

# Ebba Nus



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

REACHING  
OVER

375

BANDERS  
EVERY MONTH

August, 1943

"LET US BAND TOGETHER"

No. 7, Vol. 6

President Pro Tem: Dr. H. B. Wood, 3016 N. 2nd St., Harrisburg, Pa.  
Secretary: Horace Groskin, 210 Glenn Rd., Ardmore, Pa.  
Treasurer: Robert K. Ungemah, 10 Jackson Ave., White Plains, N. Y.  
Editor: Geoffrey Gill, 24 Overlook Dr., Huntington, L. I., N. Y.

## OUR ULTIMATE AIM

Several months ago, a writer gathering material for a banding article for publication in a general magazine, posed the question, "What is the ultimate aim of banding?" --- A brief answer, complete in about 25 words constitutes a problem. What answer would you give?

To increase man's knowledge of ornithology in general, and in particular, to learn more about the migration, length of life, habits, plumages, sex-ratios and the status of certain species of birds, would be an answer of sorts. Then obviously, the next question would be, "Are banders accomplishing this ultimate aim? Our answer to that would be "yes", with mental reservations.

Every person who has the opportunity to handle a living wild bird cannot help but learn more about that bird than he or she would learn by seeing it or hearing it singing in a tree. The very fact that the bird wears a registered number placed there by the bander gives added interest, possibly a feeling of ownership, to that particular bird and its entire species...and so a bander studies the ways of this species more closely.

However, while there can be little question of whether or not a bander's knowledge of birds increases by the marking of individuals, there are some doubts whether a great deal of this information is passed along so that man in general could refer to these bander's experiences and so tap a reservoir of avian facts unknown heretofore.

Some banders have published splendid articles on bird life, based on banding studies, but such people unfortunately represent a very small proportion of the active banders. There are active banders who have been banding for 10, and even 20 years, who have kept the knowledge so gained much to themselves. All banders will admit there is a wealth of bird information resting dormant in their records or files. Much of it considered individually, would have little value and possibly, slight meaning, but when fitted in with similiar records from other banders, the whole does take on meaning and value.

Several members have suggested that our association send out a general request for data now in members' files and have a small committee digest this gathered information. If it warrants publication, then it should be published in our official quarterly. If it doesn't warrant publication let us find out why and so correct our banding procedure. This is a fine thought and we ask all members to send in as soon as possible the return records of their banded White-throated Sparrows as a trial, so that we can find who has the oldest White-throat and their average life-span as now known. Send your information on a post-card to the editor, until a committee becomes better organized. It is realized that the first duty of such a committee will be to set up a standard whereby bander's records can be intelligently compared. This standard will be discussed in a forth-coming issue.

## WHAT WE HAVE BEEN SEEKING

A flash from Raymond T. Fuller of Wintertown, N. Y., informs us that, to the best of his knowledge and belief, 'The Manual for the Identification of the The Birds of Minnesota and Neighboring States', by Thomas S. Roberts, (Univ. of Minn. Press), 1936, Minneapolis, is the best thing of its kind for banders on plumages, variations for age and sex, etc. Mr. Fuller writes that it can be purchased for \$1.50 from: The Bibliophile Store, 1836 North St., Columbus, O. Possibly it can be bought elsewhere. It is Mr. Fuller's thought that it would be very helpful to all banders and should be considered a part of their standard equipment.

Mr. Fuller has also sent a report of his banding for the year ended June 30, 1943. His tabulation shows a total of 371 birds of 25 species. Almost one-half of his total was banded in May and June of this year. The list is topped by Song Sparrow 69: White-throated Sparrow 67; Slate-colored Junco 50: Robin 32 and House Wren 22. In May of this year he caught and banded 128 new birds.

