

ANNOUNCING THE 1953 ANNUAL MEETING

The following is from a letter from President Raymond J. Middleton, dated January 29, 1953:

"The 1953 meeting of the Eastern Bird-Banding Association will be held March 21, in the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, Pa., at 19th Street and the Parkway.

"A meeting of the Council will be held at 9:30 a.m. The morning session will begin at 10:30 when papers will be given. The afternoon session will start at 2:00 p.m.; part of this period will be a panel discussion on banding problems--bring your questions and the panel will try to answer them. The annual election of officers will also be held.

"The banquet will be held at a nearby restaurant in the evening, followed by motion pictures.

"On Sunday, March 22, a number of nearby banding stations will be visited, including a stop at Mill Grove, the first home in America of John James Audubon, and where the first banding experiment was made in this country.

"We hope many of you will plan to attend; the papers should prove informative and the outing very enjoyable.

"The local committee making arrangements are William Pepper, Chairman, and Joseph Cadbury, John Gillespie, and John Dornan.

"Any desiring hotel accommodations write to Herman F. Kuch, Jr., 1002 Crest Road, Penfield Downs, Philadelphia 31, Pa.

"Those desiring to present papers should send title and time required to the President as soon as possible.

"Enter the Academy by the Parkway entrance and inquire at the desk for the meeting room. There is a parking field on 19th Street, opposite the building."

AN AMAZING OCCURRENCE OF BALTIMORE ORIOLES

In mid-December, your Editor received a letter from a new bander, Anna N. Wanek (Mrs. Ernest Wanek), 5 Davidson Avenue, Ramsey, New Jersey, which contained the following astonishing news:

"On Monday morning, December 8, about 8:15, I experienced a 'thrill of a lifetime'. About thirty or more Baltimore Orioles (*Icterus galbula*) descended on our yard, concentrating on food shelves, fortunately stocked at the time with oatmeal and raisins in addition to the customary seeds. The majority of the flock were females. They dispersed themselves close to the house until after one o'clock that day.

"The traps were set, also baited with oatmeal and raisins, but alas, only a solitary female was intrepid enough to venture into involuntary confinement. The disappointing record at the traps, however, was well compensated for by the flashing exhibition which I understand was entirely out of season and against the rules."

Needless to say, the Editor was completely flabbergasted by this letter, even to the extent of being completely unable to know how to write a diplomatic letter for additional confirmation! Fortunately, a second letter from Mrs. Wanek, dated December 21, arrived to confirm what he was reluctant to accept. She said:

"Some days ago I had the audacity to report to you, without confirmation, the visit to our vicinity of thirty Baltimore Orioles. I should have realized not only that this is not the season for them in this latitude, but that this species does not travel in flocks.

"Yesterday, the twentieth, my husband brought to the door a single-coll trap into which another female Baltimore Oriole, I was sure, had found its way.

"The find was taken to Mrs. Eleanor Dator who confirmed our suspicion. Nevertheless, Mrs. Dator telephoned your good friend, Mr. Charles Nichols of the American Museum. Mr. Nichols graciously paid us a visit, and now we know beyond any doubt that our identification was correct, in the main. I must make this qualification since Mr. Nichols disclosed the bird was an immature male.

"He will report the visit not only of the individual but also of the whole flock in 'Audubon Field Notes'."

A third letter, dated December 23, arrived from Mr. Nichols, from which we quote.

"I think you have a note on a flock of Baltimore Orioles; thirty were counted and one banded. I was not at all inclined to accept the record, it was too fantastic. Saturday last, the bander called me to tell me she had trapped another. I hurried to the place and, sure enough, she had a Baltimore Oriole, a female. As it carried no band, it was not the bird formerly trapped. But thirty? Still I think it must be accepted." (Perhaps Mr. Nichols inadvertently mentioned 'female' rather than 'immature male' as stated by Mrs. Wanek; if it was not an immature male which was involved on December 20, we will carry a correction in a later issue.—Ed.)

With this record we have another chapter in the story of the changing status of another of our familiar birds. Miss Margaret S. Goodwin, of Earnley Farm, Route 5, West Chester, Pa., hearing about this record, kindly forwarded a copy of the January-February 1952 issue, volume VIII, number 1, of "Maryland Birdlife", on pages 10-11, of which Hervey Brackbill writes about Baltimore Orioles in Maryland in winter. He reports two individuals, one, a male, at Towson, Baltimore County, on January 4, 1951 (fide Jack Kaufmann), and another, a female, in the Walbrook section of Baltimore City, on January (fide Mr. and Mrs. C. Walter Lane and Miss Mary E. Lane); the female stayed on through February 21, and Mr. Brackbill confirmed the identification. Suet and halved grapes attracted and sustained these birds.

