

A Handy-Dandy Guide for Reporting Banded AMOY Seen at Monitored Nesting Sites (Especially Intensively Monitored Sites) During the Nesting Season

Thank you for reviewing these guidelines! There is a whimsical story for you at the end of the document, plus a link to a handy cheat sheet you can print and refer to when entering data.

Goal of Resight Reports for Sites that Monitor Productivity

Productivity monitoring is the practice of determining the success (or failure) of nesting pairs by visiting their territories frequently in a structured way during the nesting season. Since banded AMOY at sites that are monitored for productivity may be seen multiple times a week or even daily through the nesting season, we don't need each observation to be reported to the AMOY Band Database. But, we do want to capture **when birds arrive** at nesting sites, **when they start nesting**, **when nesting concludes**, and **how late the birds stay** afterwards. This guide tries to help you, or your technicians, interns, and volunteers, report this information consistently so we have a record of what birds were where when during the nesting season.

What If I Don't Monitor Some Sites (or Any Sites) That Often?

If you visit your site 3 times a month or fewer (i.e., generally less than once per 7-10 days), then just report whatever bands you see when you see them! You can ignore this document and go about your day. If you do monitor more frequently, read on.

Important Definitions

The AMOY Band Database uses specific definitions to define a bird's status as breeding or not breeding. Use these when entering data to the Band Database, even if your site or project has other criteria (you can always explain more in the Notes field).

- **Breeding confirmed:** The bird has eggs or chicks. It is only breeding confirmed if it is seen with eggs or chicks on that date.

A bird observed copulating is breeding unconfirmed. A bird acting like it has chicks (ie chicks are inferred) is breeding unconfirmed. You have to see the eggs or chicks. Once the chicks are fledged (reach 35 days of age or are capable of sustained flight), the parents become non-breeding, even if they are still associating with the fledgling(s).
- **Breeding unconfirmed:** The bird displayed behaviors consistent with nesting, generally territorial behavior either by itself or in a pair, copulation, scraping or having scrapes in its territory, sneaky behavior as through it is hiding a nest/chicks that you just can't find on that occasion. Birds in between nesting attempts are often breeding unconfirmed, as they continue to display behaviors after the loss of their nest or brood.
- **Non-breeding:** A bird without eggs or chicks and that isn't displaying nesting behaviors. For example, two birds loafing on the beach that don't react to being approached and have no scrapes are non-breeding. Birds with fledged chicks are also non-breeding.

You can always refer to the orange [?] help boxes on the Band Database's resighting entry form for these and other definitions. Please pay attention to these!

Dates to Report at Sites that Monitor Productivity

For Adults:

1. **The date the bird is first seen that season**, if before the first detected nest attempt (such as when bird first shows up and is foraging or loafing on the beach).
2. **The first date the bird's status is breeding confirmed** (i.e., the date the first nest or brood is found), **or if breeding is never confirmed, the first date its status was breeding unconfirmed** (such as when it was first seen acting territorial, mating, or scraping). It's helpful to mention what behavior or other evidence you have for the entered status, such as that it had a nest with 3 eggs, or that you found scrapes.

Some sites/agencies/organizations enter a record for each nesting attempt; you are welcome to do this, but it's not necessary. **One way of reporting the location of each nesting attempt is to report a resight for the date each nesting attempt was found (with its unique coordinates) but not the failure date. The failure date can simply be mentioned in the Notes field. Another option would be to enter the dates all nesting attempts in the Notes field of the first nest attempt's record.** This information in the Notes field can really help to resolve questions if the bird is reported somewhere drastically different during that nesting season.

3. **The date the bird's status returns to non-breeding or breeding unconfirmed** after the last known nesting attempt. In other words, the failure date of the last nesting attempt or the date the chick(s) fledge. **If the bird fledges a chick, upon fledging the parents become non-breeding, even if they are still interacting with the chick.** For database purposes, chicks are considered fledged when they are capable of sustained flight distances of 100 m or when they reach 35 days of age, whichever comes first. Most will be fledged by age—who wants to chase their chicks around to see if they fly! **If the bird fails and remains territorial or shows other nesting behavior, it becomes breeding unconfirmed.** Some pairs will continue to defend their territories after losing their last nest attempt, so they may not have non-breeding status for a while. As a result, some sites may not be able to monitor long enough to make a non-breeding observation for all of their banded birds, so just use the last breeding unconfirmed date in those cases.
4. **The date the bird is last seen that season**, if different from the date the bird returns to non-breeding/breeding unconfirmed status. Many birds linger around their territories or on the site in general after they have ceased nesting attempts and some sites record these observations.