### THE MAY WHITE-THROAT FLIGHT IN THE N. Y. AREA

In studying the banding reports sent in for the tabulation appearing in the June issue, depicting the trapping results of several banders in the New York area, and subsequent reports received from other banders in the same region, it is interesting to compare the data in regard to a late flight of White-throated Sparrows. Mr. Fuller's station at Winterton, N. Y. several miles to the north of "A", the station of Beecher S. Bowdish of Demarest, N. J., reports banding 43 White-throats in the first 12 days of May and none thereafter. Mr. Bowdish records 55 White-throats in the first 15 days and only 2 other after that date.

Moving slightly north and east of both of these stations, George Dock, Jr. reports a very late scattering of this species until the 19th. He was able to trap 9 at his station in Scarsdale, N. Y. Moving southward, Richard B. Fischer of Flushing reports banding 37 White-throats in May, all but 2 taken on the 8th and 9th. (Fisher considered 25 of these 35 birds females and the other 10 males, while Fuller recorded 27 males as against 16 females. Note the respective geographic positions of these two banders in regard to this division of sexes.) To move further eastward in the area, it is noted that Frank Sarnowski at Manhasset reports only 4 White-throats for May, the last caught on May 14th. Still further east, "Ye Ed's" station didn't take any new White-throats in May and saw no signs of a heavy late flight.

To sum up the evidence from these records, it would appear that there was a very heavy flight of this species throughout the western half of the area shown in the map in the June issue. The peak of abundance was apparently at the beginning of the second week in May. Not enough sex ratios are given to form a base for any assumptions, however there is a slight indication that the females hug the coastal areas in their northern migration while the males travel further inland.

### NEWS OF THE BIRD BANDERS

Patrick Branigan, formerly of Washington, D. C. has now moved to 11 De Sales Place, Brooklyn, N. Y.

If your issue of EBBA MUS is late in arriving in your hands, please be patient. It is mailed out each month on the 15th but due to present day conditions, each copy is longer in postal transit. We are sure that the postal authorities are doing the best they can and we must be patient.

## BANDING BLITZ AT BEAVER KILL, N. Y.

Each Summer Dick Fischer spends his vacation in the northern part of Sullivan County, N. Y. and goes on a wild rampage banding the birds in that locality with the assistance of a young lad, Billy. Their activities read so much like fast and furious banding fiction that EBBA can't resist the temptation to give our members a condensed chronological account of their "doings". We herewith quote Fischer's letter:

"Ho hum, life up here sure is swell,--and banding,--Wow, its 'outa dis woild'. CAUTION: Hold fast to your hat and any solid object. June 27th - (arrived 26th)-caught a young Boholink. June 28th - caught a young Grosbeak. Trapped an ad. female Rough-winged Swallow on the nest after dark. Very rare here. Appeared in area for 1st time about 4 years ago. June 29th - The other day saw a banded male Barn Swallow on the wire outside Ackerly's barn. The young were quite full-grown, hence the adults no longer slept with them. How to get the old birds? Easy. I closed the barn door, sliding-type half way and waited inside with my insect net. As soon as a bird entered I jumped into the opening and quickly closed the door behind me. The bird was soon confined in a smaller adjoining room and captured. It was the female, unbanded. The male seem to be 'hep' to what was up, for he was very reluctant to enter. He did finally enter, but just as the door was closing he rushed me and darted out. After another long wait, with me standing tense behind the door, ready to spring into action, the bird entered again. Again he rushed me, but this time I wielded the net with telling results, for I nailed him just a fraction before he reached the quickly decreasing space between the moving door and the barn wall. Just as I had hoped, it was 140-68515, the same bird which has used the same nest since 1940,--a return-3.

