



# EBBA NUS



A Friendly Report to Members of the Eastern Bird Banding Association

December 1939

Let Us Band Together

Vol. 2 No. 3

## ANNUAL MEETING TO BE IN NEW YORK

At a meeting of the executive council in Philadelphia on November 18, it was voted that the annual meeting would be held in New York City, February 23, 24, 25, 1940. The meeting will start with an informal social get-together on Friday evening. Members will have an opportunity to get acquainted with each other. It is expected that the exhibits will be on display at this time as well as on Saturday during the sessions. A very interesting and instructive exhibit is being planned, with the cooperation of all the members. Traps, methods of opening and fastening bands, gathering cages, band boxes, etc. are to be featured. If you have any such material that might be of interest please communicate with Dr. Carlton M. Herman, New York Zoological Park, 185th St. and Southern Blvd., New York City.

An exhibit of pictures taken by members will also be exhibited. All pictures for this purpose should be sent to Mrs. Marie V. Beals, 5833 85 St., Elmhurst, N.Y. Please put your name on the picture and enclose a typewritten caption explaining it.

The meeting will be formally opened on Saturday at 9:30 A.M. with a general business meeting. The rest of the day will be devoted to the presentation of papers and discussion of the banding activities of those present. Papers will again be limited to ten or fifteen minutes in order that as many persons as possible can participate. Plan to take part in the program. Both general and specific topics will be accepted. Our secretary, Dr. C. Brooke Worth, Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, Princeton, N.J., will be in charge of the arrangement of the program. If you wish to take part, write to Dr. Worth and tell him the title of your presentation and the time limit you desire. Let's all turn out and cooperate to make this meeting a memorable event.

A banquet will be held on Saturday evening. An outstanding ornithologist will speak and there will be motion pictures of birds. On Sunday, weather permitting, there will be a field trip for those who wish to stay over.

## BULLETIN OF E.B.B.A.

In the early years of the Eastern Bird Banding Association before the advent of the journal BIRD BANDING our association published three issues of a bulletin: BULLETIN OF THE EASTERN BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION. These were No. 1, October, 1924; No. 2, (Song Sparrow Number) October, 1925 and No. 3, October, 1927. A few copies are still available and can be obtained at 10 cents each, while they last, from Mrs. Marie V. Beals.



EBBA NUS

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Associate Editor and Circulation Manager: Mrs. M. V. Beals, 5833 85 Street, Elmhurst, N.Y.

Advertising Manager: Dr. Robert M. Stabler, Wallingford, Pa.

Our president announces the appointment of the following new committees:

Local Committee for our annual meeting in New York: Dr. Carlton M. Herman, chairman, Mrs. M. V. Beals, J.J. Hickey, Thomas Imhof, John T. Nichols, Miss E. Grace Stewart, Hobart M. Van Deusen, Donald Wylie, and R.M. Youngs.

Committee to investigate a fee for life membership: Mr. Horace Groskin, chairman.

Committee to investigate the possibilities of advertisements for EBBA NUS: Dr. Robert M. Stabler, chairman.

Committee to handle book sales through the association: Wm. Pepper, Jr., chairman.

Committee to audit the treasurer's accounts before the annual meeting: John A. Gillespie, chairman, Frank B. Foster, Horace Groskin.

We would like to call to the attention of our members the fact that we maintain a status of members known as sustaining members, dues \$5.00 per year. Any member able to afford this higher fee can contribute considerably toward our activities, particularly EBBA NUS, by becoming a sustaining member.

A few persons are still in arrears with their 1939 dues. Unless these are paid up before January 1940, all such persons will be dropped from the membership.

Dues should be sent to William Pepper, Jr., Treasurer, 110 Glenview Ave., Wyncote, Pa.

PAY YOUR DUES PROMPTLY

FIRST BIRD BANDED

"No. 1", a robust male towhee, was taken when he hopped boldly under a small ash-sifter, arranged as a makeshift drop trap. We were both equally excited and my hands trembled so that I was unable to grasp the bird in the proper position for banding. Finally, remembering the Manual for Bird Banders, I got a firm headlock with the right thumb and forefinger, confidently expecting him to dangle in a hypnotic trance while I shifted my grip at leisure. Instead of that, he braced his feet against my hand and pushed so determinedly that I had to yell for my brother's help. Between us both we managed to subdue the towhee, who by this time had showed his attitude about the whole performance in a definite manner. He was released none the worse for wear however, and promptly returned to the devoted feeding of a young cowbird. - Donald Wylie, New York City.

