

Tracker News



Microwave Telemetry, Inc.

Myth or Fact...

Dear Customers and Friends,

One of the most well known myths in history, that the Earth was flat, was eventually dispelled by Aristotle in the third century BC. It took a long time through several periods of history for this myth to be busted. Fortunately for present day biologists, satellite telemetry has helped to rewrite our science textbooks at a much faster rate. As we celebrate 30 years of the Argos system this year, we note that data from the last three decades have separated myth from fact. Some popular myths propagated before satellite telemetry: all birds instinctively know how to migrate, individuals from the same area migrate to the same place, and waterfowl are only found in wetlands.

We are delighted to feature four myth busting stories in this newsletter. Contrary to popular belief, we discover that ducks are found in the desert; that some juveniles don't automatically know in which direction to set off for their migration; that not all birds from the same population migrate to the same place. We also "dismiss dogma" with recent discoveries from tracking dogfish.

We especially wish to thank: Stephen Murphy for his fascinating article on English Hen Harriers, Kyle Spragens and Eric Palm for sharing their unusual findings on the Ruddy Shelduck, Roy Dennis for his article on Osprey and Honey Buzzards' amazing migrations from Scotland, and James Sulikowski for sharing the journey of his tagged Spiny Dogfish with us. We also thank Amanda Higgs for her amusing story of the recovery of her Atlantic sturgeon's Pop-up Tag.

Last, but not least, we thank Tannis Thorlakson for her update on her studies. We are always encouraged when we hear that our contribution, however small it is, could have had an impact on students' interest in science and satellite telemetry. We thank you for the opportunity to serve you, our customers, over the last eighteen years and look forward to many more years together. We wish you happiness, health and joy in 2010.

Sincerely,
Paul and the staff at MTI



Photo by Roy Dennis

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Above:
Morven and Talisman – both now tagged – the male winters in Guinea Bissau, the female in Mauritania.