

Ebba Nus



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

REACHING
OVER
375
BANDERS
EVERY MONTH

September, 1943

"LET US BAND TOGETHER"

Vol. 6 No. 9

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10,000 BANDED BIRDS ARE COMING YOUR WAY

For the first time in the history of your favorite monthly banding magazine, an entire issue, or most of it, will be devoted to a discussion of one kind of bird, - the White-Throated Sparrow. EBBA plans to make the coming October issue bristle with what we have found out about this "critter" by banding. A regular "he-man jam-session" is planned with "no holds barred". Cold scientific reasoning will not be attempted in this coming opus. There will be some guessing, some assumptions and a whole lot of facts, we hope. We want every member to take part in this discussion. Let's all really take down our hair and get everything off our chests that we know or think about White-Throats. We want a real "bang-up" issue and with everyone in on it. Even if you have never banded one of these birds, drop "Ye Ed" a postal and tell him so and why.

Many of us think that White-Throats are a "tough" species. "It ain't so." We have just been fooling ourselves because each of us has been working alone. If we can concentrate and cooperate, we will have the problem licked. We would like to steer the discussion along lines as where this bird comes from and where it goes. How fast it travels and by what routes. These questions are not easy, but by working together, we can find the answers. Each bander is asked to do two things.

First: We want every bander, no matter where, to watch for the coming migration of White-Throats in his neighborhood. Depending on where he is, it will probably start late this month or early in October, reaching a peak in mid-October, weather permitting. Every bander should get his traps ready,--any old kind of traps, that will take this easy-to-trap bird, and trap them this fall. There are at least 10,000 of these birds WEARING BANDS that will soon come down from the north on the way to the Carolinas. If every bander will sincerely try to catch them from Maine southward, some of us are going to get a foreign banded bird. At least that will be something. If you got 10 White-Throats last October, get 20 this year. If you got 100, aim for 200 this time, but let's get them.

Second: We want every member to consult their records and send us the number of White-Throats you have banded each winter, say from Oct. to May; the number of returns-1, returns-2, etc. Yes, there are records of 7-year old birds. By all means, send in all recoveries reported to you, and we mean recoveries from at least 10 miles away, north, west or south. If you can't get all this on a single postal, use two. Who cares for an extra pony.

Send in your data, PLEASE. One postal or two postals, who cares. If it takes 3 postals, then better send a letter for it won't cost any more, AND GET THOSE WHITE-THROATS this fall, even if you have to chase them from bush to bush with an insect net and a salt-shaker. GET THEM.

A TRIPLE PLAY, IF WE EVER SAW ONE

Here is an opportunity for banders to help in three ways, THREE interests. 1. - To help yourself with a small inexpensive Christmas gift, unique and useful for friends that are interested in birds or may have helped you with your banding. 2. - To help the small winter birds when they need help the most. Finally, to help the treasury of your respective association.

A BIRD SAVING LANTERN

60¢ or 2 for \$1.00

(postage paid)

This lantern is a new attractive suet-holder which hangs from the tip of a branch of a tree. A delight to such small birds as Downy Woodpeckers, Chickadees, Kinglets and Myrtle Warblers, etc. Larger birds, such as Jays and Starlings are too heavy to use it and it is safe from all animals. No bird can carry away all the food. Tested by the maker during the last two winters.

Sturdily built of metal and wood, attractively enamelled in bright Christmas colors, each in an individual box so you can mail it anywhere.

HOW IT HELPS YOUR ASSOCIATION

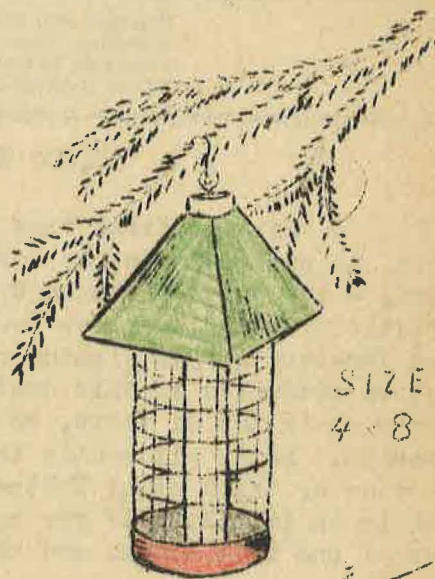
The manufacturer will donate forty percent of the gross sales to the association to which the purchaser belongs; i.e. If EBBA members buy 50 at 60¢ with a total sale of \$30.00, then the treasury gets a gift of \$12.00. Likewise, if INLAND members purchase these lanterns 24¢ of the money from every single sale or 40¢ on the 2 for \$1.00 order goes to the INLAND treasury. All orders should be sent to Geoffrey Gill, 24 Overlook Drive, Huntington, L. I., N. Y. with check or money-order made payable to him.

