

BAA BANDS

Ornithologists have been banding birds for centuries. The first record of a metal band attached to a bird's leg was about 1595 when King Henry IV banded his Peregrine Falcons. One of those Falcons was lost in pursuit of a Bustard, showing up in Malta identified by that very band.

Duke Ferdinand placed a silver band on a Grey Heron about 1669: the bird was recovered by his grandson about 1728, indicating the heron lived at least 60 years. In 1710 in Germany, a falconer captured a grey heron with several rings on one leg. The bander was unknown but one of the rings was apparently placed on the heron in Turkey, more than 1200 miles to the east.

The first record of banding in America was John Audubon's avian project. This naturalist tied silver cords to legs of a brood of phoebes near Philadelphia in 1803. This enabled Audubon to track the migration of the birds.

The systematic banding of birds developed around 1899, when Hans Mortensen placed aluminum bands on birds inscribed with his name and address. This allowed the tracking of migratory birds. By 1909 the American Bird Banding Association had been formed to organize and assist the growing number of bird banders. By 1920 banding was so wide spread that the coordination was assumed by United States Geologic Survey.

With the formation of the Budgerigar Association of America, we started to issue bands. We had always taken for granted the size and quality of the bands we use. The yearly color was always a mystery. Along about this time the old band makers in America and the United Kingdom were changing. The oral tradition and knowledge of the old craftsmen were being lost as they retired. The new band companies didn't quite meet our needs. There was significant unrest among the members. We wanted better bands. However we had no specifications as to what better bands looked like.

A small group of BAA members took up the challenge of writing the specifications for our bands. We started in the kitchen of one of our member's sizing bands. We had micromeres and calipers and such. We came up with the outside diameter, the inside diameter and the wall thickness. With that information we started to contact band manufacturers. We contacted all the band companies in America, Europe and England. Many of the companies did not respond to our request for information. Those that did wanted to know what our volume would be. We had no idea but pushed on anyway. Bands are made from tubing. The commercially available tubing size became the next issue. Our bands had to conform to the standard tubing sizes or the cost would be prohibitive. Working with several band companies we refined our specifications to meet the breeders' requirement of a larger band and still use commercial tubing. We settled on an inside diameter of 4.3-4.4 millimeters and wall thickness of 0.6- 0.9 millimeters. This band design is very close to the bands we are using for 2003.



Minimum Internal Diameter	4.30 mm	(.169 inches)
Maximum internal diameter	4.40 mm	(.173 inches)
Wall Thickness	0.60 - 0.90 mm	(.035 inches)
Band Height	3.85 - 4.00 mm	(.154 inches)
Lettering Depth	0.06 -0.08 mm	(.004 inches)

The color and rotation was the next issue the group tackled. We contacted the World Budgerigar Organization to see what they would suggest. We learned that this very issue of color series was being decided. The WBO would like all the member organizations to use the same color shades and color rotation. We were currently on a six color rotation. Many felt that the colors red and orange were too close together; that there could be a mistake between these two colors. In the end the color orange was dropped in favor of gold for a six year rotation. The colors for the band rotation are red, black, green, violet, gold and dark blue. There was also an issue of shades of colors. The WBO wanted to come up with a standard shade for each color. The Pantone Color Code was chosen as the shade for each of the band colors.

Color	Pantone Code *	Year	Year	Year
Red	1797 U	2012	2018	2024
Black	Black 2U2X	2013	2019	2025
Green	344U	2014	2020	2026
Violet	249 U	2015	2021	2027
Gold	Yellow U	2016	2022	2028
Dark Blue	301 U	2017	2023	2029

We now needed a manufacturer. In order to approach these manufacturers we needed to know how many bands we order in a year. That information was not readily available so we pushed on and asked the manufacturers what their expectations were. Based on the response, the minimum number of bands was one hundred thousand. That's a lot of Budgies. The pigeon people easily exceeded that number. We order about thirteen thousand bands. The break down is 96 orders of 100 bands 41 orders of 50 bands, and 41 order of 25 bands. So based on that information we are not a major player in the band trade.

We have reached the point that we need to make a decision on our bands. Based on our experiences over the past three years we chose and US based company. This resolved any import and currency issues.

We must remember: we deliver bands November first of each year. In order to accomplish that delivery date people need to order their bands by October first of each year. This allows time for order processing and the manufacturing cycle. We will continue to monitor the quality of the bands and make any decision necessary to maintain the quality of the bands.