

Top 30 longevity records of bald eagles in Maine: *version, 20 October 2012*

Banding birds yields insights on survival rates, movement, and population recruitment. With long-lived birds like bald eagles, the information returns (often via finding dead or injured individuals) may span several research projects over decades. Since 2004, researchers use red color bands with distinctive codes that are identifiable with good optics. Always report a band encounter: on-line at <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl/> or call 1-800-327-BAND or write BIRD BAND, Laurel, MD 20708.

Color bands on a nestling bald eagle, Oxford County



© Bill Hanson, Next Era Energy

Color band on immature bald eagle, Androscoggin County



© Lloyd Martin III

Records of the 30 oldest Maine eagles all are products of research starting in 1975 by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) in conjunction with the University of Maine (UM) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The 30 top longevity records to date are all for eagles older than 16 years (= born before 1997).

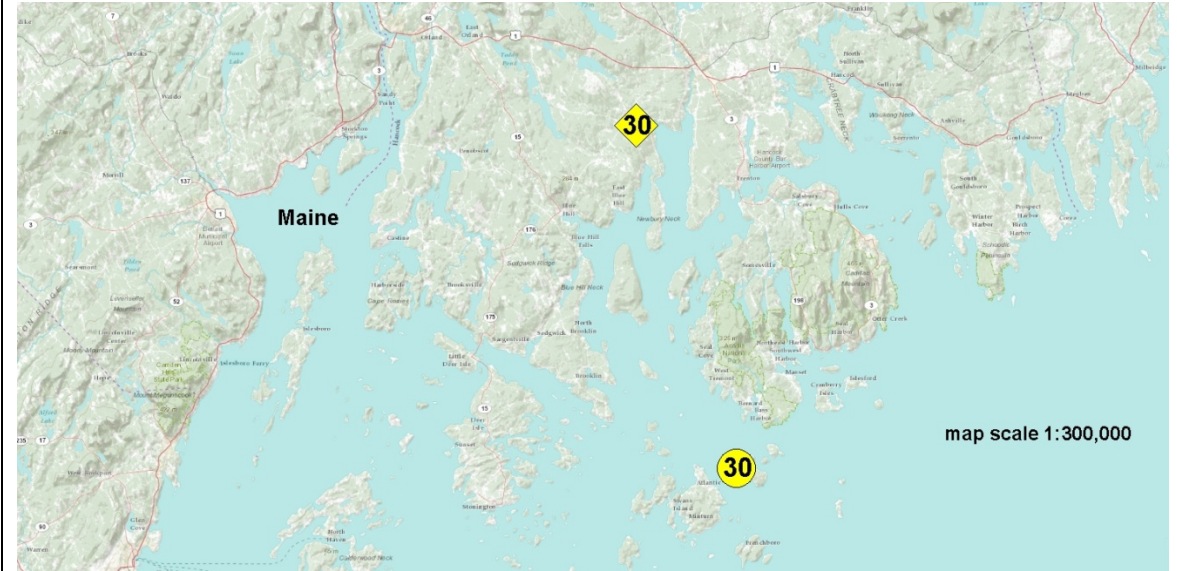
A total of 847 bald eagles (823 nestling eaglets + 24 older birds) were banded in Maine from 1975 to 1996. In this time period, Maine's depleted population was centered "Downeast" in coastal Washington County and Hancock County. Also, 22 eaglets in neighboring Charlotte County, New Brunswick were banded during 1983 - 1985. Given the tendency of eagles to return to their natal region, these initial longevity records are concentrated in eastern Maine.

Handling young eaglets before they can fly is readily done when they are half-grown (~ 6 weeks old) **IF** a skilled climber can climb the lofty nest tree and work safely around the enormous nest. Five UM graduate research studies of Maine eagles relied upon the skill of Barney Thompson. We who watched from below still remain amazed at the sight!

These records appear in order of increasing longevity. The natal nest (birthplace) is mapped as a circle. The recovery location (place of death) appears as a diamond.

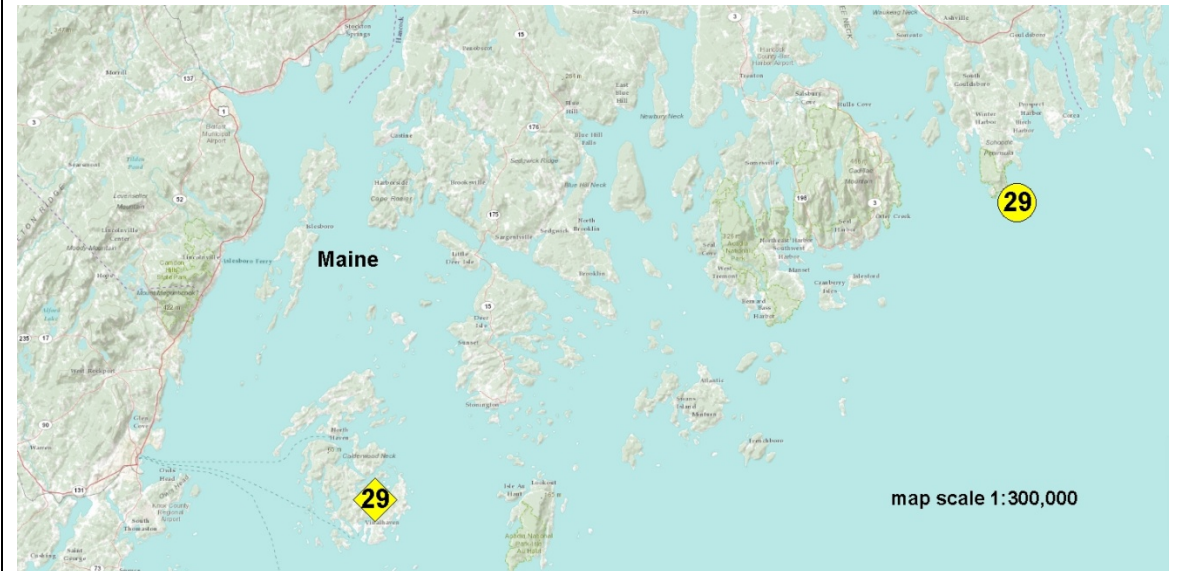
30 → 16 years – 2 months → net movement: 23 miles north → band # 629-12249

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 15 June 1983 in Frenchboro (Hancock County), ME by biologist Charlie Todd (UM / MDIFW)
- ◆ Found dead on 11 July 1999 in Surry (Hancock County), ME



