

EBBA NUS

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

D. Storer
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REACHING OVER 375 BANDERS EVERY MONTH
--

December, 1942

"LET US BAND TOGETHER"

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CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

To every member of our Association, from Maine to California, from Texas to Ontario and especially those of us in the Armed Services in distant lands or on ships at sea, EBBA NUS sends sincere good wishes. It is our earnest hope, despite the troubles of the world, Christmas may be merry and that the year 1943 will be a happy and victorious one.

It is with no small feeling of pride, that our Association looks backward on 1942 and surveys the long list of new friends we have made and the many old friends we have kept. With the continuation of the splendid support and cooperation extended to us so willingly in the past, we face the future with assurance that we will grow and prosper for the mutual benefit of all.

AN INTERESTING RETURN

Raymond T. Fuller of Winterton, N.Y., has a very interesting experience to relate about a crippled bird that returned to his station this winter, but we would rather let him relate his own tale.

"On Nov. 4, 1941 I found an adult female Slate Colored Junco in my "maze trap" (see Bird Banding, Nov. 1941 for description,) which while in the trap had broken the left leg, not quite a quarter of an inch above the "ankle" joint. The limb seemed held together only by the skin. At first, I thought of amputating the leg, then, having a mad impulse to see if a #0 band might not act the part of a splint, applied it and released the bird. There were a large number of Juncos about my station all that month. This bird was not retaken until a year later, Nov. 18, 1942, when I found her in an L-trap in my yard, some 200 yards from the spot where she was banded. The leg had set under the band, at an angle of about 15 degrees backward; the ends of the three front toes were gone--apparently the metatarsals entire---and the stumps ended in little pear-shaped knobs; the rear toe was normal. Her physical condition and plumage appeared perfect. She was one of a flock of some 20 about the place, out of which 3 others banded in Nov. 1941 have already "returned" and "repeated" up to Dec. 1, 1942. The little cripple herself, has repeated on Nov. 28. The nearest likely breeding range of this group might be some 70 miles away in the edges of the Catskills."

ANOTHER TRAPPING WRINKLE FOR BANK SWALLOWS

Herbert A. Houston, who operates a banding station with his father at Wayne, Pa., sends his thoughts on banding Bank Swallows. He writes that he became "fed up" with putting my gathering cage over a nest entrance, only to see birds come out of all the holes but the one that was covered, so I returned to the nesting site after dark and plugged the entrances to the nests with stones. Early the next morning I started to band. By noon I had caught some 46 Swallows, then had to release the rest, because they must have been getting hungry. The birds did not seem any worse for their experience."

THE SEX RATIO OF TOWHEE RETURNS

Carrying on the interesting discussion regarding Towhee returns started by Mrs. Marie Dumont of Pequannock, N.J. in our October issue, further records have been brought to light.

One point brought out by this survey is the fact that many of us are careless in banding this species, especially immatures, without making a note of the sex. Outstanding in this neglect is "Ye Editor" who has missed this very important item on 75 of such birds banded. It illustrates the value of not only recording the essential facts, but adding as many notes as possible to each banding record.

"Dick" Fischer, of Flushing, N.Y. whose banding station is only a few miles west of the Manhasset banding station that submitted Towhee data in the previous issue, has also sent in his records. In the past 3 years Mr. Fischer has banded 83 of these birds. In the case of 4 individuals, he is not sure of the sex. Of the remaining 79 birds, 38 were males and 41 were females. His being the first station to show more females banded than males. Of the 52 individuals banded previous to 1942, none have returned to his station, which also seems unusual. One adult male, banded by him on Nov. 3rd, 1940 was "taken" at Jefferson, S.C. on March 3rd, 1941. Under the heading of southern recoveries, "Ye Ed" also has one case to cite out of the 204 Towhees banded, previous to 1942. This bird was an immature, sex unknown, banded July 20th, 1932, killed at Murfreesboro, N.C., Nov. 4, 1932. It is interesting to note than an immature was in North Carolina almost to the day when an adult male was banded at Flushing, Long Island. Another recovery is found in the records of William Davidson of Takoma Park, Md. This bird, a male, banded Aug. 24, 1932, returned to the station Apr. 26th, 1933 but was later shot in Lee County, S. C. on Dec. 25th of the same year.

Of the 102 Towhees banded between 1931 and 1942 in Montgomery and Prince George Counties, by Mr. Davidson, 36 were recorded as males and 21 as females. In the banding of the remaining 45 birds the sex was not determined. Of the 94 Towhees banded previous to 1942, ten returned, five were males, three were females and sex was not noted in two other returns. The years in which big catches of this species occurred at this station are 1932, 1934, and 1937.