A MAP OF OUR MEMBERSHIP

A member has suggested that we publish a map of all our region showing the location of our many members. This map to be published in 4 sections, each the size of regular NUS page and so arranged that they can be fitted together and map the whole area. One page a month to be printed in our medium. This is a splendid idea and one we would like to see accomplished. How can we do it? Has anyone any suggestions?

Our page size is $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 inches and four of these would make a map 17 by 22 inches which would be a dandy size. However, a mimeograph is so arranged that each page must have margins. The stencil controls this difficulty and the regular pages would have to be trimmed to fit together. This would give us a map about 14 x 18 inches. Our area from Florida to Ontario is a funny shaped piece of land, somewhat like a "V" about to fall down. Still, it might be possible to make an outline map showing the rivers and mountains that would be useful.

The next thing would be the problem of spotting in the banding stations. We think that every place where birds have been banded should be designated. Active stations by a small circle and places where birds have been banded in years ago by or "vacation" stations, with a black dot. Each site would bear a number with an appropriate key. What do you think?



REGARDING COMPARATIVE TABULATIONS

Some members have pointed out the weaknesses in comparative tabulations of birds banded at several stations. Such weaknesses exist, but can be corrected to a degree by a standard rating of the banding stations. Once these ratings are established, then, when a bander submits data for comparison he should give his rating with the material. These ratings, of course, will change as the activities of the bander changes, but at all times they will be judged and designated by the bander himself.

In the matter of traps, one station may have many more than another and so trap more birds in a given period. Therefore, it is suggested that each bander have a trap rating. Obviously an 8-cell trap will catch more birds than a one-cell trap in a day, so the rating should state the total of cells rather than that of traps. A single-cell should count as 1 and an 8-cell should count as 8.

Traps such as the Government Sparrow, House Fabian, Modesto and all funnel or maze traps really have 1 main cell, but may take several birds at a time. It is suggested that these ground-opening traps be considered as 5 units each. Granting that the kinds of traps will affect the species of birds caught, some clew to trap types should be placed in the rating. It is thought that traps can be grouped into 4 general classes.

Each pull-string trap can be designated as 1PS. The top-opening traps, such as the Brenckle can be called TO. An 8-cell Brenckle could then be called 8TO. Then there is the large assortment of ground-opening traps, many of them single cell with a vertical sliding door or a door closed in some manner by a false bottom or a step tripped by the bird. Each of these could be considered as 1GO. The funnel and maze traps, as mentioned above are also ground-opening traps but for the above stated reason it is suggested that each be considered as 5GO. The fourth class would consist of all special traps, such as Swift Traps, Woodpecker Traps, etc. and be designated with the letter S.

The time in any period allotted to banding would also be a factor in comparisons, particularly during migrations, so a clew to the time element should be given in any rating. It is suggested that an average trapping day is a maximum of 13 hrs. Hence, if a banding station is operated daily through the month of September it would be in operation 390 hrs. If operated only on Saturday afternoons and Sundays in September it would be rated as 78 hrs. The number of times the traps are inspected during a day would also have an affect, but it is assumed that banders always visit the traps frequently when set.

Finally, some clew as to the trap's surroundings should be specified. A short description such as, "Open fields, in hedgerow, or small woodland near garden" should be given.

Then we have John Brown's banding station consisting of a pull-string in the garden, 5 two-cell top-opening traps in a nearby woodland with a 6-cell Brenckle and a Government Sparrow Trap in an open field. If all traps were operated daily during the whole month of September, then his rating would read as follows:

John Brown; Newton, Ga., 1PS in Garden, 16TO nearby woodland, 5GO open field, Total 22 Units 390 hrs.

