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EBBA NUS

A FRIENDLY REPORT ISSUED MONTHLY TO THE MEMBERS OF THE EASTERN BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION

Members In
Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and other States and in Canada.

November, 1941

"LET US BAND TOGETHER"

Vol. 4, No. 11

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Secretary: Horace Groskin, 210 Glenn Road, Ardmore, Pennsylvania.
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LONG ISLAND and ADJACENT BANDERS TO MEET

list new members p. 4-

Long Island and neighboring banders will hold an outdoor meeting at 2:00 P.M., on November 29th in the woods adjacent to the athletic field of the Manhasset Junior-Senior High School. A frankfurter roast at the outdoor fireplace is planned, with pie, cake and cider, perhaps. If the weather is too unpleasant everyone will meet in the Domestic Science rooms of the school. A large delegation of banders and their friends are expected to attend. Individual collections of kodachromes depicting different phases of banding and reports of the banders' activities during the past season will be highlights of the meeting.

RAWTHER REMARKABLE - EH WHAT ?

Charles J. Spiker of Branchport writes that a Barn Swallow banded as a nestling at Prattsburg, N.Y. on July 31st, 1941 was recovered on Sept. 2, 1941 at Houma, La. This place is about 40 miles southwest of New Orleans. "Since it was banded as a nestling, it could hardly have been out of the nest more than three weeks when it had made its aerial adjustments and taken this 1,200 mile journey." That swallow was certainly good to the last drop!

We have heard of insurance agents that had "their office" in their hat, but Laurence Howe of Belmont, N.Y. is the first insurance agent we have heard about that has a banding station in his pocket. Mr. Howe reports: "My winter Chickadee group is gradually assembling and will come to my hand. I banded two by trapping them in my coat pocket! I trained them to go in after sunflower seed." Clever chaps, these insurance agents, don't you think?

"From the rock-bound coast of Maine to the sunny shores of Florida....." That well-worn phrase, so often dragged out at election time, seems to fit this banding item like a glove. Remember several issues back, EBBA NUS related how LeRoy Wilcox of Speonk, L.I., N.Y. spent a busy but damp day on July 3rd, banding nestling Ospreys on Gardiner's Island? In a recent letter he sends us some recoveries from this expedition. On Aug. 21, one was killed by an electric wire at Bayonne, N.J.; On Sept. 6th another was shot at Springvale, Maine; Next day another was shot at Coatesville, Penna.; a fourth met its end by contact with a power line at Merritt Island, Florida, on Sept. 24th. A fifth was found dead, also in September, at Huntington, L.I., N.Y., home of the NUS. With the dispersal of these youngsters in all directions, EBBA feels like asking the reader to take a quick look out of the window and see if there isn't one of these birds tangled up in the neighbor's clothes line.

R. K. Ungemah of White Plains, N.Y. banded a Blue Jay on Oct. 21, 1940. Picked up by a friend in another part of White Plains July 1, 1941 after a severe electrical storm, it was reported as killed by lightning. What do you think?

NEWS OF THE BIRD BANDERS

Russell Richards, active this summer banding birds at Lake Chautaugus, N.Y., is now located at Overbrook, Pa. He writes that at his new location he has some 20 acres in which to band birds, so between him and Mr. Baily, also of Overbrook, birds thereabouts should be all wearing bands soon. Mr. Richards' new address is in care of the Overbrook School for Blind, Overbrook, Philadelphia, Pa.

Leon D. Cool, Jr. of Tremont Gardens, Falls Church, Va. has a nicely situated station in a piece of woodland. Among other traps he has a neat Brenckle and a Fabian. Mr. Cool believes in soldering all joints on his traps and scorns such untidiness as wire lacing, as many of us stumble along with.

Edward McColgan of Catonsville, Md. has a different sort of station with 4 traps. His best trap is a drop trap on a window shelf. He believes that Mourning Doves are best caught in a drop trap on the ground and uses grain feed with buckwheat added - 2 lbs. of buckwheat to 25 lbs. of usual grain feed. Mourning Doves have brought him 20 per cent returns. Of 24 banded in one year, 12 returned which is something of a record. In regard to the question: "To what extent are individuals permanent residents?" Mr. Colgan points to his record of a White Breasted Nuthatch banded and color-banded on Sept. 2, 1933 and later killed in May, 1935. He has dates of seeing this bird 101 times. Seen every month of the year, between Jan. 1934 and Dec. 31, 1934, it was recorded 76 times; certainly a permanent individual. White Breasted Nuthatches are well-known to be very constant and other species may fall in the same class, but it is believed that many birds considered permanent residents as a species, are migratory as individuals. What do you think?