Next few days continued on our carefree way. Many Barn Swallows and Wrens now wearing bands. July 7th - Time passes...Scene changes...Billy Shurter arrives... night falls..shh..It's around 9:30, just after dark, two strangely equipped characters are seen slipping stealthily into the dark recesses of Fred Bank's barn. STAND BY. Earlier in the day I had seen some Barn Swallows and a few Starlings there. Tonight we didn't find a single Swallow, BUT, as we climbed up into the rafters some Starlings began fluttering around. We caught a few. It was apparent, however, that up in the belfry, (the barn had a belfry, of all things.) there were more Starlings. So Billy climbed up to see if he couldn't stir up a little action. GREAT GUNS. As he went up the birds came down. The place was alive with them. I was standing on a platform 15 ft. above the barn floor, while Billy was fully 15 ft. above me, and he hadn't reached the top yet. What's more, there was a big hole in my platform about 3 ft. square. I had to be careful not to fall down that hole and break something. Well, the Starlings were so numerous that the whole thing became a joke---It was like our boys rounding up the prisoners in Tunisia. I got a big burlap bag and began dropping them. For almost an hour the place was a madhouse. The problem wasn't to catch them, it was to decide on which to catch next. When the fracas was over we had captured 32 Starlings and were ready to drop ourselves. Bed at 2:45 p. m.

July 8th-This evening Billy and I hiked down to the Beaver Kill Trout Club. As we drew near, Billy spotted a Great Horned Owl sitting on a phone pole right near the barn, but he flew away. We sneaked into the barn and went to it. There were 2 pair of Swifts nesting in the barn. We captured all 4 birds. 3 of them were returns 2 from '42 and 1 from '41. We also snagged 15 Barn Swallows and a return from '41 that was also caught in '42. To bed at 1:30.

Continued:.....

July 12th - The Trout Club again to do a little checking up and Oh, Brother, We captured a 3rd pair of Swifts, (didn't want to disturb them last time) and guess what? ... They were both returns, the male being the one that has come back every summer since banded in 1939. The female was the same mate he had last year. In addition we captured 7 more Barn Swallows and another return from '41. July 15th - Remember the big Cliff Swallow colony worked last year? We made a giant net that fits right up into the eaves. We were about 2 weeks late but we made a haul anyway. Nailed 15 adults plus 4 birds that were banded in '41. None were retaken last year. 3 were adults when banded and the other was an immature. These are my first Cliff Swallow returns.

When we got home and had dinner, we sallied forth anew, this time with shovels. We knew where there were some Kingfishers that needed banding so we waited until dark before starting operations as the fishermen shoot them up here and we wanted to be as secretive as possible. Dug 7 of them out and they are cute. There were some Rough-wing Swallows in a hole next to them so we banded them. Billy and I banded 45 birds that day.

I have been here a month now and have banded in the vicinity of 150 birds, thanks to the fine assistance of Billy Shurter.

#### A SITE FOR A BANDER

"Ye Ed" insisted that Dr. Wood tell us more about his recent guest, Lieut. Burt L. Monroe, who before entering the Army was State Ornithologist of Kentucky and a bander, of course. It is now revealed that he was also President of the League of Kentucky Sportsmen until a year ago when he entered the Army. His favorite trap seems to be an immense affair 6 ft. square and belongs to the funnel family. He uses a government sparrow trap for a gathering cage, which will give one an idea of the size. EBBA now has a diagram of it and hopes to display it on these pages at a later date. It has a number of entrances, both on top and in the sides and is reported as ready to take anything in the line of birds. He also uses Potters baited with suet on the ground and takes all kinds of woodpeckers. He has banded 15 fledgling Red-shouldered Hawks and 11 Cooper's. He has never used a pole trap. One Red-shouldered was killed about 100 miles from the place of banding.

Lieut. Monroe's pet site for banding is the Falls of the Ohio which are longitudinally in the center of Louisville, Kentucky. This spot is the most unique place in the state for finding birds. It is about 200 yds. wide and 3/4 of a mile long, containing rocks, pools, falls, beaches, trees and bushes. After looking at EBBA NUS, Lieut. Monroe declared that Albert L. Baily III trap (Dec. '42) was the ideal trap for shore birds and he certainly will have one for the Falls of the Ohio.

