

ABSTRACTS FOR *CONDOR* 103(2) MAY 2001

FEATURE ARTICLES

SEX RATIOS OF DUNLIN WINTERING AT TWO LATITUDES ON THE PACIFIC COAST¹

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Abstract. Latitudinal clines in sex ratio during the nonbreeding season occur in some shorebirds of the Scolopacidae. We compared populations of nonbreeding Dunlin (*Calidris alpina pacifica*) from two latitudes along the Pacific flyway: the Fraser River Delta, British Columbia and Bolinas Lagoon, California, to determine whether, and to what degree, they exhibited sex ratios consistent with a latitudinal cline. Dunlin are plumage monomorphic, so we used a maximum likelihood model to estimate overall and monthly sex ratios for each population from culmen length distributions. Sex ratios in the Fraser River Delta were corrected for sex differences in habitat use. Monthly sex ratios were similar at the two sites but varied throughout the winter, likely reflecting differences in seasonal movement patterns between the sexes. Both populations showed an overall bias toward males (Fraser = 61% males, Bolinas = 65% males). There is no evidence to support the possibility of a skew toward males in *C. a. pacifica* as a whole, so our data are consistent with some form of latitudinal cline in the sex ratio of *C. a. pacifica*. However, additional data from the Oregon coast, southern California, and Mexico are required to resolve this question. We also tested the hypothesis that the mean body size within each sex is larger at the higher-latitude site (Fraser River Delta). There was some indication that this may be true of males, but the statistical results were equivocal.

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