Late in the summer I arrived at the Y.W.C.A. camp at Lake Ariel, Pa. I had with me my banding permit, a few bands but no traps. We managed to capture five birds by hand. The first was a young house wren. It had fallen into a drain. When I lay on the ground my arm would reach the bottom of the hole. From that level a pipe led to the lake and the bird could hop into this pipe. When we would get away from the hole the mother would drop down to feed the youngster. Finally one of the girls lay still a long time with her hand at the bottom of the drain and the small wren hopped to her hand. - E. Grace Stewart, New York City.



Mr. Isaac G. Roberts, 217 E. Washington St., West Chester, Pa., a member of the Eastern Bird Banding Association since its founding in 1923, passed away on April 6, 1939.

#### TRAPS FOR SALE

I am compelled to close my bird banding station because of the many thefts of my traps. Any bird bander who wishes to purchase any of my traps at a reasonable price -- sparrow, drop, potter, colhasset, and Brenkle water trap -- Please communicate with me. Marie V. Beals, 5833 85 St., Elmhurst, N.Y.

#### DISEASE STUDY PROJECT

Dr. Gordon M. Meade, Assistant Director, Strong Memorial Hospital, University of Rochester, 260 Crittenden Boulevard, Rochester, New York, announces his desire to cooperate in the Disease Study Project of the Eastern Bird Banding Association. Bird Banders in his territory are invited to ship birds which die or are accidentally killed at their stations to him for post mortem examination. Refrigeration (up to the time of shipment) and speed in transit are essential to accurate diagnosis.

Dr. Donald C. Boughton, formerly at the University of Georgia, is now located at the regional laboratory, Bureau of Animal Industry, United States Department of Agriculture, Auburn, Alabama.

#### BANDING BARN SWALLOWS AT NIGHT

For the past several years Charles Spiker and I have caught and banded Barn Swallows at their roosts in the cat-tails bordering the inlet of Keuka Lake at Branchport, N.Y. Wearing a flashlight on our hat and throwing the beam on the birds they can easily be taken in a long handled net. In a boat, one of us in the stern with the net and the light on his head finds the birds while the man at the oars pushes the boat, stern first, until the birds are in range of the net. A quick swoop and one to four or five birds are caught at a haul. The net has a deep bag and a half turn holds them until the man at the oars makes the transfer to a gathering cage. When about thirty are caught they are banded and released close to the cat-tails. They go back to roost. Birds caught early in the evening have been recaptured later in the night at another place in the cat-tails.

This year we were out eight nights and the following Barn Swallows were banded:

Aug. 18, 1939,	64
" 20,	70
" 24,	36
" 29,	13
" 31,	20
Sept. 2,	32
" 3,	40 (10 Bank Swallows also banded this night.)
" 5,	4

A Barn Swallow was picked up in the road (where it had been run over by a car) the morning of September 1. This was two miles south of where it had been banded by us the night before.

The swallows roost only in cat-tails that are growing in the water and mostly in the little coves and bays where they are sheltered from the wind.--  
Verdi Burtch, Branchport, N.Y.

At the 57th annual meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union at Berkeley, Calif. this summer the Brewster Medal was awarded posthumously to Dr. Witmer Stone for his two volume work on "The Birds of Cape May".



## GULL SURVEY

During 1939 many more gulls were banded with colored bands. Members along the coast should be on the lookout for such birds and report their findings to Gull Survey, American Museum of Natural History, New York City. The markings are as follows:

Station	Number	1937	1938	1939
Razades Islands, P.Q., Canada	2,307	Two blues on same leg	Yellow on each leg	Blue on each leg
St. Mary Is. P.Q., Canada	1,103	Red over yellow	Red on one leg Yellow on other	Yellow over red
Bonaventure Is. P.Q., Canada	100	Two yellows on same leg	None	None
Kents Is. (ad.) N.B. Canada	820	Red on one leg Black on other	Red on one leg White on other	None
Kents Is. (young) N.B. Canada	8,209	Single red	Black over red	Yellow on one leg Black on other
Duck Is. Maine	748	None	Black over yellow	Yellow over black
Muscongus Bay Maine	3,686	Yellow over blue	Blue on one leg Yellow on other	Blue on one leg Green on other
Heron Is. Maine	700	Blue over yellow	None	None
Isles of Shoals, N.H.	2,288	Two reds on same leg	Blue over black	Red on each leg
Penikese Is. Mass.	1,600	Blue over red.	Blue on one leg Red on other	Blue over green
Wicopesset Is. New York	567	Red over blue	White over blue	None
Four Brothers Is. New York	253	None	Blue on one leg White on other	Blue on one leg White on other (only 14 in 1939)

## ANALYZE YOUR BANDING DATA

Our official publication, BIRD BANDING, is in constant need of good articles and notes for its pages. Analyze your banding results and summarize your findings on paper. Let us know what you are doing. Write to Mrs. Beals, perhaps your small observations may be worthwhile contributions to the advancement of ornithological knowledge. We will continue to publish general information in EBBA NUS and can never get too much material. If your data shows promise of permanent value we shall communicate such information to the editor of the journal BIRD BANDING.



## REVIEW

THE MIGRATION OF AMERICAN BIRDS by Frederick C. Lincoln, 189 pp., 12 chapters plus index, 12 colored plates and 22 full-page maps. Doubleday Doran and Co. Inc., N.Y. \$4.00

Although written as a popular, rather than a scientific, approach to the subject of the migration of birds in North America, and contains no bibliography, this book stands out as the most extensive and comprehensive presentation yet to appear. The text goes briefly into a discussion of all phases of the subject. A short chapter of 36 pages is devoted entirely to bird banding and includes sample recovery records of 138 species of birds which should prove very interesting and valuable to those who are operating banding stations. The book sells for \$4.00 and every bander should strive to possess a copy. - C.M.H.

## BOOK SERVICE

As a new service to our members all books on birds and nature study can be bought through the association. Address your orders to Mr. William Pepper, Jr., 110 Glenview Ave, Wyncote, Pa. In the next issue of EBBA NUS we will publish a list of recommended books. Help your association by buying your books through Mr. Pepper.

## FLYING WITH SWANS

I believe that my most interesting incident afield occurred when I was actually flying with a flock of Whistling Swans. This happened on November 5, 1932. An account later appeared in the general news columns of the AUK, Vol. 50, No. 1, p. 92. On this afternoon I had just left the York Airport, headed north and leveled off at 1400 feet. After several minutes I noticed a long curving line of large white birds at about the same altitude flying towards the Susquehanna River, visible about ten miles to the east. I was up with them in an instant and recognized them as Whistling Swans; a flock of perhaps 100 birds. I banked the ship about the flock and could maneuver them at will; always, of course, on the outside and at some little distance from them. On several occasions I banked away and then overtook them in straight flight, at which I estimated their speed at fifty-five miles per hour. I was not a little surprised at this figure and pleased with the unique and interesting opportunity of determining it. - Charles S. Weiser, York, Pa.

During the summer Harold Peters made a 10,600 mile trip into the Arctic with the Eastern Arctic Patrol of the Canadian Government on the R.M.S. "Nascopie" collecting information on ducks, geese and Brant. He also spent some time in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Mr. Peters is spending the winter months in the southeastern states.

I am having a great deal of fun banding Black-capped Chickadees and White-breasted Nuthatches. I have one Chickadee and one Nuthatch that have but one leg each. In each case I have a band on the remaining leg. - C. Huber Watson, Andover, N.Y.

Henry P. Baily reports that a Herring Gull (B-673563) banded July 19, 1932 at Duck Island, Maine was caught at Long Branch, N.J. in August, 1938 (six Years).



## BANDED BIRDS KILLED BY CATS

The following birds banded at Mrs. Beals Station at Elmhurst, N.Y. from 1928 to 1939 have been reported by the Bureau of Biological Survey as killed by cats.

Brown Thrasher, total number banded 505, returns 11, killed by cats 1.  
Banded 9/4/36 killed 5/15/37, Hastings-on Hudson, N.Y.