Brackbill (Ibid.) calls attention to an oriole seen at Mount Joy, Lancaster County, Pa., February 4, 1951 ("Bull. Lancaster Co. Bird Club", 22: 10, 1951).

Chandler S. Robbins, Editor of "Maryland Birdlife" (Ibid.), in a footnote, calls attention to additional occurrences of this species reported to the Fish and Wildlife Service during the same winter in late December, January, or February, from Newburyport, Mass., New London, Conn., Lexington, Va., Jamestown, Ballston Lake, and Baldwin, N.Y., and Youngston, Ohio.

Herbert L. Stoddard, Sr., of Sherwood Plantations, Thomasville, Georgia, writing in "The Auk" (68, 1: 108-110, 1951) about the occurrence of the Baltimore Oriole in southwest Georgia and the southern coastal plain, states that the appearance of the species coincides with cold-fronts. He attributes the increasing wintering habits of the species to the profound ecological changes in that region of Georgia and South Carolina, changes that are being brought about by changes in agricultural practice.

To this writer, it would appear that such ecological changes may not be the reason for the establishment of the wintering habit in that part of the south. It is of course true that changes in the nature of the ground cover and type of food supply are favorable to some species of birds and unfavorable to others, with consequent shifting of ranges, and in the case of orioles, the changes are favorable to their having an adequate winter food supply. On the other hand, no such marked change has occurred in recent years in the available food supply in New England and the Middle Atlantic States, from which areas quite a number of records have come.

It may well be, that, under certain conditions, records are correlated with the appearance of cold fronts; information on which to base such a generalization is lacking for most of the records.

That the Baltimore Oriole may be extending its winter range northward is a distinct possibility, although a shift, in the northern limit of the winter range from southern Mexico to Georgia and South Carolina within a few years seems rather drastic. Furthermore, Forbush ("Birds of Massachusetts", 1925, II, 443-444 cites four midwinter records for that state, and Albert Conway advises the writer of three winter records in the Philadelphia region: one dead at Haddonfield, N.J., Jan. 16, 1912 (R. T. Moore); Swarthmore, Pa., Dec. 26, 1919 (S. C. Palmer); and one found dead at Wyncote, Pa., Dec. 27, 1919 (E. H. Baynes). These records for many years ago as well as others which undoubtedly have not come to our attention would lead us not to draw too hasty conclusions as to the uniqueness of the present occurrences or to the possible long-term changes which they may presage.--J. R. Conway (See page 9, this issue, for additional oriole records received since this was written.—Ed.)

BANDING OF COLONIAL BIRDS IN 1952

Late last summer, Mr. Harry T. Davis, of the North Carolina State Museum, Raleigh, North Carolina, offered the suggestion that EBBA NEWS summarize the banding of colonial species of birds by members of E.B.B.A. along the Atlantic coast. A number of members responded to a request for information by sending in data on their operations. While the data are probably not complete, they should be of interest to persons concerned with colonial species. If this information is of sufficient interest to readers, please drop the Editor a note. Another season, it would seem desirable to publish this material in the September or October issue. In future years it would be of value to have observations on the numbers of a species present at a given location, together with comments on change in status, etc.

In the following tables, the number of birds banded refers to fledglings unless otherwise indicated. All dates, of course, are for 1952.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Number Banded</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Bander</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
LEACH'S PETREL (9 young banded):				
6/19 to 8/20	9	Numerous islands, Lincoln & Knox Cos., Muscongus Bay, Maine	J.M. Cadbury	"Size of colonies impossible to estimate."
BROWN PELICAN (7 young banded):				
May 19	7	Brevard Co., Florida	W.M. Davidson	"Earliest in a colony of at least 100 pairs."
DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT (511 young banded):				
May 19	17	Brevard Co., Florida	W.M. Davidson	"About 24 pairs in colony."
7/17-18	18	S. Mark Island, Hancock Co., Maine	F.P. Frazier & F.P.F., Jr.	250 young birds in colony.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT, continued:

6/19 to 8/20 476 Muscongus Bay, Maine J.M. Cadbury "Over 2000 pairs"

AMERICAN EGRET (6 young banded):

May 15 6 Longwood, Seminole W.M. Davidson "30 pairs in
County, Florida colony"

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL (244 young banded):

7/17 & 18 5 S. Mark Island, F. P. Frazier "Estimate of 35
Hancock Co., Maine & F.P.F., Jr. young"

6/19-8/20 233 Muscongus Bay, Me. J.M. Cadbury "Nearly 1000
pairs"

July 19 6 Mark Island, A.L. Baily "3 pairs of
Casco Bay, Me. adults"

HERRING GULL (204 young banded):

6/19-8/20 104 Muscongus Bay, Me. J.M. Cadbury "About 600 pairs"

July 19 100 Mark Island, A.L. Baily "65 pairs
Casco Bay, Me. estimated"

LAUGHING GULL 19 Brigantine Refuge, A.E. Conway "500 pairs; young
July 12 N. Jersey chiefly on wing"
(19 young banded) One recovered,
8/14/52, Tottenville, S.I., N.Y.