Richard B. Fischer of Flushing, N.Y. writes: "Remember that 6-cell Brenckle I made at Beaver Kill, N.Y.? I must have had it in a poor location for in three weeks constant operation it didn't catch a thing. A friend assured me that it would never catch a bird "as long as there is a bill on a crow". I made it according to the specifications given in EBBA NUS and painted it with olive green automobile paint. Raw materials were hard to get up there, so I used elastic bands as springs and light forked sticks for perches. I had it shipped down to Flushing and two hours after placing it in operation it caught a Magnolia Warbler. Since then it has captured "bunches" of warblers, thrushes, sparrows, kinglets, a few chickadees and a Scarlet Tanager. I once had three Blue Jays in it at one time. All of which shows how vital a good location for the trap really is. For bait I use dripping water, cracked grain and wild berries in season. The perches and elastic bands work so well that I hesitate to change them." It would seem that nothing more need be said, but Mr. Fischer has a 10-cell combination trap that has caught over 400 birds which EBBA hopes to describe in an early issue. This trap is not a year old as yet, and is the real thing. We'll be illustrating it.

H.A.W. Kates of Montoursville, Pa. reports the banding of 881 birds. He states that he has little time to devote to this activity and doesn't seem to think this record is so good for the years he has been banding. On the contrary EBBA wishes many holding a license would equal this record. Mr. Kates is looking forward to the time when he can build up his small sanctuary and devote most of his time to banding. He now has a sample of the automatic nest box trap door which he is adopting to his Martin House.

Horace Groskin of Ardmore, Pa. writes that out of 9 Catbirds banded at his station in May, 1940, 5 returned in May, 1941; nearly 56%. We'll wager they were nearby nesting Catbirds, whose return percentage is always high.

Another inter-station capture. Richard B. Fischer on May 12, 1941 captured Purple Grackle banded by W.O. Astle on May 26, 1938. Both banders operate their stations in Flushing, N.Y. Grackles bring a large percentage of recoveries.

MENDING BROKEN BONES OF BIRDS

By E. S. Griscom

Briar Bush Bird Sanctuary, Roslyn, Pa.

Asked to give some account of my experiments in mending broken bones of birds, I would begin with the statement that from a conservation standpoint it is a waste of time to "patch up" one of Nature's children. It would be much more practical to mercifully end its existence and devote the time and energy to improving the opportunities for the species to multiply and make up the losses. However, if other than practical considerations impel one to undertake the task, one can look forward to an absorbing occupation for the ensuing weeks. I allow six weeks, but less may suffice.

I have tried everything I could think of in the way of splints, sewing to the quills, harnessing and suspending clear of the floor, etc., but without much success, until I adopted half-inch surgical adhesive tape as the principal medium. My first success was a male Bluebird, brought to me with a wing broken in the middle, dangling by the tendons and skin. Holding the bird in one hand, with the bone ends in place, short strips of tape were bent around the edge of the wing, over wound and pressed snugly against feathers until the tape adhered, criss-crossing these strips and extending the area until the wing was encased in what resembled a plaster cast in its stiffness. Then the other wing was similarly handled, care being taken in taping to have the wing folded in a natural position against the body. Then strips of tape laid across the back, from neck to tips of wings, cross-crossed, so that when the job is finished, both wings are held in a natural folded position against the body and so rigid that the bird cannot move them, but must learn to keep its balance with feet alone. With large birds it might be necessary to use a sheet of metal or splint across the back, well taped to the wings, to secure the necessary rigidity and inactivity of both wings. To bandage one wing seems useless, the free wing enabling the bird to wreck itself in short order.

For leg bones, I use a layer of absorbent cotton, drawn firmly around the leg with the bone ends together, then, starting next to the skin at one end, the tape is wound around the leg, overlapping the edges of the turns, then other layers are spiral-wound in both directions, until tape forms a stiff tube around the cotton layer. A sheet metal tube is then formed around a rod or pipe about the size of the tape circumference, opened up like a bird band and pressed into place on the outside of the tape with pliers, care being taken when making the band that it either overlaps edges when pressed into place, or that the edges do not quite meet, so that just the right pressure can be given with the pliers to hold the band in place around the tape and prevent it slipping downward and resting on the bird's toes. This tube serves the double purpose of giving rigidity to the wounded leg and preventing the bird from picking at the bandage. I have used this procedure successfully on a Sparrow Hawk, Plymouth Rock rooster, Argentine Cowbird and Long Eared Owl. I might add that for broken legs I select a board about as wide as the patient's body, somewhat longer than the bird, placing the bird lengthwise and back to the board and using yards of string to bind the patient, with folded wings, loosely to the board, from bill to tip of tail, including the good leg, so that it will not interfere. For wing operations on birds too large to hold in one hand it is better to have an assistant to hold the patient, as there would be too much risk of disturbing the set if the bird was bound to a board to tape the wound, as it would need to be unbound before both wings could be finished and securely fastened in final position. For removing tape, wet with any solvent like benzine, alcohol or acetone, which will not hurt feathers or skin, and carefully peel off layer by layer.