Eastern Robin, total number banded 2990, returns 81, killed by cats 6.  
Banded 5/1/37 killed 4/21/38, Rego Park, N.Y.  
" 4/22/35 " 7/2/38, Elmhurst, N.Y.  
" 9/4/36 " 6/26/38 Flushing, N.Y.  
" 7/8/37 " 6/5/38 Ozone Park, N.Y.  
" 7/13/37 " 5/1/39 Forest Hills, N.Y.  
" 9/29/37 " 7/30/39 Woodhaven, N.Y.

Eastern Hermit Thrush, total banded 3010, returns 4, killed by cats 2.  
Banded 10/24/35 killed 8/19/37, Lakeport, N.H.  
" 10/22/38 " 10/25/38, Elmhurst, N.Y. (near station)

Starling, total banded 4250, returns 230, Killed by cats 8.  
Banded 8/30/33 killed 1/25/35, Brooklyn, N.Y.  
" 2/4/34 " 11/10/34, Queens Village, N.Y.  
" 2/26/34 " 1/27/36, Monroe County, Pa.  
" 7/12/35 " 8/17/35, Glendale, N.Y.  
" 9/21/35 " 5/31/38, Hollis, N.Y.  
" 9/25/35 " 11/27/35, Arlington, N.J.  
" 8/23/38 " 5/15/39, Brooklyn, N.Y.  
" 8/7/39 " 9/19/39, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Cape May Warbler, total banded 6, 1 return killed by a cat.  
Banded 9/12/37 killed 10/15/37, Cleveland, Tenn.

Yellow-breasted Chat, Total banded 28, 1 returned, killed by cat.  
Banded 5/22/37 killed 7/10/39, Flemington, N.J.

Red-eyed Towhee, total banded 815, returns 6, killed by cat 1.  
Banded 10/1/37 killed 5/27/39, Nesconset, N.Y.

Eastern Fox Sparrow, total banded 1774, returns 12, killed by cats 2.  
Banded 11/25/34 killed 12/3/34, Elmhurst, N.Y. (near station).  
" 11/25/37 " 11/30/37, Elmhurst, N.Y. (near station).

## BIRD WINDOW CAFETERIAS FOR SALE

Are you interested in obtaining an all year 'round, self-cleaning window box for feeding your birds? Geoffrey Gill, 24 Overlook Drive, Huntington, N.Y. is offering one for sale that is unique. It is easily installed, lasts indefinitely, fits standard window without hampering screen or storm sash, has a floor that tilts and is easily cleared of snow, chaff, etc. by a touch of the hand. It has over 300 square inches of feeding space (8" X 40") and is equipped with 8 waiting perches, 2 suet hampers and an outdoor thermometer. It can be had for \$3.50, shipped prepaid.



## AN OBLIGING OWL

March 15, 1938, I was wandering aimlessly through a local cedar swamp when my eyes caught sight of about twenty small owl pellets. After carefully putting them in a bag, I looked up into the cedar tree. Directly above me, not more than two feet away was a beautiful Saw-whet Owl. Its big yellow eyes were blinking as they watched me and my two dogs. Slowly I ungloved my hand and stretched it forward. Still the little fellow showed no fear. Then I carefully lifted him off his perch and carried him home. The next day he was watched and photographed by my bird friends. During the day the owl was in my outer kitchen and here was placed fifteen live meadow mice in a large open tub. Immediately the owl flew to the tub and snatched one out, killed it and ate it, all within a period of three minutes. Band #37-415901 was placed on its leg and he was released in the same cedar tree. After letting him go I took a few more photographs. We moved him into the sunlight for better photography. Still he did not fly away. The next day he was still in the same tree and a dead deer mouse was on a nearby limb. Examination of the pellets disclosed three deer mice and one shrew. Analysis of the pellets was made by C.E. Hope of the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology of Toronto, Canada. - William Lott, London, Canada.

## BANDING STATIONS

The Dumont Banding Station is located in the north central part of New Jersey, on the Newark-Forampton Pike. It consists of  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre of residential property, other residences being close by on three sides. There is a general assortment of berry-producing shrubs, vines, grapevines, some fruit trees, considerable evergreens, berry bushes and a medium sized pool with running water. There are open fields opposite the station where considerable of the banding is done. A small strip of woodland within two blocks also serves as a trapping ground. Our equipment consists of Government sparrow, Brengle warbler, false-bottom and drop traps, also two woodpecker traps.