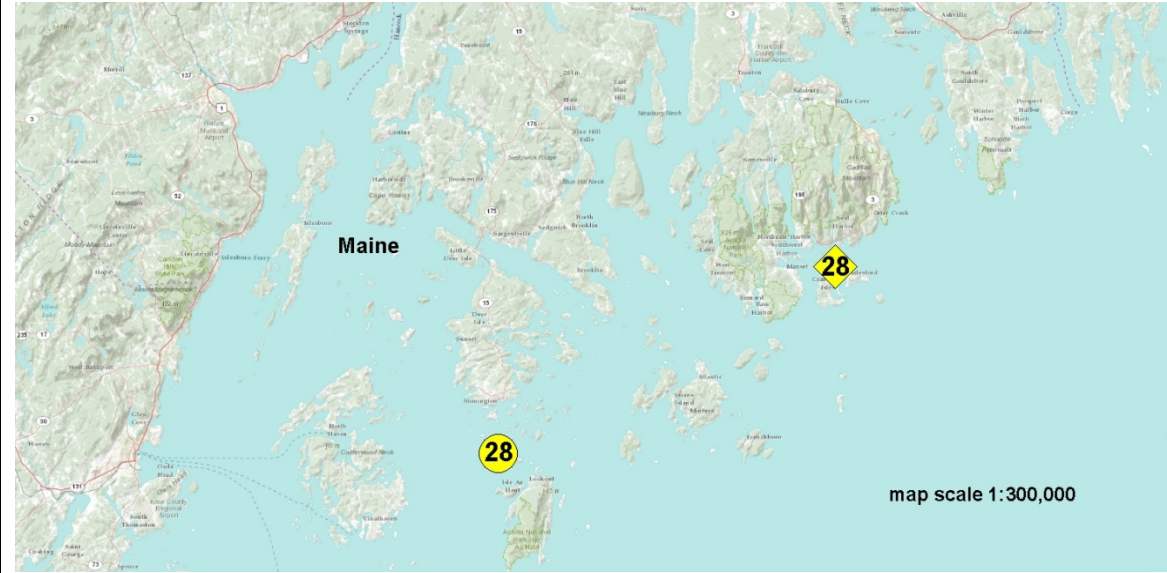
#29 → 16 years – 5 months → net movement: 42 miles southwest → band # 629-12254

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 20 June 1983 in Winter Harbor (Hancock County), ME by biologist Charlie Todd (UM / MDIFW)
- ◆ Found dead on 25 September 1999 in Vinalhaven (Knox County), ME



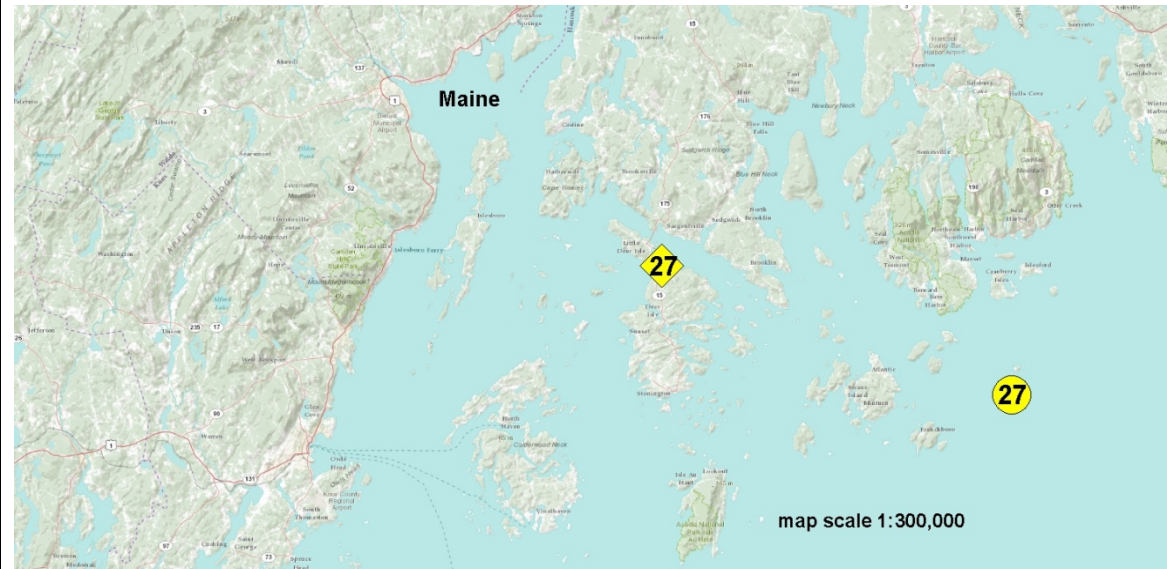
#28 → 16 years – 7 months → net movement: 23 miles northeast → band # 629-38388

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 21 June 1994 in Isle au Haut (Knox County), ME by biologist Angela Matz (UM / USFWS)
- ◆ Found dead on 17 November 2010 in Cranberry Isles (Hancock County), ME by Jeff Porter & warden Bayley Grant (MDIFW)



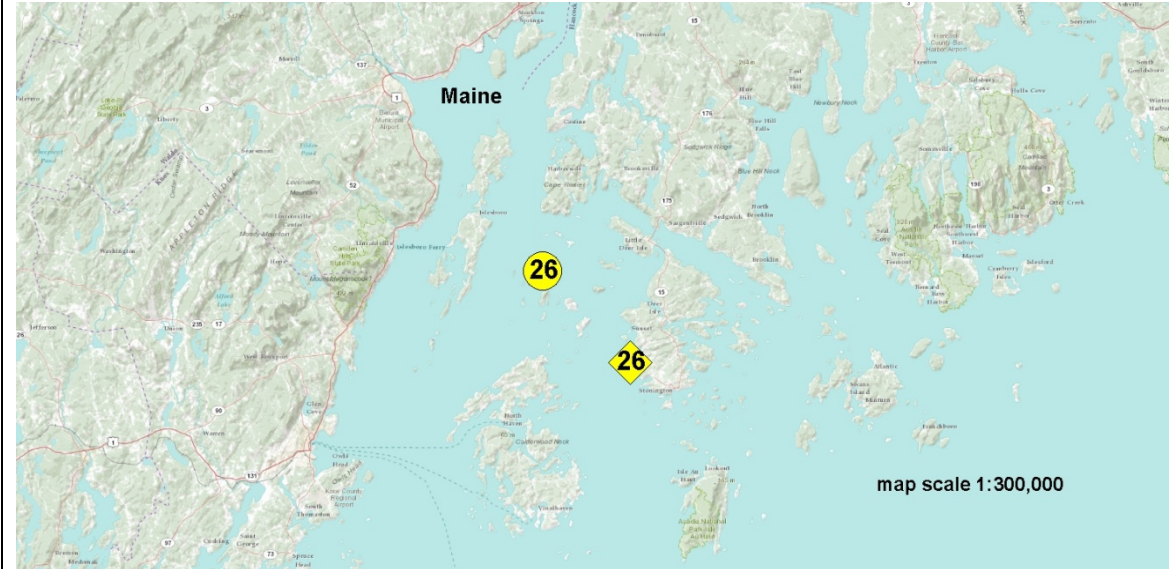
27 → 16 years – 11 months → net movement: 23 miles west → band #629-38392

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 23 June 1994 in Frenchboro (Hancock County), ME by biologist Angela Matz (UM / USFWS)
- ◆ Found dead on 11 April 2011 in Deer Isle (Hancock County), ME by warden Brian Tripp (MDIFW)