Feeding wild birds in captivity is a real test of one's ingenuity and patience as well as the knowledge of their natural diets. Practically all birds,

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presented with their natural diets and left free from observation, will eat all they need. Seed eaters are easy. Fruit eaters like Cedar Waxwings and Robins are fairly easy to supply, but exclusively insect eaters are very difficult, because a natural diet is not obtainable and their instincts are strongly set against any that are not alive and moving, so that substitutes, such as dried fleas, etc., used for caged pet birds, are refused. We have used a prepared commercial food in some cases by force-feeding -- opening the bill and thrusting the food against the tongue or down the throat until the patient begins to realize that it is good and satisfies hunger, -- but birds of the same species vary widely as humans in their temperamental characteristics. Some are very co-operative, respond to your efforts and come through, while others are thoroughly antagonistic to your every effort to help, will accept no substitutes and inevitably perish of hunger. Nearly all insect eaters seem to like meal worms, but these are expensive when bought at pet shops and only occasionally can one discover a mill or feed store where they abound in the litter on floors or other places where grains have accumulated.

If the above shall have helped you make a decision regarding the next feathered patient who comes to your hand, I shall not have written in vain.

E. S. Griscom.

NEW MEMBERS

It is again our pleasure to introduce another large delegation of new members to our association this month. If any of these newcomers reside near you, be sure to visit them soon.

Irwin M. Alperin, 1100 East 19th St., Brooklyn, N.Y.
David B. Black, Blackwater Refuge, R.F.D. 1, Cambridge, Maryland.
Rev. F. H. Craighill, Box 72, Rocky Mount, North Carolina
Childs Frick, Roslyn, Long Island, N. Y.
Dr. Harold C. Gardenier, 381 Broadway, Westwood, New Jersey.
Keahon Garland, Columbus Road, Demarest, New Jersey
Wallace B. Houston, Apartment D-1, Windemere Court, Wayne, Penna.
Lester K. Hutton, R.F.D. 1, Box 28, River Rd., Ulster Park, N.Y.
Mrs. Ore F. Jensen, Box 88, Chapel Hill, North Carolina
Paul Jensen, 610 Franklin Street, Reading, Penna.
Rev. Fabian Kekich, Capuchin College, Brookland, Washington, D.C.
Miss Martha C. Kent, Dalton 309, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Penna.
Dr. Ralph D. Lury, Dominion Observatory, Ottawa, Canada
Lawrence T. O'Neill, 393 Elk Street, Albany, N. Y.
H. R. Pease, 261 Ridgewood Road, West Hartford, Conn.
E. Carroll Poler, 520 Davis Avenue, Medina, New York
Ralph C. Preston, 90 E. Stratford Ave., Lansdowne, Penna.
W. A. Robb, 327 Sixth Street, McKeesport, Penna.
Edward C. Wildman, 4331 Osage Avenue, Philadelphia, Penna.
Charles J. Spiker, Branchport, N. Y.

THE CARRY NATURE SANCTUARY

The Carry Nature Sanctuary, which operates as one of its activities, the Sweet Briar Bird Banding Station at Sweet Briar, Va., was founded at Sweet Briar College in 1936. Its operations, therefore, take place almost entirely on a college campus, and the traps of the station are within less than two minutes walk of the dormitories. Reports of the sanctuary work are published from time to time in the college newspaper, "The Sweet Briar News". As one can imagine, while the banding station is a small one, the educative value of it is widespread in proportion to its size.

Jeanette Boone, Sweet Briar, Virginia

NEWS FOR THE BIRD BANDERS

William O. Astle, of Flushing, L.I., N.Y. reports a very successful banding summer this year. He spent the summer in New Brunswick, Canada, and banded over 100 White-throats, besides a goodly number of gulls, swallows and juncos - nearly a thousand for a grand total. He also reports the recoveries of 4 gulls banded on Magdallene Islands, P.Q. These were later captured in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. A newspaper clipping is also enclosed with his letter, showing a picture of himself and one of his Brenckle traps.