GULL-BILLED TERN 1 Oregon Inlet, N.C. H.T. Davis
(1 young banded)

COMMON TERN (124 young and 8 adults banded, a total of 132)

July 4-5 8 Pamlico Sound Bay, N.C. H.T. Davis "Banded 8 adults
out of 20 pairs"

Do. 12 Oregon Beach, Inlet, N.C. Do. "20 pairs"

COMMON TERN (continued):

July 24 13 Oregon Inlet, N.C. R. Wolff

July 17 2 Strathmere, N.J. W. Pepper

July 12 75 Beach Haven, N.J. A.E. Conway "150 pairs"

July 26 10 Do. A.E. & J.R. Conway

Do. 10 Do. P.H. Fluck

Aug. 13 2 Stone Harbor, N.J. A.E. Conway "11 p.m., on beach"

LEAST TERN (50 young banded):

July 4-5 13 Oregon Inlet, N.C. H.T. Davis "12 pairs"

July 24 20 Do. R. Wolff

July 17 16 Strathmere, N.J. W. Pepper

July 12 1 Little Beach Island, N.J. A.E. Conway "1 pair"

BLACK SKIMMER (452 young and 6 adults, a total of 458 banded):

July 12 100 Beach Haven, N.J. A.E. Conway "250 pairs"

July 26 65 Do. A.E. & J.R. Conway "One found

dead Vero Beach, Fla., Jan. 5, 1953"

Do. 60 Do. P.H. Fluck

Aug. 13 2 Stone Harbor, N.J. A.E. Conway "11 p.m., on beach"

July 4-5 96 Oregon Inlet, N.C. H.T. Davis "75 pairs" "Trapped
& J. Grey an adult banded on
Do. 6 Do. Do. 7/19/49 1 mi north"

July 24 68 Do. R. Wolff

July 19 27 Wreck Island, Va. J. Grey

BLACK GUILLEMOT (6 young banded):

6/19-8/20 6 Muscongus Bay, Me. J. Cadbury "About 75 pairs"

It is not intended that the foregoing is a complete tabulation of all the colonial birds banded along the Atlantic Coast in 1952; rather it represents a tabulation of the reports sent to your Editor in reply to his request for information. At Stone Harbor, N.J., the two each of Common Terns and Black Skimmers reported banded on the beach at 11 p.m.

by the Editor were merely picked up while on a late evening walk; this colony was not systematically banded this year by the Editor, but he noted that many young birds of these species were banded, yet no report on this operation was forthcoming.

Mr. Davis's remarks on the colonies in North Carolina are quite interesting, and from these we quote several portions:

"Rookery Island, one mile west (of one-time New Inlet, Pamlico Sound Bay--Ed), where we had found hundreds of Royal Terns in 1948 and 1949, was altogether abandoned, as it was last summer (1951). Very few Royals were seen on the wing. *** A half mile to the south, we located a colony of mixed herons in some low trees, estimated at 25 pairs.

"On Grassy Island, one mile west from the south side of Oregon Inlet, we observed an estimated 250 pairs of nesting Laughing Gulls. The hatched young were small, and in the thick rushes and saw grass. We did not band them, although we had banded hundreds there in previous years. They were the most abundant birds about the refuge (Pea Island).

"To observe bird colonies in the Ocracoke region, I received a friendly lift on a boat going through the Inland Waterway Canal from Morehead, thence out to the mouth of the Neuse River and across the lower sound, date July 11 and 18. About a mile from Highway 70 bridge was an island colony with some 40 pairs of mixed herons.

"In approaching Ocracoke, we passed close to Shell Castle, North Rock, and Beacon Islands. On the last there were low bushes and about 20 pairs of herons. The other islands were well covered with weeds and small shrubs. There were altogether estimated 700 pairs of Laughing Gulls and more than that of waddling young.

"Least and Common Terns had nested on bare spots, some 100 pairs of each. Only an occasional Royal Tern was seen. No Pelicans were seen, although they had nested here in previous years.

"The famed Royal Shoals, traditional home of Royal Terns, had

been washed flat. It is well out in Pamlico Sound, north of Ocracoke, and it was not observed. Other shoals that have built higher there (Howard Lumps) or in the vicinity of Cape Hatteras may have taken care of the Royal Tern colonies.

"July 5, 1952, Isham B. Rogers, Superintendent of Schools of Onslow County, reported 'several hundred' Black Skimmer nests on a bare sand (dredge dump) area of one and one-half acres to the west of Bardens Inlet, near Cape Lookout."