Thus, for most adults, you will have four records/bird, and some birds will have 2-3 records depending on if their first seen and last seen dates were also when they were detected nesting and when their last nest failed. If an adult was banded partway through the nesting season (say, on its second nest attempt), you would only report dates during which it was banded so it could have fewer records still.

For Chicks (in addition to their capture records):

1. The **date the chick fledged** (either by reaching 35 days of age or by observed sustained flight). Comments for how the chicks were fledged are encouraged—for example, “fledged by age,” “fledged, 35 days old” (if exact hatch date was known), or “fledged, observed sustained flight.” For database purposes, chicks are considered fledged when they are capable of sustained flights of 100 m or when they reach 35 days of age, whichever comes first. Most will be fledged by age—who wants to chase their chicks around to see if they fly! But some sites do keep track of this, and if so then feel free to enter the date that the chick was observed flying.

2. Please report a sighting for **the last date the chick/fledge was seen at your site** (this could be before fledging if the chick was not seen after fledging).

If chicks are not seen after banding, add a comment in the Note field s to the capture record stating this. This information can be really helpful in determining if a resighting is credible.

3. If the **chick is found dead** it's very important that a record is entered for when they were found (status = dead), and any notes on suspected cause of death can be added, or whether the whole body was found, just the bands, etc.

Reporting Kinship Information to the Database

The database does not natively support kinship (associations with mates, parents/offspring, and siblings) in its data tables, but many sites have this data recorded anyway, so to preserve it in one place, the database strongly encourages and requests that it be recorded in the Notes section of each record for which such information is known.

For reporting banded kin, record the following in the Notes field:

“Mate of...” – If the bird is paired with another banded individual we note “mate of DG(CJL).” If the bird is paired with an unbanded bird, we use “mate of UNB” or say nothing.

“Parent of...” – If the bird is known to be the parent of a chick, note “parent of...”

“Chick of...” – For chicks with banded parents, note “chick of...”

“Sibling of...” – For chicks with banded siblings, note “sibling of...”

Please list relevant information with the associated resight. For example, if records are entered for two nesting attempts, please include “Mate of DG(CJL)” in both, or if the mate changes, the new mate for the second nest attempt.

Reporting Non-breeding Birds

Some sites will read bands on birds that are merely passing through in early spring or fall. For non-breeding birds, we would like all status = non-breeding resights, unless you are visiting a site daily and gathering a large number of redundant resights. In that case use your best judgement about number of sightings to report, but be sure to report the first and last date seen. Feel free to contact the database administrator to discuss your particular situation.

Notes On Other Fields

Please remember to write out observers' names, as opposed to initials, and if you have flock size recorded, please enter it in the Flock Size field.

Using the Excel Template

These practices may generate a lot of records. If you have more than about 20-30 rows of data, you will probably find that using the Excel template takes less time than entering records one by one at the website. It may also facilitate your own data checking process. If you don't have the template, request it from the database administrator.

That's (Almost) It!

That's the guidance we have for you! Below there are some examples (using real/not real birds) AND, here is a [link to a printable sheet](#) that can be referred to while you or your technicians, interns, or volunteers, enter data.

Examples

Put it all together for one bird and you will get a set of reports that look something like this. Note, this is the maximalist approach. Optional, though encouraged records are in italics and gray boxes. And, note that not all fields are shown, just those to illustrate just what is important.

