



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



IN REPLY REFER TO:

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MBPM-11
Date:

MIGRATORY BIRD PERMIT MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Temporary Use of Certain Zip-tie Bands for Raptors Hatched in 2022 and 2023

PURPOSE: This memorandum authorizes the use of Service-issued blue or fluorescent green, numbered, zip-tie bands as equivalent to seamless, metal bands for birds hatched and banded under Raptor Propagation permits in 2022 and 2023.

BACKGROUND: Captive-bred raptor nestlings held under a Raptor Propagation permit (50 CFR 21.85) must be banded with a numbered, seamless, metal band provided by the Service within 2 weeks of hatching (50 CFR 21.85(e)(2)(i)). Only raptors marked with a numbered, seamless, metal band provided by the Service may be transferred, sold, or bartered (21.85(g)(1)). If a raptor nestling is not seamlessly banded within two weeks or a seamless band must be removed, captive-bred raptors must be marked with a yellow, zip-tie band (50 CFR 21.85(e)(4)). Raptors banded with yellow, zip-tie bands may be transferred but cannot be sold or bartered.

Numbered, seamless, metal bands are made of rolled aluminum and are sequentially numbered using a specialized stamping process. Manufacturing of the band die is limited to a few companies in the United States who have the capacity and experience to make the specialized bands.

The Service was unable to obtain seamless, metal band stock in 2021. As a result, there is limited availability of certain sizes of bands for captive-bred raptor hatchlings for 2022, and this limited availability is expected to continue through 2023. This policy explains banding requirements until the Service has an adequate stock of seamless, metal bands.

POLICY: The Service may issue numbered, zip-tie bands in blue or fluorescent green for 2022 and 2023 when there is insufficient, seamless-metal-band stock. These zip-tie bands will be considered equivalent to numbered, seamless, metal bands when applied to hatch year 2022 and 2023 hatchlings. As long as the raptor remains marked with the blue or fluorescent-green, zip-tie band, the raptor may be transferred, sold, or bartered for the life of the bird. If a blue or fluorescent-green, zip-tie band is replaced with a yellow, zip-tie band, the prohibitions on sale of yellow, zip-tie-banded birds apply. This policy applies to all permit types that authorize the possession and use of seamless-metal-banded raptors, including abatement, falconry school, and raptor propagation.

Bands can be requested from the Service Regions using Form 3-2435. The Service will use line “O” of the Form to indicate if blue or fluorescent-green, zip-tie bands were provided in lieu of seamless, metal bands. The Raptor Propagation permittee must maintain records of banding, consistent with regulations and permit conditions. The Service also maintains records of all bands distributed to permittees.

The Service will notify federally permitted Raptor Propagators who have obtained blue or fluorescent-green, zip-tie bands when we have acquired sufficient numbered, seamless-metal-band stock. Further application of blue and fluorescent-green bands will be prohibited after the effective date in the notification.

Summary of Zip-Tie Bands Used on Raptors:

- Fluorescent-green, numbered zip-tie bands for Hatch Year 2022 and 2023 are equivalent to seamless, metal bands;
- Blue, numbered zip-tie bands for Hatch Year 2022 and 2023 are equivalent to seamless, metal bands;
- Yellow, numbered zip-tie bands are replacement bands for captive-bred birds; birds with yellow, zip-tie bands may not be bartered or sold;
- Black, numbered zip-tie bands are distributed by states for falconer use on wild-caught birds of four species (Peregrine Falcons, Gyrfalcons, Harris’ Hawk, and Goshawk). Wild-caught birds may not be bartered or sold.