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MORE ABOUT ORIOLES

The BULLETIN OF THE MAINE AUDUBON SOCIETY, vol. 9, no. 1, January 1953, edited by Dr. Alfred O. Gross of Bowdoin College, is now at hand and provides another banding record for an oriole this winter.

On December 4, 1952, an immature Orchard Oriole appeared at the feeding station of a Mrs. Raymond in Westbrook, Maine. It was examined by Dr. Gross, as well as banded on December 13 by Mrs. Irma Werner with band number 49-185137. On January 13, 1953, it was still present. Concerning this species in Maine, Dr. Gross (pp. 22-23) says there are "few records of the Orchard Oriole for Maine and no authentic records of their nesting". His examination of the plumage of this bird suggests that it must have been the result of a very late nesting, with the strong possibility that it occurred in the State limits.

Two Baltimore Orioles were observed but not banded within the same State this winter, a young bird at Bangor, December 20, 1952 (T.P. Coolidge) and another at Yarmouth, December 21, 1952 (Roy Spear), the latter bird being present January 7, 1953. (Ibid., p. 23)--J.R.C.

* * *

CONCERNING PROPER BAND SIZES

Father Edward Stoehr, St. Conrad Friary, Annapolis, Maryland, R.F.D. 4, Box 748, says, in a letter to the Editor, "It seems that some of the recommended sizes (of bands) are too large for the bird involved. For example: # 2 is too large for Wood Thrushes, I've been using 1A.

1A is too large for the other thrushes (Olive-b., Veery, Gray-ch., and Hermit)-while # 1B seems more proper.
1A is too large for the tanagers-so I've used # 1B.
and # 1A is too small for Mockingbirds; # 2 is a better fit.

"Have you any comments concerning this matter? It would be interesting to know what other banders think along these lines."

Your Editor agrees with Father Stoehr that a number of the recommended band sizes are not the best that could be used. In their list of band sizes, the Editor and his wife have, from time to time, made changes in the sizes of the bands to be used on various species. Since many other banders have probably had similar experiences, the Editor requests that members drop him a line concerning the changes in band size which they make. Through this type of cooperative effort, the Fish and Wildlife Service will better be able to recommend, in future publications, bands which are more suitable for certain species. Try to get this data in by April 15 at the latest.

* * *

BLUE JAY SYMPOSIUM

The results of the questionnaire circulated to members last Summer interestingly enough gave first place to the Robin as a topic for a species symposium, although the announcement that the November issue would be devoted to that species went out before the results from the questionnaire were in. Next in order of preference as a symposium topic was the Blue Jay, so it has been decided to devote the May or June issue to that species. The latter issue will mark the final issue of the current term of the Editor, so whether or not he be renamed for another term, the Blue Jay material will have been completed before the end of the current term. Use the Robin symposium as a guide to the type of material desired (Nov.-Dec. 1952). Please send the material no later than April 1 to:

Mrs. Albert E. Conway
Route 4
Easton, Pennsylvania

* * *

Don't forget! Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, Pa., March 21-22, 1953.

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Since the appearance of the Robin symposium, three sets of data on this species have been received. In a future issue, highlights from these will be presented, especially where different material is involved.

The April issue (deadline for corrections, March 21) will be devoted to an alphabetical listing of all members of E.B.B.A., as well as the new slate of officers. If your address, as shown on the cover of EBBA NEWS is incorrect in any way, please drop a postal to the Editor advising him of the correction to be made. Also, if you plan to move in the near future, and know your new address, let him know it so that the list will be as up-to-date and correct as possible.

In the membership list, those persons who have contributed one dollar or more in excess of the annual dues of \$2.00 will have an asterisk in front of their names. The Editor is sure that the Treasurer, Merrill Wood, would be most happy to receive additional contributions for the current year from those persons who would like to be classified as sustaining members. If possible, try to help the Association in this way.

The somewhat different format of this and the last issue reflect comments and majority opinion of the members as shown by the responses to the questionnaire.

Some members have wondered why the address of the Editor fluctuates between "Lafayette College" and "Route 4", Easton, Pa. This primarily refers to the return address which is used in returning copies which can not be delivered, and varies according to whether College is in session or not, although experience indicates it doesn't make much difference which address is used.

If any of you have written the Editor or sent in material which has not been acknowledged, please forgive the delay. This Fall and Winter have been very busy and, since the Editor devotes from ten to twenty-five hours per month at his job, he can't keep abreast his correspondence as well as he would like. ***It is hoped that the February issue will follow this number very shortly, with the March issue out March 10.

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E B B A N E W S

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The Eastern Bird-Banding Association News Letter

January 1953

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