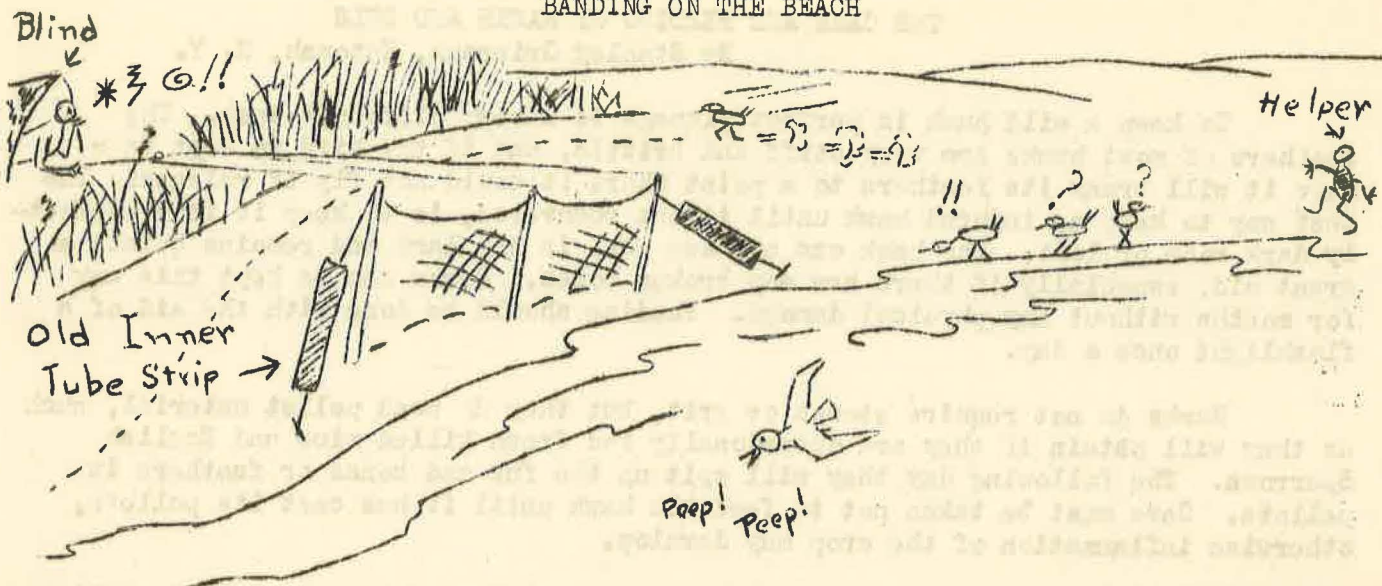
In 10 years, 1933 to 1941, "Ye Ed", operating a banding station at Huntington, L.I., N.Y. (about 20 miles east of Manhasset) 204 Towhees have been banded. With 129 of these individuals the sex was recorded. Of these 129 birds, 65 were males and 64 were females. 22 of these birds have returned at least once and oddly enough 11 were males and 11 were females which doesn't support the trend to a higher percentage of males returning. However, the complete returns show that 1 male is at least 6 years old, 2 males are at least 5 years old and 1 male and 2 females are 4 years old, while 1 male and 2 females are at least 3 years old. This data gives some weight to the fact that males outlive the females and so give greater opportunities for males to return more frequently to their home station. High catches for the Towhees at Huntington were the years 1935, 1936 and 1941.

NEWS FOR THE BANDERS

Mrs. Florence K. Daley of Olivera, N.Y. is spending the winter at Bowie, Texas. We hope she has good banding down there.

A pan of water is appreciated by the birds at this time of the year. To prove it, just put a small ash-tray filled with water on your window feeding shelf, then watch the birds.

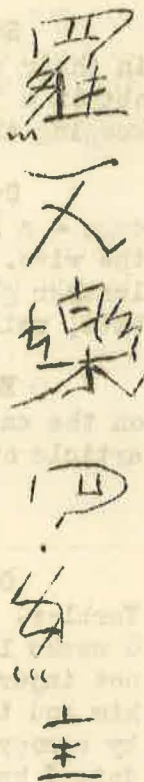
BANDING ON THE BEACH



This summer Ebba Nus commented on the fact that Albert L. Bailey III, of Westtown, Pa., while summering in Maine, attempted to trap shore birds with a large 1/4 inch mesh drop net. (Yes. He banded 14 Spotted Sandpipers before a large storm put a crimp in the fun.) At that time he sent an amusing illustration of his "lay-out". We enlarged his sketch for the ideas it contains and present it above with apologies to the original artist. We wish to state that any resemblance in our enlargement to human beings or even to birds, is purely accidental.