Adult Nesting Season Sequence:

Date	Bands	Status	Notes
April 10, 2025	DG(NX)	Breeding unconfirmed	Date first seen on site. Scaping with DG(KT).
April 25, 2025	DG(NX)	Breeding confirmed	Incubating. Mate of DG(KT). Nest failed due to overwash on May 1. Second nest found May 9.*
<i>May 9, 2025</i>	<i>DG(NX)</i>	<i>Breeding confirmed</i>	<i>Mate of DG(KT), incubating second nest attempt.**</i>
<i>July 1, 2025</i>	<i>DG(NX)</i>	<i>Breeding confirmed</i>	<i>Mate of DG(KT). Banded its two chicks; parent of DG(ETC) and DG(ETE).***</i>
July 13, 2025	DG(NX)	Non-breeding	Chicks fledged. Parent of DG(ETC) and DG(ETE).
August 15, 2025	DG(NX)	Non-breeding	Last date seen. With its mate and two fledges.

* Note that though the April 10 breeding unconfirmed record mentions DG(KT), that could have just been a spring fling. They made it real—and got a “Mate of...” note—once they were found with a nest. It's also fine to say “Paired with...” or “Mate of...” for a pair that is only Breeding unconfirmed, especially if no nest or brood was ever found, but it's nice to confirm the pair once they have a nest.

** Note that this would capture any movement or lack thereof between nesting attempts, as the coordinates would be different for the first breeding confirmed record and the second.

*** Note that if you don't have a record for the chicks' banding date, you would want to include a note about the chicks' bands on some other date (most logically in the July 13 record). And, your coordinates could remain the same as for the May 9 record. Unless you have a special reason for doing so—the brood moved far away from the nest, etc.—you don't have to be a hero about updating coordinates for each sighting. That information is not always recorded in the first place, so nest location can be a good stand-in for any records pertaining to the same nesting attempt.

Choose Your Own Adventure Alternate Ending:

Date	Bands	Status	Notes
April 30, 2025	DG(NX)	Breeding confirmed	First observation of season. Incubating. Mate of DG(KT). Nest found failed with coyote tracks nearby on May 2.
<i>May 12, 2025</i>	<i>DG(NX)</i>	<i>Breeding confirmed</i>	<i>Mate of DG(KT), incubating second nest attempt.</i>
May 15, 2025	DG(NX)	Breeding unconfirmed	Second nest failed. Coyote tracks nearby.*

August 1, 2025	DG(NX)	Non-breeding	Last date seen. Loafing on shoreline with mate and UNB.**
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* Note that you would want to enter coordinates for the second nest because the first breeding confirmed record would have the coordinates of the first nest.

** Note this explains the status. They are not showing any breeding behaviors, so they cannot be Breeding unconfirmed.

Chick Nesting Season Sequence:

Date	Bands	Status	Type	Age	Notes
July 1, 2025	DG(ETC)	Non-breeding	Capture	L	Chick of DG(NX) and DG(KT), sibling of DG(ETE).
July 13, 2025	DG(ETC)	Non-breeding	Resight	HY	Fledged by age.*
August 20, 2025	DG(ETC)	Non-breeding	Resight		Last date seen on site.**

* Note that this would then be the first sighting of the chick when it was 35 days or older. Therefore, its age becomes HY. Strictly speaking, you don't need to enter the age for resight records, but L (local) refers to a young bird that can't fly and they magically become a HY (hatch year) when they can so if you are fledging a chick, entering HY for age is helpful.

** Note that this last date is different than its parents' last date seen would be. If you wanted, you could add a record for the resighting on August 15 when you saw the whole family together but if so you would still want a record from this later date.

Who Are DG(NX) and DG(KT)?

If you made it this far, congrats and we appreciate your attention to recording the breeding stories of these birds—we hope you enjoy the funny tale of this imaginary family. Dark Geen NX is Lindsay's favorite oystercatcher. He was so hard to catch as a chick. The band code suggests "Nixon" so this is Tricky Dick, which was President Nixon's nickname. Tricky Dick fledged in 2011 and though he never nested, he lived a happy life until Hurricane Florence struck in 2018 and he was not seen again. He has 46 resightings. Dark Green KT hatched in 2012 and never fledged. In this timeline, they survive and find each other—and a territory some other bird isn't hogging. And even though DNA from their feathers in our real timeline indicated they were both males, in this other timeline they are Tricky Dick and Katy, and they raise two happy chicks, ETC and ETE, who are not actually siblings in our real timeline, but both of whom really did fledge and are alive today in the fall of 2025. The end.