26 → 17 years – 0 months → net movement: 8 miles southeast → band # 629-36902

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 21 June 1991 in Deer Isle (Hancock County), ME by biologist Linda Welch (UM / USFWS)
- ◆ Found dead on 23 April 2008 in Deer Isle (Hancock County), ME by Ken Crowell and biologist Charlie Todd (MDIFW)



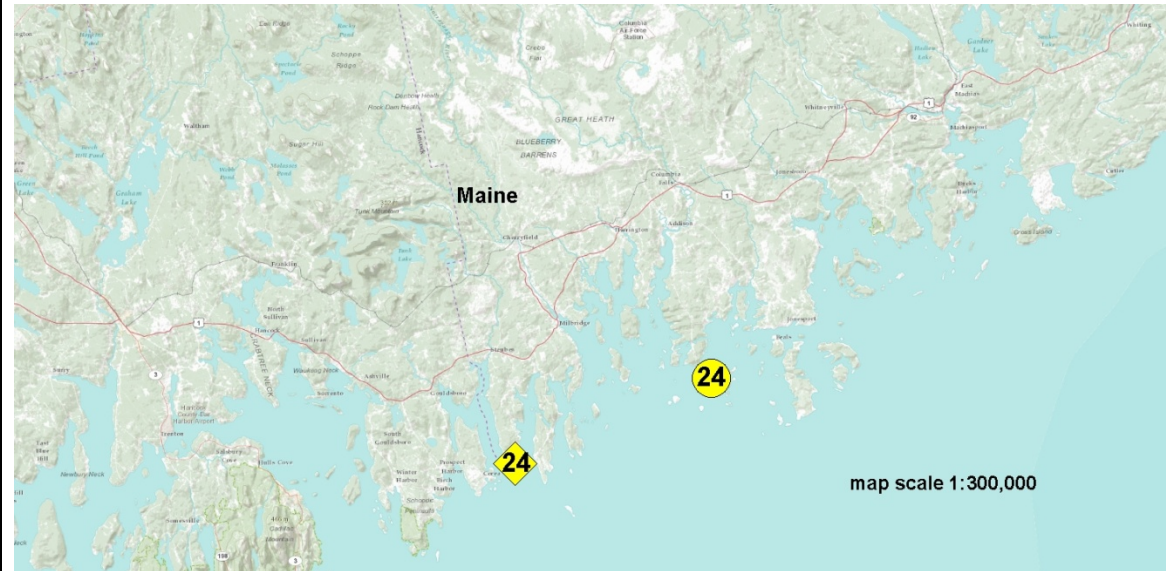
#25 → 17 years – 1 months → net movement: 325 miles northeast → band # 629-16316

- Banded as a nestling eaglet during PA reintroduction efforts (transplants from Michigan and Saskatchewan) on 10 September 1985 near Greeley (Pike County), PA
- ◆ Found dead on 5 July 2002 in Jay (Franklin County), ME



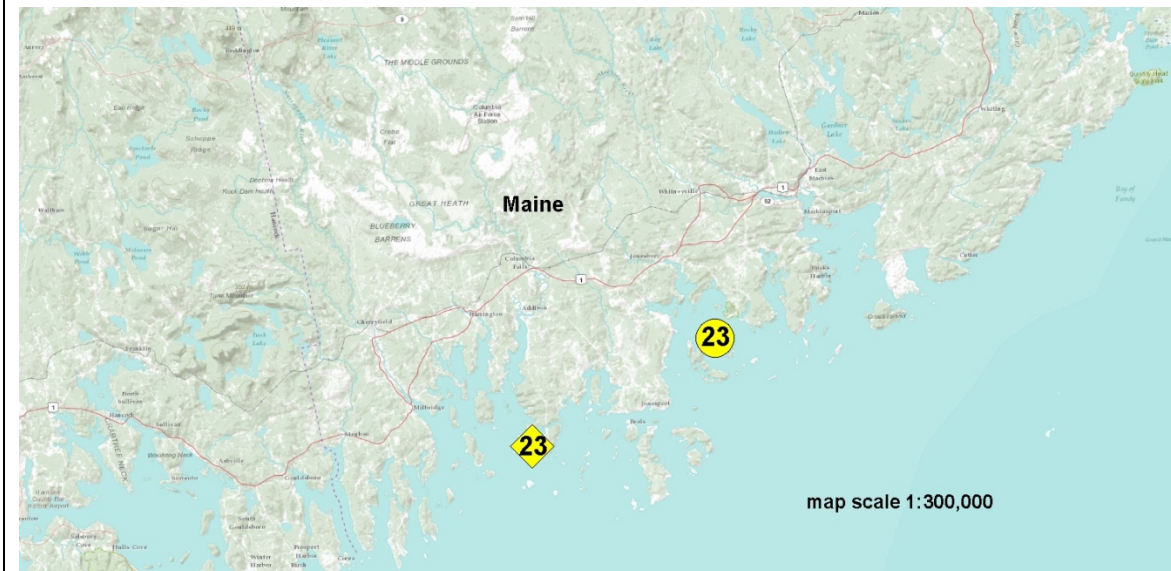
24 → 18 years – 0 months → net movement: 13 miles southwest → band #629-14170

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 7 June 1985 in Addison (Washington County), ME by biologists Mark McCollough (UM / USFWS) & Charlie Todd (UM / MDIFW)
- ◆ Found dead on 1 May 2003 in Steuben (Washington County), ME



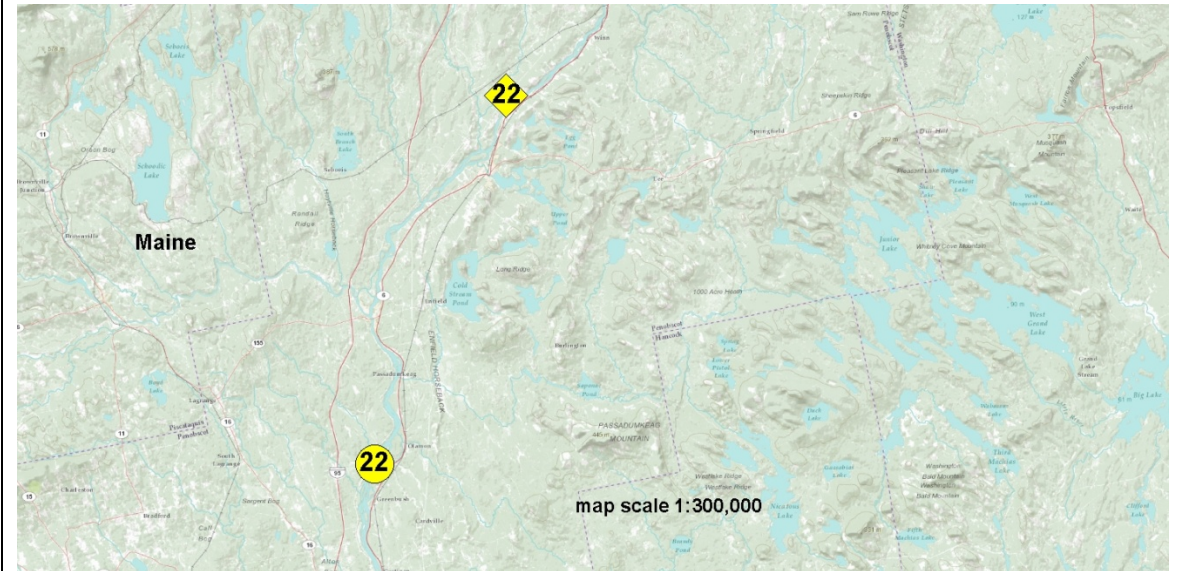
23 → 18 years – 0 months → net movement: 13 miles southwest → band #629-12287

