Dolbeer, R.A. and J.L. Belant. 1994. Differential band wear for male and female Laughing Gulls. Journal of Field Ornithology 65(4):543–550.

Abstract: Mass loss and wear of sizes 4A and 5 bands on male and female Laughing Gulls (Larus atricilla) collected at John F. Kennedy International Airport, New York in 1991–1993 were analyzed. For band size 4A, there were significant differences in band mass between sexes for ages 2–6 yr. Bands on females lost a mean of 51 mg of mass per year (7.6% of original mass), greater than the 46 mg (6.8%) per year for bands on males. At age 6, size 4A bands on females averaged 2.43 numerals (of eight) showing edge wear compared to 0.68 numerals for males. In contrast to the findings for band size 4A on gulls 2–6 yr old, no significant differences in band mass or numeral wear were noted between sexes for band size 5 on gulls 7–8 yr old. The rate of mass loss for size 5 bands for years 6–8 (49 mg per year) is intermediate to that for size 4A bands on males and females for years 2–6. At age 8, size 5 bands averaged 45.0% of their original mass. The significantly smaller diameters of female tarsi compared to males probably allowed size 4A bands to move and abrade more freely, causing the difference in band wear between Laughing Gull sexes. That no differences in wear were detected between sexes in size 5 bands might be related to these larger diameter bands allowing for equal movement on the tarsi of males and females. Extensive band loss for Laughing Gulls banded as chicks should begin at about age 9 or 10. Females wearing size 4A bands should begin losing bands 1 or 2 yr earlier than males.