Donald M. Wylie of Montvale, N.J. reports that he is nearly ready to start his new banding station at this locality after nearly two years of activity. This is real good news and EBBA wishes him a big catch.

Rev. Edward Stoehr of Washington fame and now residing in Cumberland, Md., sends us a new member and writes that he hopes to start his banding work very soon. Reports that there are lots of birds around just begging to be banded. Here's hoping he catches some of ours from up north.

Dr. Harold B. Wood of Harrisburg, Pa. is busy promoting a campaign to protect the ducks resting in the shallow water of the Susquehanna within 4 miles of his city limits. Good luck to you, doctor. We only wish there were more of you that appreciated the sound of "Quack".

Edwin A. Mason of the Wharton Banding Station at Groton, Mass. writes that the White-throat and White-crown migration is larger than the average, but the warblers were few and far between. Other stations register disappointment over the warbler flight this fall too. How has it been with you?

George Dock, Jr. of Scarsdale, N.Y. picked up a dead bird within a block of his station last month and it is now a museum specimen. It turned out to be a female Dickcissel and is the seventh such bird to be recorded in the New York metropolitan area in recent years. He also reports banding a Cardinal which is pretty rare for Scarsdale.

H. R. Pease of West Hartford, Conn. would appreciate any trapping tips on Goldfinches. EBBA has sent all that were available here, but if any member knows of some better "wrinkles" please send them to this bander. His street address is 261 Ridgewood Road.

William McIntosh, Jr. formerly of Panama City, Fla. has now moved the scene of his banding operations to Georgia. His new address is 315 East 51st Street, Savannah, Ga. Let's hope his new station is so successful that we'll all say, "My-gosh, Look at McIntosh!"

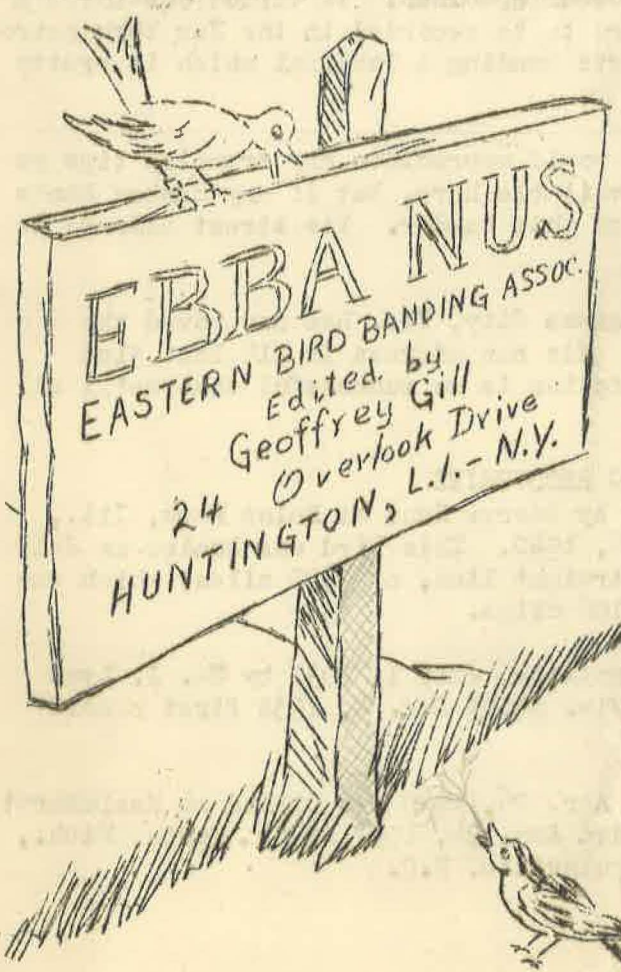
SOME INTERESTING RECOVERIES

Bank Swallow, banded as a fledgling by George Kent at Palos Park, Ill., found at La Tempestad, Iquitos, Peru, Jan. 6, 1940. This bird was banded on July 16, 1939 and represents a flight, if in a straight line, of 3300 miles, which exceeds the previous long distance record by 100 miles.

Franklin's Gull, banded at Delta, Manitoba, July 1, 1937 by Wm. I. Lyon was found at Lake Okechobe, near Lakeport, Fla. about Dec. 4, 1938 first record for Florida except a sight record in 1918.

Cowbird, banded at McMillan, Mich., Apr. 26, 1940 was killed at Hazlehurst, Georgia, Feb. 25, 1941. Purple Finch, banded Aug. 24, 1937 at St. Marie, Mich., by M. J. Magge was found Feb. 4, 1941 at Beaulaville, N.C.

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Sec. 562 P. L. & R.



EBBA NUS



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