

**CFO Grant: results of Loggerhead Shrike Banding in South Texas –  
December 26, 2010 through January 11, 2011**

**Susan H. Craig**

**1530 Robidoux Circle**

**Colorado Springs, CO 80915**

**Phone 719-591-0322**

This research trip began December 26, 2010, when I left Colorado Springs for south Texas. Along the way, I diverted from the highway to follow some back roads to look for shrikes, but caught only a few. My ultimate destination was Port Lavaca in south-central Texas along the Gulf Coast. Once there, I rented a motel room for 10 days and worked from that location.

On December 30, I captured a previously banded shrike near Port Lavaca. It had been banded on December 22, 2006, by my Canadian subpermittee, Dr. Amy Chabot, during her PhD research. Amy sampled all her captures for DNA and stable isotope analysis. The genetic signature for that particular bird indicates that its origin is the Dakotas. So this means shrike #1981-08017 has traveled from the Dakotas area to south Texas and back again 8 times in its 4 year life span. Quite remarkable!

On December 31, I was joined by Keith Brink, a former Colorado subpermittee. In all, we banded 146 shrikes, working in counties surrounding Port Lavaca. We worked primarily on back roads, some paved and some dirt. In general, shrikes were abundant. Some birds were caught in odd places, such as a Wal-Mart parking lot, and one from a beachfront walkway. All birds appeared to be healthy: there were no leg or bill deformities or injuries. Many birds carried measurable fat.

The primary objective of this trip was to try to confirm evidence of double breeding (winter breeding) by an unknown migrant shrike population. Since south Texas experienced a rather cold, wet winter, I'm convinced that double breeding could not take place this past winter. If it occurs in shrikes, this phenomenon appears to be adventitious, and likely happens only when warmer, drier weather conditions permit. While I'm disappointed in not achieving my primary objective, I was able to learn even more about migration, winter site fidelity, and aging.

A few weeks after returning home, I discovered I'd been given a generous grant from Colorado Field Ornithologists. By then, the bills had all been paid, so the grant has been put into a fund for next winter's research. Stay tuned!

Total Miles driven – Colorado Springs to south Texas and return - 3792 miles