

You Need to Know...

■ Storage of bird PTTs and Pop-up tags



As instructed in the field manual included with every order, all battery powered PTTs and Pop-up tags should be stored in a refrigerator in original packaging.

■ Storage of solar PTTs

Solar PTTs should not be stored in the dark for more than a few days. If the transmitter is going to be left switched off for an extended period, it is recommended that it should be periodically exposed to sunlight (four hours each month) to maintain a charge in the batteries.

■ Backup IDs

We once again bring this crucial information to your attention—**when you give us your Argos ID numbers to program into your transmitter, you must ensure that you are giving us valid IDs.** (That is, be sure the numbers are still assigned to your program and in active mode—not in backup mode.) Problems with IDs will stall production and may delay delivery beyond your deadline.

■ Returning PTTs to us

We have noticed an improvement in utilization of the proper paperwork when returning PTTs. However, our international customers should always ship PTTs back via Federal Express. All other carriers charge us a customs clearance fee of 100-125 dollars. We have no alternative but to add this fee to your invoice.



Further Update on tracking Swallow-tailed Kites with 18 gram solar powered PTTs

Dr. Ken Meyer, of the Avian Research and Conservation Institute of Florida, continues to get amazing results from the diminutive Swallow-tailed Kite he has been tracking for over a year with one of our 18 gram solar PTTs. It returned to its nest site on March 16, having taken two months to migrate from its Brazilian wintering grounds. Dr. Meyer continues to get daily data from the PTT while the kite is tending to its offspring after successful breeding.

Microwave Telemetry, Inc.

8835 Columbia 100 Parkway
Suites K & L
Columbia, MD 21045, USA

phone numbers

(410) 715-5292

(410) 715-5293

fax number

(410) 715-5295

e-mail

microwt@aol.com

web address

www.microwavetelemetry.com



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wintering area at 15 and 27 March. One stork summered in the region of Qiqihar in Heilongjiang province, China, 523 km from its birth place.

BirdLife International classifies the Oriental White Stork as an endangered species because of the predicted increased rate of population decline and the small population. Our tagged storks disappeared before they were old enough to breed and that is a very worrying factor. Three out of five birds died along the migration route and two birds died in the wintering area. We have no real data on how the birds died but at least two of them disappeared after taking an aberrant route. Most storks can be found on wintering areas that have already a protected status but, overfishing and disturbance remain a problem even inside the nature reserves.

Nature protection NGOs from Asia, Europe and the United States try to stop the population decline. Most of the breeding areas have recently been protected, but spring fires threaten breeding sites and destroy nest trees. In some regions there is a big lack of nest trees which is tackled by putting up artificial nesting platforms.

Another major problem is that many of the stopover and wintering sites of the Oriental White Stork urgently need to be protected. The results of this and other studies are important to identify the most important areas. One way to give the protection measures more chance to succeed is to include the Oriental White Stork in the further development of the Asian Crane Site Network. This network of nature reserves and organizations aims to protect the four globally threatened Crane species endemic to North East Asia (Red-crowned Crane, Siberian Crane, Hooded Crane and White-naped Crane) which often use the same staging and wintering sites as the Oriental White Storks. We hope that all this work will improve the general awareness of the value of nature and its protection needs. ❖