A rating of this kind appears somewhat involved, yet considering the many factors influencing banding it only gives the bare details.

RECOVERIES

A Robin wearing band 41-232773 was caught and later released by some boys about July 3rd, 1943 at Dumont, N. J. The incident was reported by Miss Mildred Hauser of Harrison St., Dumont, N. J. to W. R. Stone, County Agricultural Agent at Hackensack, N. J., who in turn reported it to B. S. Bowdish of Newark, N. J. Mr. Bowdish notified us. Who banded this Robin?

Grackle wearing band 35-336476 was found crippled by Mrs. Tucoulat of Hillsdale, N. J. on July 22nd, 1943. The information followed the same channels as the incident concerning the Robin. Dr. H. C. Gadenier of Montvale, N. J. banded the Grackle on July 13th, 1943.

NEWS FOR THE BIRD BANDER

Charles J. Spiker of Branchport, N. Y. reports the banding of 299 new birds from Jan. 1st to Aug. 1st, 1943. Among these were one each of 3 new species for his station, Long-eared Owl, Bobolink and Henslow Sparrow. Since the fields on his farm are not cultivated this year he has noticed a change in the bird life around his banding station which consists of a trap line one half mile long in open fields and along hedge-rows. Because he can't get flash-light batteries this year he will be unable to band any swallows in a nearby marsh at night. Mr. Spiker writes that Sturdevant, one of his nearby banders is doing "a land office business with Barn and Cliff Swallows." His total was in the hundreds early in July with a second nesting still to be worked.

Raymond T. Fuller of Winterton, N. Y. searched for a nest of a Broadwing Hawk in the surrounding 6 miles of his station for weeks. He finally found it within 400 ft. of his back door, 35 ft. high in a hemlock. As he climbed to the nest the young flew away. "Wouldn't you know it would happen that way?" Mr. Fuller sends in the first report on his White-throat Sparrow banding. He has banded 137 and as yet has had not a single return. He also reports the banding of 7 young Green Herons and wonders if the stated band size (No. 4) isn't too small.

Actively banding since 1927, Dr. Wood of Harrisburg, Pa. reports that the first foreign banded bird trapped by him was caught on Aug. 17th, this year. He considered it a young female Purple Grackle. It wore band 42-326456. As he believes there are no banders within 75 miles of his station, he is wondering who banded this bird. Members check your records and drop him a card if it is your bird.

"Ye Ed" can't resist the temptation to mention that a Catbird, believed to be an adult when banded on July 10, 1936, has just appeared in his traps again for the EIGHTH consecutive year. This bird visitor might be called a "regular guy". Banded on the above date it was back May 14, '37; May 6, '38; May 9, '39; May 16, '40; Sept. 26, '41; May 8, '42 and back again Aug. 15, 1943.

B. S. Bowdish of Demarest, N. J. writes that he has succeeded in banding 64 new Blue Jays in the last 132 days. This Jay population is in addition to several returns and repeats. As a temporary population of Blue Jays on an area 100 x 200 feet, he thinks this is a pretty good number. All members will agree. Banding considered by months for his jays are as follows: April 15-30, 4; May, 5; June, 18; July, 27; and August up to the 25th, 10. July 4th was high day when 7 jays were taken in the traps. A family of 5 were caught at one time in a water trap, the first four being caught in the usual way and the fifth had only his head in the trap when the door shut and hold it. It was released with a band none the worse for its experience.

DR. WOOD DISCUSSES BANDING PROJECTS

"Projects depend entirely upon opportunity. In turn, this depends on the birds, their local activities and the species which visit a station. A successful project would depend more upon the abundant species, rather than any stragglers. Some projects depend upon the percentage of returns of the most abundant species."

"If a study is made of the time of molting, of the order of molt of any special set of feathers of a given species, many birds of this species would be needed through many months. Diets as a project are related to local growth conditions. Take this as an axiom: Birds feed on local food and according to season. My brief studies indicate this. During summer and early fall, polk berries, which grow abundantly at Harrisburg, Pa. are eaten avidly by Catbirds and Robins, but when dried and re-softened, or kept in a refrigerator until after the season is long passed, will not be touched by these birds. In western New York where buckwheat is commonly grown, Starlings and other birds eat the seeds in great quantities. At Harrisburg, where no buckwheat is grown, no birds will eat buckwheat. In New England bayberries are eaten in great quantities, mostly in the green soft stage, but even as white dried berries. In Pennsylvania, where none of these berries grow, bayberry bushes, freshly brought from Rhode Island, were no attraction for any birds, warbler or others. Students should not be mis-lead by the local eating habits of birds. A well-known investigator examined the stomachs of Crows and declared that grasshopper and buckwheat formed a large percentage of their diet, but he failed to impress upon his readers that where these birds were dissected, was where these insects were very numerous and that buckwheat was one of the most abundant grains grown."