NEWS FOR THE BIRD BANDERS

After surviving the above shock, Ebba Nus proves its versatility by giving you a little Chinese on the right. These words mean the "daily joy of catching birds with a silken net", which is about as close as anyone could come to saying bird banding in Chinese. Rev. Stanton Lautenschlager of Chentau, China, recently spoke in a church at Harrisburg, Pa. and explained that his Chinese name meant the phrase above. Dr. Wood was so intrigued that he got an autograph. Ebba has traced the autograph, but since we have the happy faculty of doing the most simple things wrong, it wouldn't surprise us one bit if the whole thing is upside down.



William McIntosh of Savannah, Ga., writes that his banding has been handicapped lately by the lack of spare time and a great number of spare cats in his neighborhood. He looks forward to better luck in 1943.

Henry Ahrenhold of the Manhasset (L.I.) Banding Club has had splendid luck with White Throats this autumn. By Thanksgiving Day, he had caught about 60 individuals from two flocks frequenting his home garden.

Charles J. Spiker of Branchport, N.Y. writes: "Speaking of squirrels, I spend the nights in a camp in the woods on the north end of my farm. The night before last, I left a couple of traps set on the front porch, baited with a chunk of suet each. In the morning one of them contained a half-grown flying squirrel. I get an adult every so often, as they live in a hollow tree at a corner of the porch. I was particularly glad to note that these squirrels raised young ones this year.---I plan to try Dock's new hawk trap when I get the wire."

THE CARE AND FEEDING OF HAWKS AND OWLS

By Stanley Grierson, Katonah, N. Y.

To keep a wild hawk in perfect plumage is a very difficult task. The feathers of most hawks are very stiff and brittle, and if the bird is kept in a cage it will break its feathers to a point where it could not fly if released. The best way to keep an injured hawk until it has recovered, is to keep it in a perfectly dark room or loft. The hawk can not see well in the dark and remains quiet, a great aid, especially if there are any broken bones. Hawks can be kept this way for months without any physical damage. Feeding should be done with the aid of a flashlight once a day.

Hawks do not require stones or grit, but they do need pellet material, such as they will obtain if they are occasionally fed fresh killed mice and English Sparrows. The following day they will spit up the fur and bones or feathers in pellets. Care must be taken not to feed the hawk until it has cast its pellets, otherwise inflammation of the crop may develop.

Hawks will eat raw beef, liver or heart. Occasionally raw egg and codliver oil should be mixed with their food. Young hawks require broken bone and egg shell to prevent ricketts.

Hawks should be fed enough to stuff their crops, and should not be fed suet or fat. A large plan of clean water will provide both drink and bath.

Sharp-shin Hawks are difficult to keep and require large numbers of birds in their diet. If one wishes to keep a hawk any length of time I suggest that they obtain a book on Falconry where you will find complete directions on taming and keeping the hawk on a perch by means of a leash and jesses.

Owls require the same care as hawks, except that they may be kept in a cage -- a large one is preferred. Owls feathers are soft and do not break against the wire. A word of caution: Hawks and owls should always be handled with heavy leather gloves to prevent injury from their talons. Owls and falcons will also bite, while the mouse hawks will only use their feet.

Editor's Note: This is the second of a series of articles by Mr. Grierson on the care of injured birds that may come into the hands of a bander. A third article on the care of small birds will follow at a later date.

AN UNEXPECTED LATE GUEST

On Nov. 19th, 1942, George Dock, Jr. of Scarsdale, N.Y., trapped a Wilson Warbler. Dock writes: "It is beyond my understanding, as the bird was at least 6 weeks late and they winter in Central America. The bird was in perfect condition, not injured in any way, and flew off with the greatest of ease after I had banded him and taken a number of photographs in color. One of these photos was backed up by a copy of the N.Y. Times to prove the date. This is by a full month the latest date I have ever caught any warbler except Myrtles and Blackpolls."

Mr. Dock also encloses with his letter, the editorial page of the Scarsdale Inquirer which is dominated by a splendid banding article, illustrated with his photographs. This write-up is one of the best we have ever seen. It adequately relates the manner in which the general public, especially children, can help all banders.

MOVED

Thomas Smith, formerly of Hamilton, Ontario has now changed his address to Box 237, Dundas, Ontario.