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 4 June 1984 in Jonesport (Washington County), ME by biologists Mark McCollough (UM / USFWS) & Charlie Todd (UM / MDIFW)
- ◆ Found dead on 8 May 2002 in Addison (Washington County), ME by warden Jim Martin (MDIFW) & biologist Scott Lindsay (MDIFW)



22 → 18 years – 3 months → net movement: 23 miles north → band #629-36912

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 25 June 1991 in Argyle Township (Penobscot County), ME by biologist Linda Welch (UM / USFWS)
- ◆ Found dead on 1 August 2009 in Chester (Penobscot County), ME by warden Mike Boyer (MDIFW)



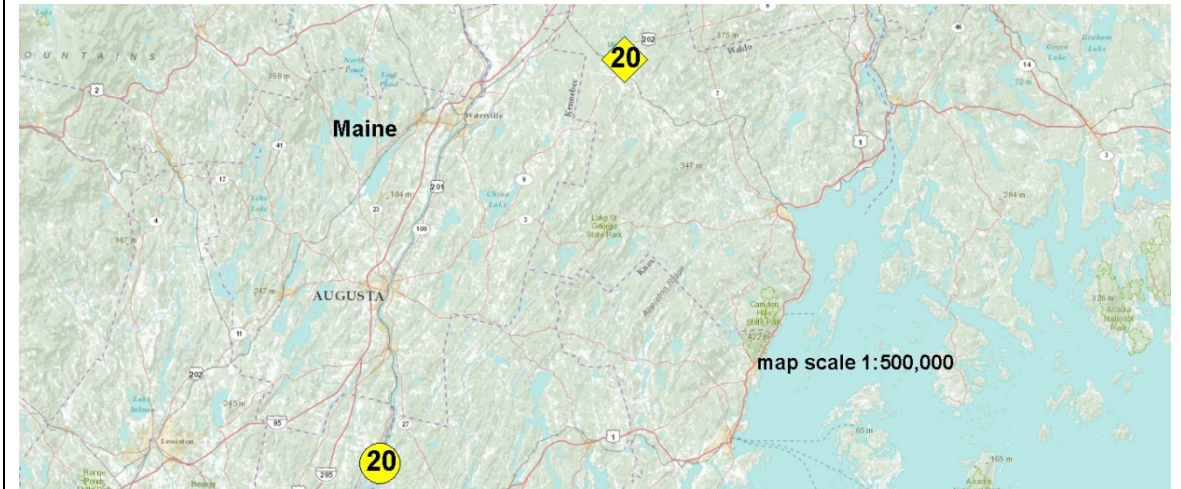
21 → 18 years – 11 months → net movement: 17 miles southeast → band #629-36878

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 11 June 1991 in Perkins Township (Sagadahoc County), ME by biologist Linda Welch (UM / USFWS)
- ◆ Found dead on 21 March 2010 in Bristol (Lincoln County), ME by Bruce Cummings & Lynne Flaccus



20 → 19 years – 00 months → net movement: 45 miles northeast → band #629-36940

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 5 June 1992 in Perkins Township (Sagadahoc County), ME by biologist Linda Welch (UM / USFWS)
- ◆ Found dead on 25 April 2011 in Unity (Waldo County), ME by biologist Keel Kemper (MDIFW)



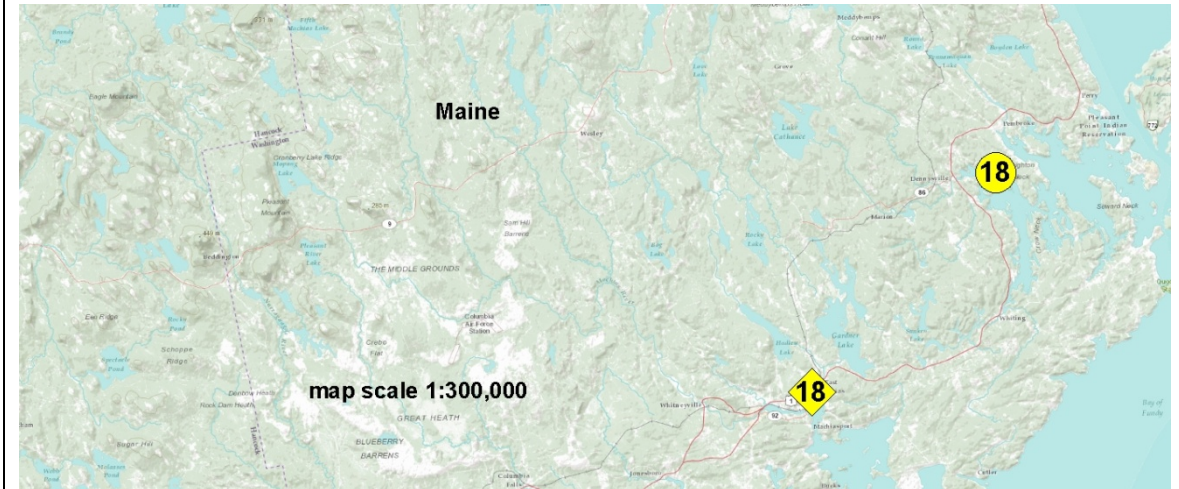
19 → 20 years – 1 month → net movement: 83 miles northeast → band #629-05895

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 23 June 1980 in Perkins Township (Sagadahoc County), ME by biologists Frank Gramlich (USFWS) & Charlie Todd (UM / MDIFW)
- ◆ Found dead on 1 June 2000 in Hancock (Hancock County), ME by biologist Brad Allen (MDIFW)



