

ABSTRACTS FOR *CONDOR* 104(1) FEBRUARY 2002 C.E.

SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

SEX DIFFERENCES IN NEST VISITATION BY CHICK-REARING MARBLED MURRELETS

RUSSELL W. BRADLEY¹, LAURA A. McFARLANE TRANQUILLA, BRETT A. VANDERKIST AND FRED COOKE

Centre for Wildlife Ecology, Department of Biological Sciences, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6, Canada

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¹Present address: Point Reyes Bird Observatory, 4990 Shoreline Highway, Stinson Beach, CA 94970. E-mail: rbradley@prbo.org

Abstract. We report a significant male bias in dawn and dusk nest visitations of breeding, radio-marked Marbled Murrelets (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) during the chick rearing period in Desolation Sound, British Columbia, Canada, from 1998–2000. Overall visitation rates of males during chick rearing were 1.3 times greater than those of females. Dusk visitation rates by males with active nests were 1.8 times greater than those of females. Male visitation rates were similar between early and late chick rearing, both within and among individuals. However, female visitation rates during late chick rearing were significantly lower than female rates early in rearing, both within and between individuals. In addition, between-sex comparisons of nest visitation during early and late chick rearing showed significant reductions in female effort relative to males, only during late chick rearing. These results suggest that male birds may provision chicks more often than females, especially during the last half of chick rearing. These findings offer a behavioral explanation for the annual male bias of birds flying inland during the chick rearing period at Theodosia Inlet in Desolation Sound from 1994–1999. Although female-biased provisioning has been documented in several species, male-biased provisioning has not been widely reported in other alcids.

Key words: *Brachyramphus marmoratus*, *British Columbia*, *male bias*, *Marbled Murrelet*, *provisioning*, *radio-telemetry*, *sex ratio*.

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