SWIFT BANDING IN GEORGIA

Raymond J. Fleetwood of the Piedmont Refuge at Round Oak, Ga., reports a splendid catch of Chimney Swifts this fall. Some were caught in the well mentioned in a previous issue of the NUS. His total for the season was 4,320 new birds, 134 returns, 12 foreign banded birds and 17 repeats. This catch was made between September 7th and October 24th. Mr. Fleetwood states that these totals contain a smaller proportion of foreign banded birds than he has taken formerly. Out of the famous "Jones Well", at Clinton, Ga., he was able to take 172 new birds and 8 returns; 5 of these returns had been banded from this same well on Aug. 12, 1941. Mr. Fleetwood writes, "8 returns out of 180 is a pretty fair percentage. The number of repeats is small considering the number banded."

Mr. Fleetwood plans to do considerable Junco banding this winter and we certainly hope he gets a good catch. He reports the first record at the Refuge on Nov. 1st of two Blue-headed Vireos and states that as yet, he hasn't seen any warblers passing thru. Myrtle Warblers are usually the most numerous and a few winter on the Refuge. He would like to correspond with some banders in the south. Will southern banders please drop him a lone. We might add that EBBA is always glad to hear from them also.

FOR BANDERS IN THE ARMED SERVICES

Another instance of the well-known southern hospitality comes to the fore in a recent letter from Mrs. Zora P. Jensen of Chapel Hill, N.C. Mrs. Jensen is inviting every bander in "the service", stationed at either Fort Bragg or Camp Bitner, to her home for a week-end. They can get a change from "camp life" and see how her banding station operates. This is a splendid idea and it is hoped that other banders located near any of the many camps will follow Mrs. Jensen's example. The only "hitch" in the plan, as we see it, is the difficulty in knowing when banders are stationed in the nearby camps. Most of the banders in service have an address consisting of a number in care of a postmaster somewhere. Probably this is due to rules and regulations, but if any bander arrives at either of the two camps above, a postal to Mrs. Jensen, Box 88, Chapel Hill, N.C., will probably be the first step in a very enjoyable leave. Mrs. Jensen has already invited two members of "Inland", now at these camps, to visit her. (A remarkable coincidence: "Ye Ed" had just completed typing these lines at home this evening, when a knock was heard at the door. It was a sailor from the Naval Dispersal Station six miles away, wanting to know if this was the place where the chap interested in birds lived. The sailor was Robert Hog of Wakefield, Mass., and a member of the Brookline Bird Club. We talked birds right thru a "blackout" for two hours. A fine chap.)

Mrs. Jensen also states that she visited Mr. Lincoln of the F. & W. L. Service, recently. He has asked her to make a study of the plumages of the Summer Tanagers, since she has been so successful in banding this species. She also encloses with her letter a dandy photo of three banded immature Redheaded Woodpeckers, each of which shows a different pattern of feather markings. If any bander is making a study of this species, she will be glad to send them a print of this picture.

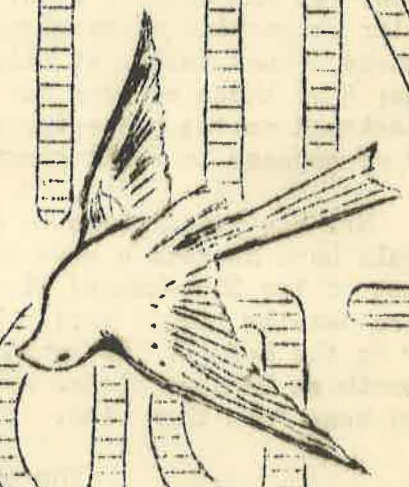
FISCHER IS CATCHING THE BIRDS

Several banders have complained that the fall flight has been very disappointing this year and few birds have been banded. "Dick" Fischer of Flushing, N.Y. writes in the opposite vein. Between Sept. 12th and Nov. 1st he has caught 243 new birds. He says he could have doubled this total if he had more time to devote to banding.

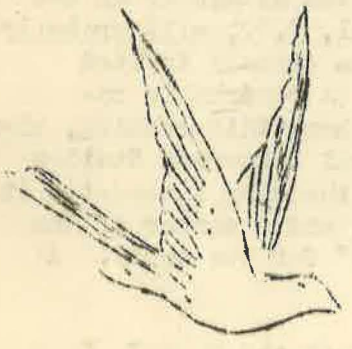
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F B I
M O S



Sec. 562 P. L. & R.



Report a dead bird wearing a band, when found, to
FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