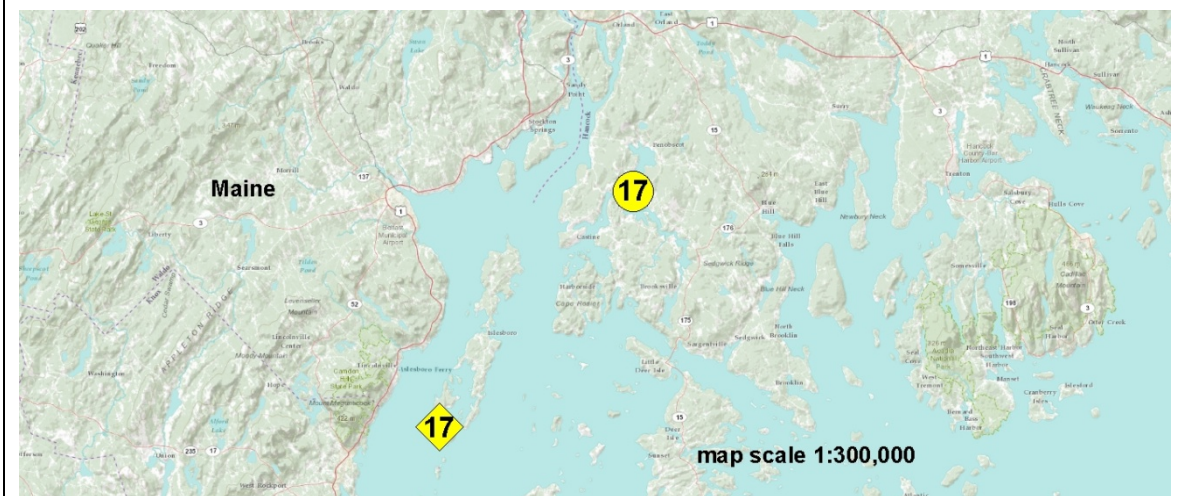
18 → 20 years – 1 months → net movement: 16 miles southwest → band #629-36915

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 27 June 1991 in Pembroke (Washington County), ME by biologist Linda Welch (UM / USFWS)
- ◆ Died & recovered on 19 May 2011 in East Machias (Washington County), ME by warden Wayde Carter (MDIFW)



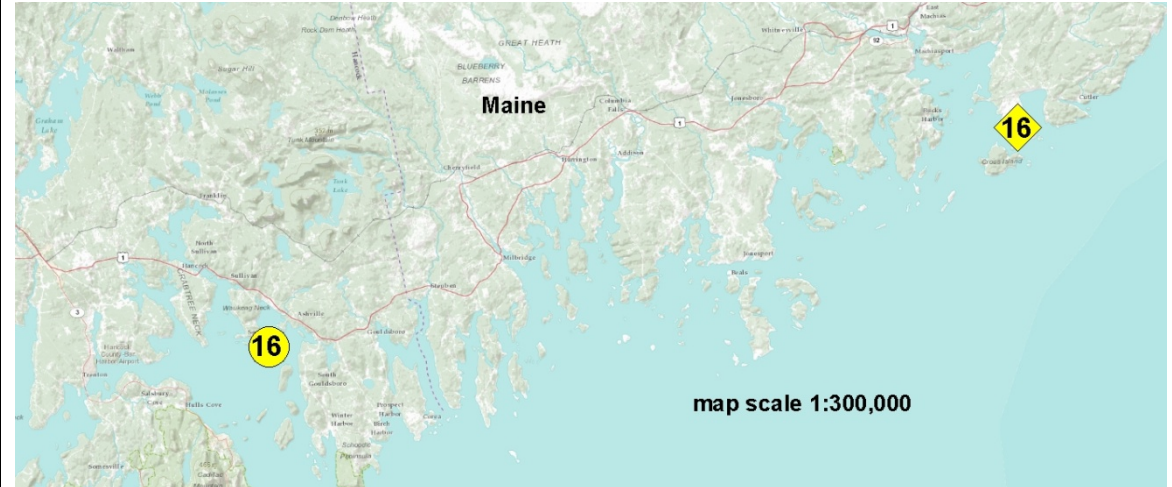
17 → 20 years – 2 months → net movement: 17 miles southwest → band #629-14165

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 6 June 1985 in Brooksville (Hancock County), ME by biologist Charlie Todd (MDIFW)
- ◆ Found dead on 3 July 2005 in Islesboro (Waldo County), ME by biologists Brad Allen (MDIFW) & Charlie Todd (MDIFW)



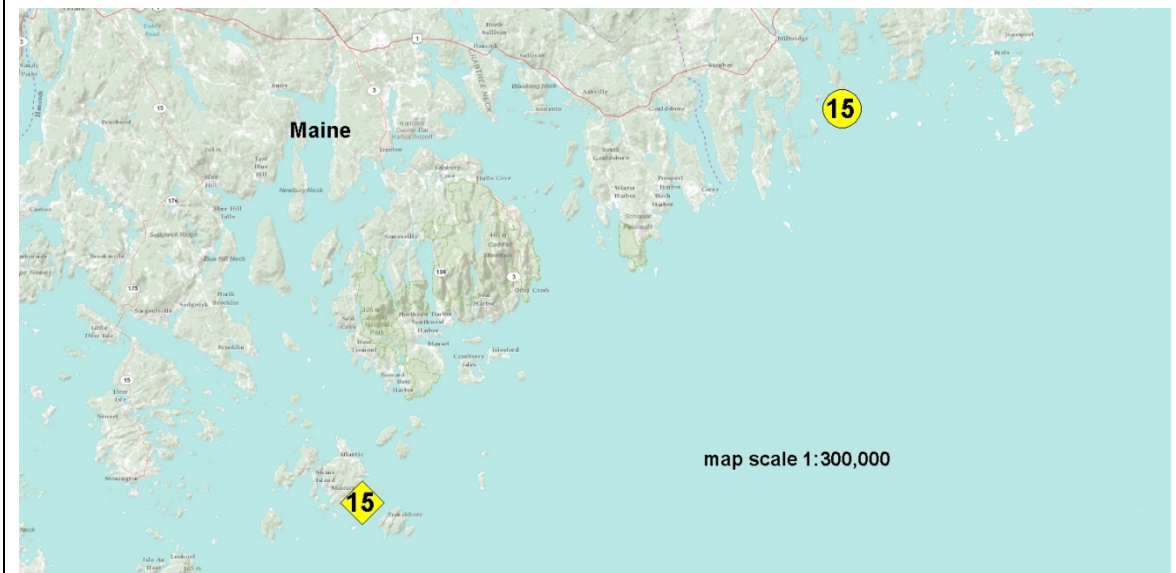
16 → 20 years – 2 months → net movement: 45 miles east → band #629-00828

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 22 June 1976 in Sorrento (Hancock County), ME by biologists Frank Gramlich (USFWS) & Charlie Todd (UM / MDIFW)
- ◆ Found dead on 11 July 1996 in Cutler (Washington County), ME by biologist Dwight Welch (MDIFW)



