

## **Genetic and demographic management for the Endangered San Clemente loggerhead shrike recovery program**

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The San Clemente loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus mearnsi*), endemic to the southern-most of California's Channel Islands, was federally listed as Endangered in 1977. By the mid -1980's as few as five breeding pairs remained. In 1990 efforts to develop a captive flock of shrikes began in order to provide a reservoir of genetic material, a hedge against stochastic events, and a source of animals to fuel a release program. Captive propagation of shrikes has proven successful and release efforts are now underway. Genetic and demographic management of the program has proven complex, as introgression between the captive and wild populations is frequent. While the captive population is managed intensely for genetics and demography, the wild population is monitored closely and manipulated opportunistically. Priorities for management are maintenance of genetic diversity in the captive flock as well as providing a number of genetically diverse individuals for release great enough to overcome the demographic challenges facing the wild population. This management strategy has resulted in increases in both wild and captive population gene diversity and will be discussed.