

A DISSOLVING LEG HARNESS FOR RADIO TRANSMITTER ATTACHMENT IN TREECREEPERS

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We modified a leg harness designed for radio transmitter attachment in birds so that it could be used on species without long exposed thighs and so that it would automatically fall off after several months. Using this harness, we attached radios to 68 treecreepers (Climacteridae) to follow their dispersal movements. Harness life was quite variable and females were more likely to break the harness loops and shed transmitters prematurely. Nonetheless, most harnesses remained intact for at least three months. This harness provides a safe alternative to gluing for non-permanent attachment of radio transmitters and may be more reliable than gluing for a wide variety of species.