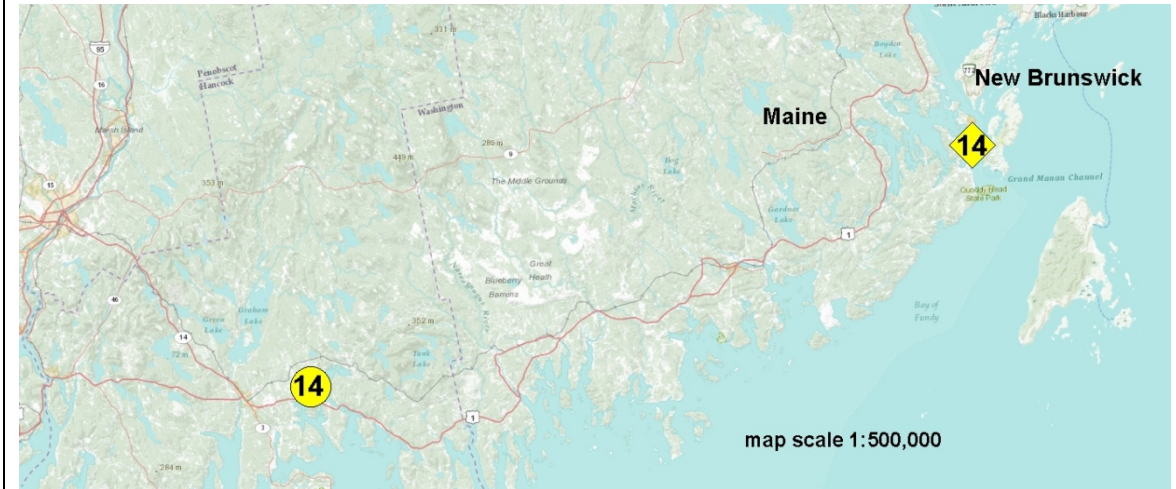
15 → 21 years – 0 months → net movement: 38 miles southwest → band #629-18260

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 10 June 1986 in Harrington (Washington County), ME by biologist Charlie Todd (MDIFW)
- ◆ Found dead on 2 May 2007 in Swans Island (Hancock County), ME by special agent Eric Holmes (USFWS)



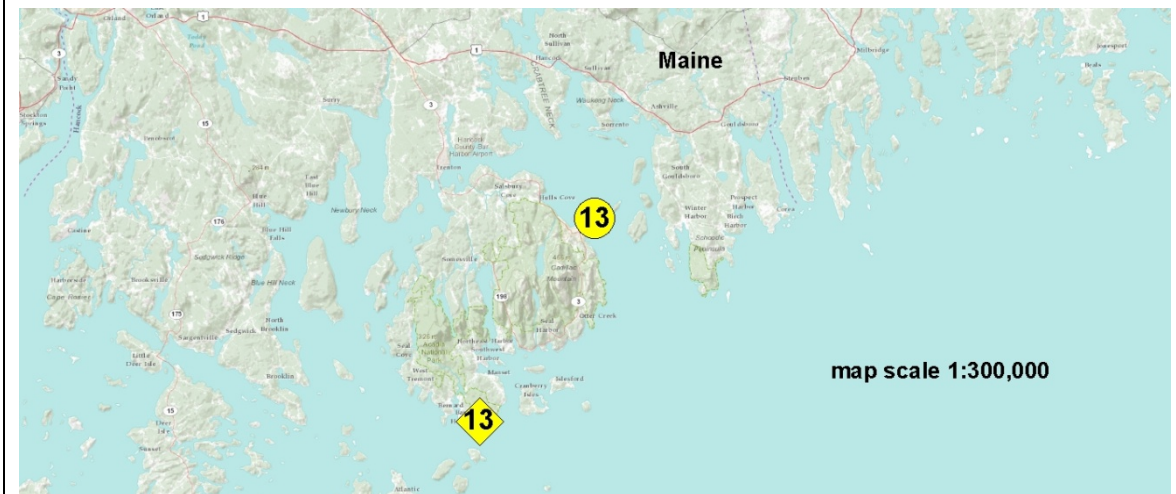
14 → 21 years – 0 months → net movement: 68 miles east → band #629-05876

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 10 June 1980 in Hancock (Hancock County), ME by biologists Frank Gramlich (USFWS) & Charlie Todd (UM / MDIFW)
- ◆ Found dead on 6 May 2001 in Eastport (Washington County), ME by biologist Tom Schaeffer (MDIFW)



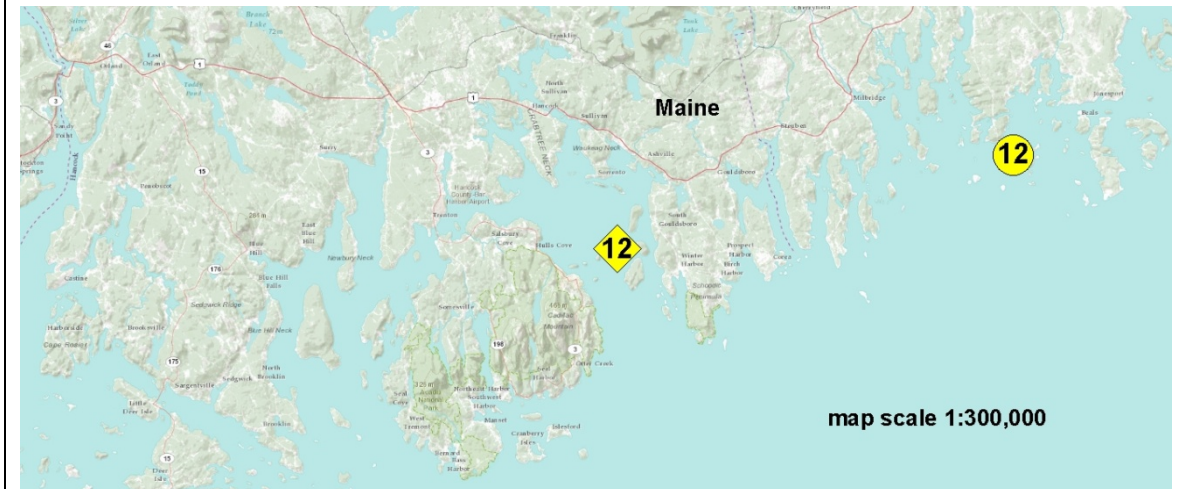
13 → 21 years – 3 months → net movement: 14 miles southwest → band #629-18280

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 12 June 1986 in Gouldsboro (Hancock County), ME by biologist Charlie Todd (MDIFW)
- ◆ Found dead on 6 August 2007 in Southwest Harbor (Hancock County), ME by ranger Art Shettle (Acadia National Park) & Bruce Connery (Acadia National Park)