During the six years of banding we have taken 5850 birds of 87 species. Of these 20 have been recovered, including 13 species. This gives an approximate average of 1 out of 300 birds banded have been recoveries. Station returns amount to 400 individuals of 22 species, Tree Sparrows leading with 175 individual returns out of 740 banded. - Mrs. Marie Dumont, Pequannock, N.J.

For several years my bird banding station was located on Caladesi Island, Pinellas County, Florida. This island, 800 acres, is a mile and one-half from the mainland. On the west of the island is the Gulf of Mexico and to the east is St. Josephs Bay. The western shore of the island is the nesting site for Least Terns, Black Skimmers and Wilson's Plovers. The eastern part of the island is covered with mangroves and here nests Clapper Rails, Louisiana and Green Herons. Sandwiched between these two shores is high land with a growth of cabbage palms, cedars, wax myrtle and pines. Thousands of migrating birds stop on this island to feed on the numerous insects and berries. Robins, Catbirds, Cedar Waxwings and Mockingbirds like the berry of the palms. Many of the warblers eat the berry of the wax myrtle and cedar. Painted Buntings feed on the seeds of the wild sunflowers.

At this station I have banded 39 species, averaging about 300 birds a year. Two of the most interesting species I have banded are the young of the Chuck-will's-widow that nest in the oak leaves at the base of trees and the Burrowing Owls which have been banded by digging into their burrows after the young were grown. My best return was a juvenile Green Heron, A-465705, banded June 3, 1934 and retaken on May 23, 1935 at Lisbon, N.D. - Mrs. M. Betz, Dunedin, Florida.



There have been an overwhelming number of requests from the banders for more information about baits, traps, and various techniques and methods of capturing birds for banding purposes. With this issue of EBBA NUS we are inaugurating a policy to bring more of this information to our members. However, this program calls for the full cooperation of all our banders. First you must let us know what information you wish, and second, it will be equally important that all our members inform us of their experiences and special nick-nacks and tricks if EBBA NUS is to fill this need for the spreading of such information. We must always bear in mind one of the greatest pleasures of bird-banding, namely catching someone else's bird or hearing from one of our own birds from a far away place. If we have special methods for catching our birds, teaching these methods to others will greatly increase their chances of recovering one of our banded messengers. It is only with your cooperation that our efforts to bring such material before our members can be successful.

#### ATTRACTING AND TRAPPING GROUND-FEEDING BIRDS

To help prolong the stay of ground feeding birds at my bird banding station I use the following seed mixture: equal parts of chick feed, wheat, hemp, rolled oats, wild rice and crumbled whole wheat bread and doughnuts. This mixture is liked by White-throated, Fox and Song Sparrows and Juncos. If Goldfinches and Tree Sparrows are around I add millet to the mixture. Black-capped Chickadees like broken nuts and peanuts (I use raw peanuts). For the Blue Jays I put out both shelled and unshelled peanuts. Redwings and Grackles prefer cracked corn. I add small pieces of suet to my mixture as well as sand when the ground is frozen or when the food is put on a feeding shelf. - Mrs. M.V. Beals, Elmhurst, N.Y.

Dr. Harold B. Wood of Harrisburg, Pa. and Geoffrey Gill of Huntington, N.Y. both report good results with poke berries. Mr. Gill finds that white bread attracts squirrels which wreck the traps or at least spring them and the change to berries is as much to combat squirrel trouble as anything else.

When I take my traps out of operation, they are left in position and well supplied with food. I maintain as many free feeders as I have traps and being liberal with free food has brought me many more birds than I would have had otherwise. - Horace Groskin, Ardmore, Pa.

Any questions about banding to which some fellow bander may know the answer should appear in EBBA NUS. This, plus the answers, is the main reason for the existence of the news letter. Let us hear from you. Write to Mrs. M.V. Beals, 5833 85 St., Elmhurst, N.Y.

Mr. William Vogt is having a successful year in Peru studying the guano birds for the Compania Administradora del Guano of Lima. His last report stated that 9,000 cormorants were banded and he had ordered 100,000 more bands.

#### DONT FORGET THE ANNUAL MEETING

Merry Christmas to all the members from all the members!