



Behaviour of Loggerhead Shrikes Breeding in Captivity



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A few facts about the bird

Lanius ludovicianus migrans

- Both a songbird and a bird of prey
- Impales its prey on hawthorns or barbwire; has a sharp, slightly hooked beak
- Disappearing from Canadian grasslands over the last 50 years
- Endangered in Canada since 1991



Captive Breeding and Release Program at ASCC

Overall Aim:

Experiment with various techniques to determine the most effective, efficient way to breed Shrikes in captivity and release them into the wild.



Methods

Pairing based on genetic relatedness and compability of birds

Daily behavioural observations:

- Aggression
- Displays
- Nest approach
- Food transfers
- Nest material transfers



Methods, cont'd...

Record feedings of young + aggressive behaviour toward them by parents



Parents continue feeding juveniles after they have fledged, but male can become aggressive towards them, especially if a second clutch is laid



Methods

Juveniles are weighed, measured and banded before transporting them to release site



Results

Total of 22 young fledged,
18 released in the wild



Release Procedures



Conclusions

- Data not yet compiled to determine what behaviours result in successful breeding
- First few days of pairing are crucial to effective nesting of birds
- In compatible pairs, little aggression and earlier nest building and courtship behaviours
- Breeding season very successful in 2006, 1 male even raised 5 young by himself after the female died



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