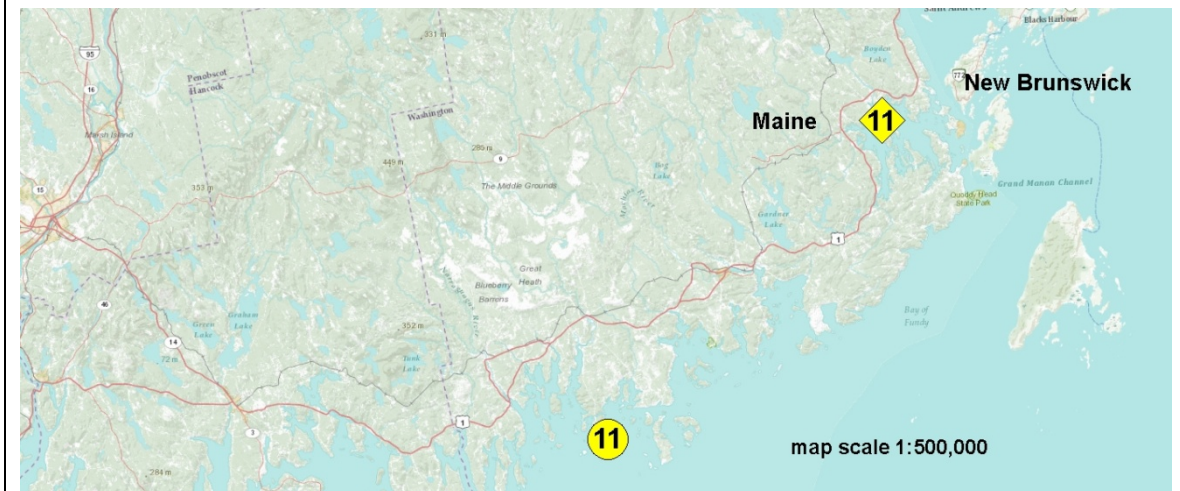
12 → 21 years – 5 months → net movement: 23 miles west → band #629-12284

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 4 June 1984 in Addison (Washington County), ME by biologists Mark McCollough (UM / USFWS) & Charlie Todd (UM / MDIFW)
- ◆ Found dead on 30 September 2005 in Gouldsboro (Hancock County), ME by warden Phil Richter (MDIFW)



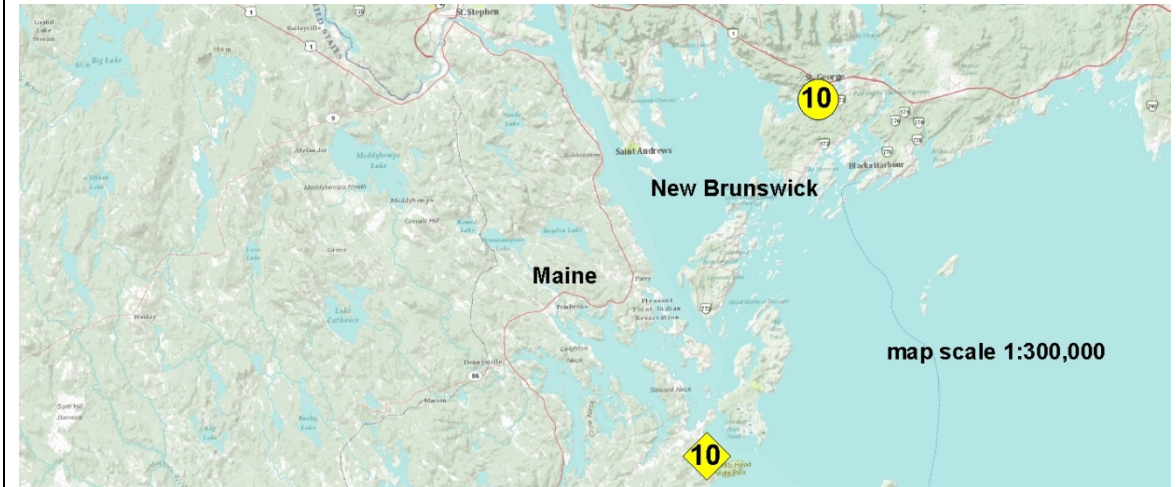
11 → 22 years – 7 months → net movement: 40 miles northeast → band #629-05882

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 19 June 1980 in Addison (Washington County), ME by biologists Frank Gramlich (USFWS) & Charlie Todd (UM / MDIFW)
- ◆ Died on 9 December 2002 in Pembroke (Washington County), ME & recovered by biologist Jim Hall (MDIFW)



10 → 23 years – 4 months → net movement: 22 miles south → band #629-18220

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 26 June 1985 in Saint George (Charlotte County), NB by biologist Mark McCollough (UM / USFWS)
- ◆ Found dead on 28 August 2008 in Lubec (Washington County), ME by biologist Rich Bard (MDIFW)



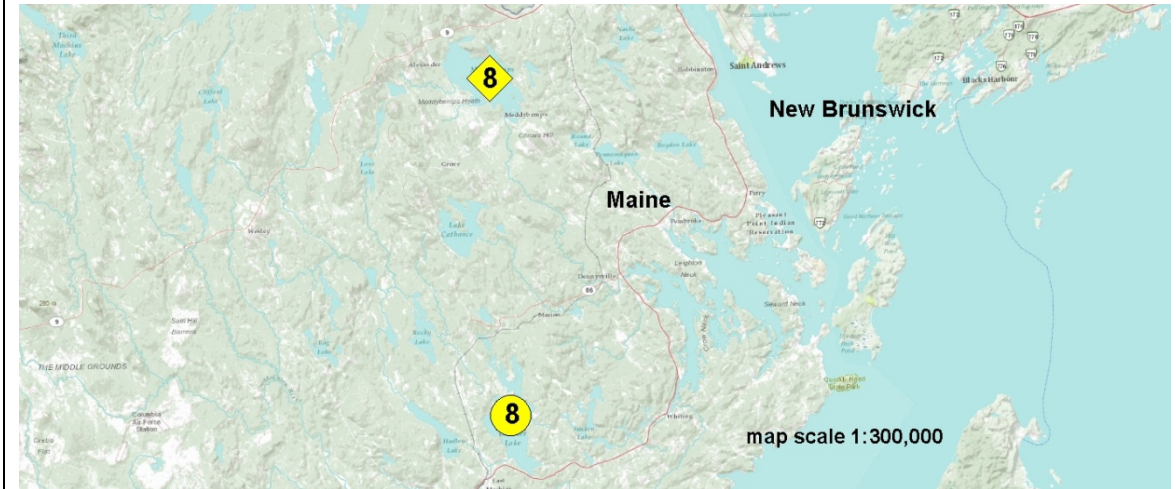
9 → 23 years – 7 months → net movement: 105 miles northwest → band #629-12264

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 24 June 1983 near Welshpool (Charlotte County), NB by biologist Charlie Todd (UM / MDIFW)
- ◆ Found moribund on 30 November 2006 near Millinocket (Penobscot County), ME & recovered by warden Andy Glidden (MDIFW)