We list some of the birds seen at this spot: White Pelican, Wood Ibis, 7 Snowy Egrets, American Egrets by the hundreds, adult and immature Little Blue Herons. For shore birds, Least, Spotted, Solitary, Western, Pectorial, Baird, Sanderling, Dowitcher, Knot, Wilson Phalarope, Killdeer, Black-bellied Golden, Piping, Semipalmate Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Buff Breasted Sandpiper, Western, Willet, both Yellowlegs, Semipalmated Sandpiper and 5 terns, Common, Forster's, Least, Black and Caspian. The best time is early in September but the season extends from July 1 to Oct. 10th. --- "Ye Ed" only wishes he could say, "Don't push, banders,--There is plenty of room in the front of the car."

## CHIMNEY SWIFT RECOVERIES

Besides banding 4,320 Chimney Swifts during the fiscal year ended July 1, 1943, Raymond J. Fleetwood of Round Oak, Ga. received 23 recovery reports from Swifts banded by him previously. These are as follows:

Date Banded	Place Banded	Date Recovered	Place Recovered
10/3/40	Macon, Ga.	6/27/42	Thackery Point, Md. (*1)
"	" "	6/1/42	Mifflinburg, Pa.
"	" "	7/4/42	Woodlyn, Pa.
"	" "	5/?/42	Portsmouth, Ohio
"	" "	7/2/42	Monroe, Maine
10/1/40	Milledgeville, Ga.	7/1/42	Hyde Park, N. Y.
"	" "	5/30/42	Linwood, Md.
"	" "	8/7/42	Rural Hall, N. C.
"	" "	6/17/42	E. New Portland, Maine
5/5/40	Macon, Ga.	8/3/42	Luray, Va.
9/8/40	" "	4/?/42	Tawas City, Mich.
9/22/40	" "	5/7/42	St. George Beauce, Quebec
9/20/40	" "	5/30/42	Guilford Center, Vt.
9/1/41	" "	6/7/42	New Charles, Va.
9/13/41	" "	No date	Jobstown, N. J.
9/20/41	" "	6/30/42	Jamaica, L. I., N. Y.
9/27/41	" "	7/26/42	Franklin Center, Quebec (*2)
9/28/41	" "	10/?/42	Childersburg, Ala.
9/17/39	" "	No date	Massey, Md.
8/12/41	Clinton, Ga. (*3)	4/14/43	Wayside, Ga.
"	" "	4/5/43	Wayside, Ga.
9/7/42	" "	6/23/43	Round Oak, Ga.
9/28/39	Columbus, Indiana	5/6/43	Columbus, Indiana

\*1- Cecil County; \*2- Huntington County; \*3- Banded in well, recovered nearby.

### NEWS FOR THE BANDERS

Lt. C. B. Worth of Swarthmore, Pa. and now at the Army Medical Center in Washington, D. C., has been promoted to the rank of Captain. While on furlough in July at Avalon, N. J. he succeeded in banding 29 immature Common Terns and 9 immature Green Herons. "Had I not turned in my large size bands last year, I could have banded about 20 young Ospreys as easy as pie." he writes. -Our regards, Captain. Glad to hear you are keeping your hand in banding.

Among 60 returns recorded at the station of "Ye Editor" this year, the return of a female Purple Grackle is considered worthy of comment. This bird, banded as an adult in May 27, 1935, was taken again in May, 1936, May, 1940 and finally on this year on June 15th. This bird can be assumed to be at least 9 years old now.

Stanley Grierson is now stationed at Camp Campton, West Campton, N. H. He reports that he is making good use of his spare time and scaled a 500 ft. cliff and banded a Duck Hawk. He is also banding a colony of Bank Swallows and writes that he has met a friend of Jesse Miller of Manhasset at camp. Between them they have been very fortunate in taking some fine colored slides of birds and animals which Mr. Grierson uses with lectures at camp.

Prof. Dayton Storer  
N.Y. State Museum  
Albany, NEW YORK



562 P. L. & R.

"BUY WAR SAVINGS STAMPS AND BONDS"