"A valuable point to be derived from all this, is that it is of little use to plant food plants to attract birds in localities where the birds will not recognize them as food plants at that particular spot even though they do eat them at distant locations. Such a subject needs more study by those banders having the opportunities."

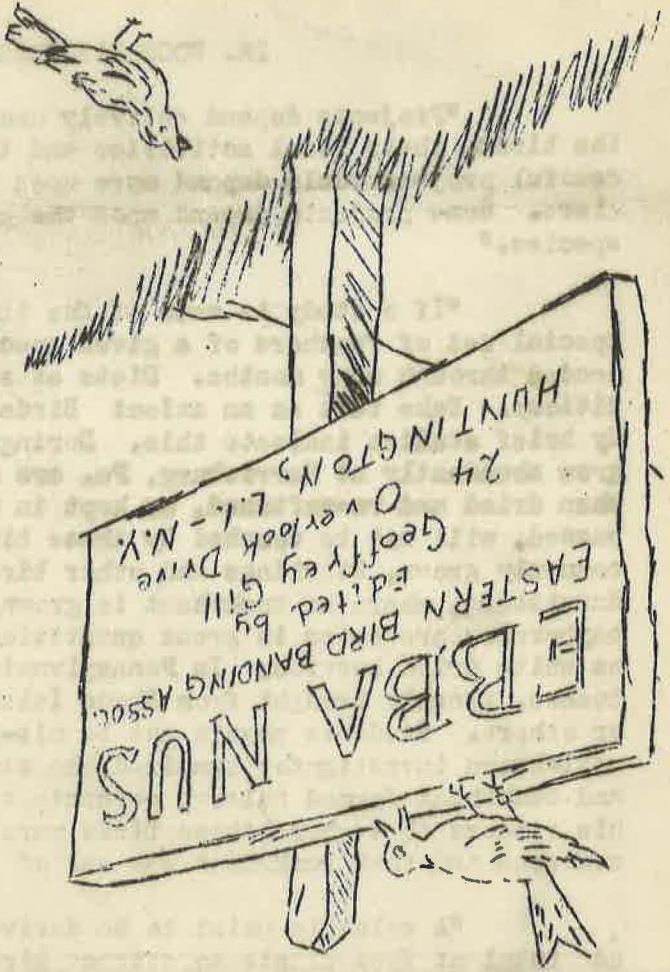
"To assist in the setting up of projects banders should be invited to send postal, which can be easier handled and filed, a list of the most numerous birds they band, the birds which give all recoveries, the species with most returns, species on which nesting studies or data has been collected, species with longest flights, birds with greatest ages over 5 years, special investigations now being carried on, etc. Such a card from my station would read like this:

BIRDS MOST BANDED: Grackles, Robins, Catbirds
RECOVERIES: 1 Grackle
MOST RETURNS: Catbirds, Robins, Song Sparrow
AGES: Catbird, Robin
NESTING: Bluebird, Barn Swallow, House Wren
NEST BANDING: Most small birds including B. C. Night Heron
LONGEST FLIGHT: B. C. Night Heron to Cuba, Robin to La. Song Sparrow R. I. To Fla.
SPECIAL STUDIES: Tail plumage of Robins and Juncos
.....
(Name) (St. Address)
(Date, Town and State appear in the post-mark of postal)

----- Dr. Harold B. Wood, 3016 N 2nd St., Harrisburg, Pa.

Why not send such a card to Dr. Wood at your earliest convenience, setting forth the data for your station as outlined. A very important index of information sources can be established this way.

Prof. Dayton Stoner
N.Y. State Museum
Albany, New York



Sec. 562 P. T. & R.

"BUY WAR SAVINGS STAMPS AND BONDS"