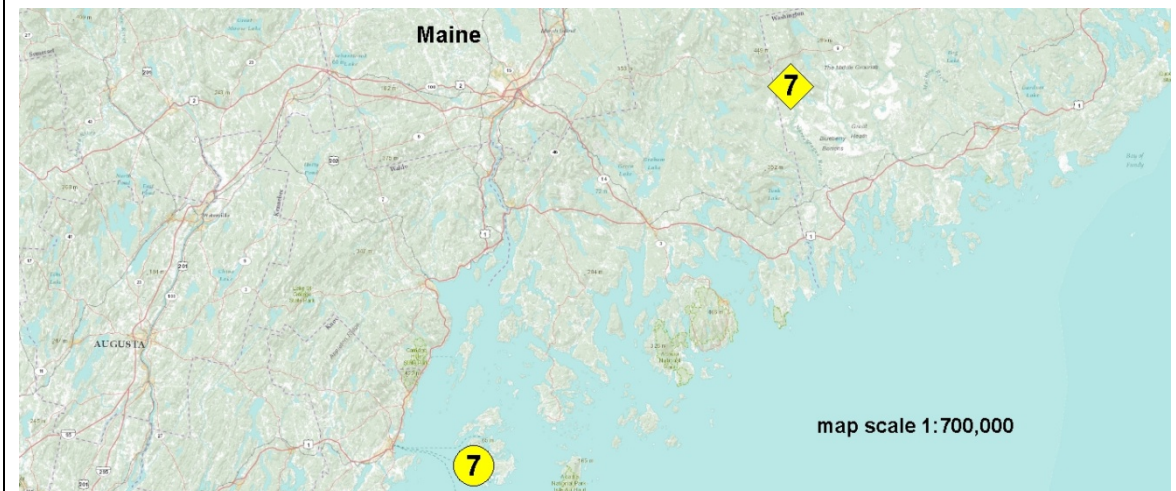
8 → 23 years – 9 months → net movement: 20 miles north → band # 629-14283

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 13 June 1985 near East Machias (Washington County), ME by biologists Charlie Todd (MDIFW) & Mark McCollough (MDIFW / USFWS)
- ◆ Found moribund on 18 January 2009 in Meddybemps (Washington County), ME & recovered by Mike Krug (USFWS)



7 → 24 years – 6 months → net movement: 67 miles northeast → band = 629-18237

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 3 June 1986 in Vinalhaven (Knox County), ME by biologist Charlie Todd (UM / MDIFW)
- ◆ Found dead on 2 November 2010 in Beddington (Washington County), ME by biologist Mitch Simpson (Maine Dept. of Marine Resources)



6 → 25 years – 5 months → net movement: 12 miles southeast → band = 629-14277

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 18 June 1985 in Sullivan (Hancock County), ME by biologists Mark McCollough (UM / USFWS) & Charlie Todd (UM / MDIFW)
- ◆ Found dead on 2 October 2010 in Gouldsboro (Hancock County), ME by ranger Bill Wiedner (Acadia National Park) & Bruce Connery (Acadia National Park)



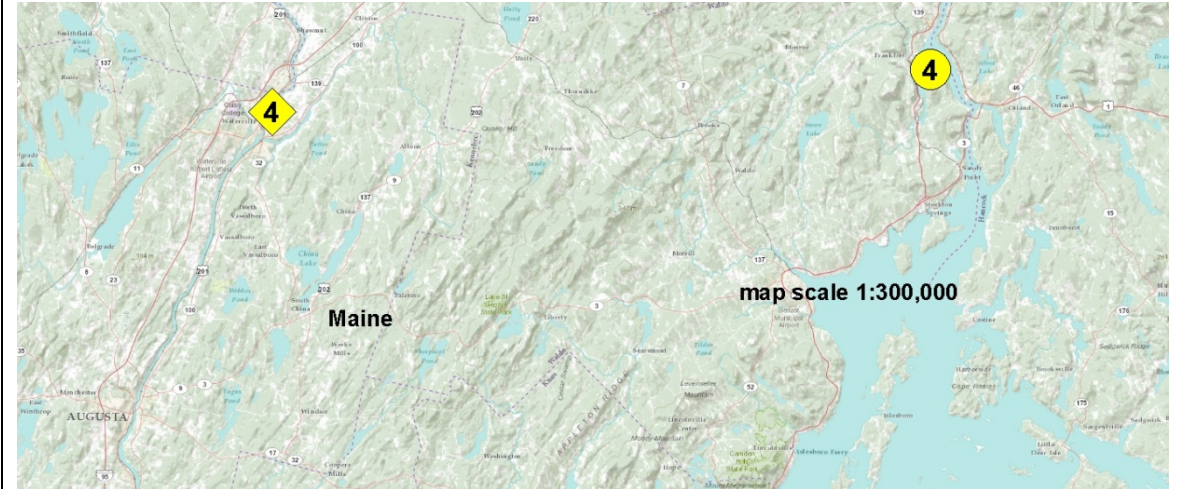
5 → 26 years – 0 months → net movement: 104 miles southwest → band #629-12221

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 8 June 1983 in Roque Bluffs (Washington County), ME by biologists Charlie Todd (MDIFW) & Mark McCollough (MDIFW / USFWS)
- ◆ Died on 3 May 2009 in Bremen (Lincoln County), ME & recovered by Bob & Carol Jones



4 → 26 years – 11 months → net movement: 38 miles west → band = 629-12232

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 9 June 1983 in Prospect (Waldo County), ME by biologist Charlie Todd (UM)
- ◆ Found dead on 7 April 2010 in Winslow (Kennebec County), ME by biologist Kendall Marden (MDIFW)



3 → 27 years – 9 months → net movement: 224 miles northeast → band #629-03250

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 21 June 1977 in Ellsworth (Hancock County), ME by biologists Frank Gramlich (USFWS), Ray Owen (UM) & Charlie Todd (UM)
- ◆ Found dead on 11 February 2005 in Shediac (Westmorland County), NB by Ray Solomon



2 → 28 years – 1 month → net movement: 220 miles northeast → band #629-07272

- Banded as a nestling eaglet during MA reintroduction efforts (transplants from Nova Scotia) on 21 June 1984 in Belchertown (Hampshire County), MA
- ◆ Found moribund on 14 June 2012 in Knox (Waldo County) ME & recovered by Marc Payne, Avian Haven Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic



1 → 32 years – 11 months → net movement: 20 miles north → band #629-03783

- Banded as a nestling eaglet on 23 June 1977 in Pembroke (Washington County), ME by biologists Frank Gramlich (USFWS) & Charlie Todd (UM / MDIFW)
- ◆ Died & recovered on 4 April 2010 in Saint Stephen (Charlotte County), NB by Eric Scammell



The above record is presently the longevity record for bald eagles in the wild ... anywhere across their North American range! For information on longevity records of various birds, see http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl/longevity/Longevity_main.cfm

Bands used on bald eagles prior to 1975 were likely not permanent. Thus, as the years pass it is likely that such a record will not stand. We simply hope that Maine eagles will remain competitive for the longevity record! Survival rates of adult eagles have a major influence on population dynamics.

If you see a color band on an eagle, note the

- band color
- character code (a letter and / or number combination)
- color of characters on the band
- character alignment (horizontal, vertical, sideways)
- which leg (the eagle's left or right) has the color band
- date & location

Digital photography of eagles can yield a clear image of the color band. A silver metallic band on the other leg has small engravings usually legible only when the bird is handled. The bands are not always visible if the eagle is perched erectly and lower leg feathers hide the ankle joint. When the eagle leans forward (during landing or take-offs, while feeding, etc.), a timely photo can provide important information. The 7-month old eagle pictured below was photographed on 12 October 2006 along Lake Erie ~ 670 miles southwest from its Aroostook County, ME nest.

Maine juvenile bald eagle near Erie, PA



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