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E B B A N E W S

Eastern Bird-Banding Association News Letter

NOVEMBER 1951

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THE EASTERN BIRD-BANDING ASSOCIATION

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REPORT OF EBBA COMMITTEE ON PROPOSAL FOR A NORTH AMERICAN  
BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION

For the Eastern Bird Banding Association, President Horace Groskin, on June 28, 1951, appointed a Committee, consisting of Geoffrey Gill and Beecher S. Bowdish, to study the proposal for a nation-wide bird banding organization and report thereon.

As the essential matters involved, the Committee has considered first; the need for such an organization and second; the feasibility of creating it as something which would successfully function for the achievement of its objectives.

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A letter of inquiry relative to some of the questions pertaining to a North American organization was addressed to Dr. Charles H. Blake, President of the North-Eastern Bird Banding Association, one of the principal proponents of the proposal. Dr. Blake's answer intimates that some of the principal considerations are: that while the normal income of a national organization would, of course, be inadequate to enable it to take over the present functions of the Fish and Wildlife Service in the supervision of bird banding, such a national organization would be in a better position to solicit funds from "some foundation" than would a regional organization; also that an increased subscription to BIRD-BANDING should be anticipated with the forming of a national banding organization.

Dr. Blake's conception of such an organization was stated as a federation of existing and possible additional future regional organizations. His letter did not rule out the possibility of abandonment of non-game bird banding supervision by the Fish and Wildlife Service, which has been the subject of a rumor of unknown origin that has circulated in connection with the proposal for a North American banding organization.

In connection with the above mentioned rumor, a letter of inquiry on behalf of the Committee was addressed to the Fish and Wildlife Service. The reply, written by Dr. John W. Aldrich, Chief of the Section of Distribution and Migration of Birds, Branch of Wildlife Research, should serve to dispose of the rumor permanently. That part of Dr. Aldrich's letter referring to the rumor reads as follows: "I am surprised at the current rumor that Fish and Wildlife Service contemplates discontinuing supervision of banding other than game birds. We learned of such a rumor about a year ago through Mrs. Margaret Morse Nice and Dr. S. Charles Kendeigh, and thought that we had adequately stated the facts at that time which would squelch the rumor. As far as I can learn, the subject of abandonment of banding of other than game birds by the Fish and Wildlife Service has not even been discussed by persons with authority in the Service. I am certain that no such action is being contemplated at the present time and I doubt very much if it will ever come to pass unless there is complete collapse in the Wildlife Research budget.

"I hope that you will take pains to pass on this information to those who are concerned about the future of banding, and trust that it will put an end to the rumor that is going around."

Of the proposal for a North American banding organization, Dr. Aldrich says: "I am glad to hear that this proposal is still alive since I believe it has considerable merit."

In view of the time that has elapsed since the appointing of this Committee, it is our feeling that further time spent in search of additional facts bearing on the subject is not likely to produce material justifying thus delaying our report.

The Committee suggests that this report or a condensation thereof be printed in EBBA NEWS together with an invitation to all members of the Eastern Bird Banding Association to participate in a ballot by postcard as to what shall be the attitude of our Association in regard to the proposed North American banding organization.

Respectfully submitted,  
S/ Geoffrey Gill  
S/ Beecher S. Bowdish

Write to the Committee or to President Groskin with your ideas.

#### MORE ON TRAPS

Beecher Bowdish of Demarest, N. J. contributes some general observations:

"Basic in provision and use of banding traps is the character of construction. The beginner is very apt to attempt to acquire an outfit of traps as quickly as possible, without too critical consideration of how satisfactorily the equipment is going to serve him.

Based on a very considerable amount of experience, some of it

painful, a few suggestions are herein offered. Taking time right at the start to insure that equipment is as near perfection in certain essentials as possible is worthwhile.

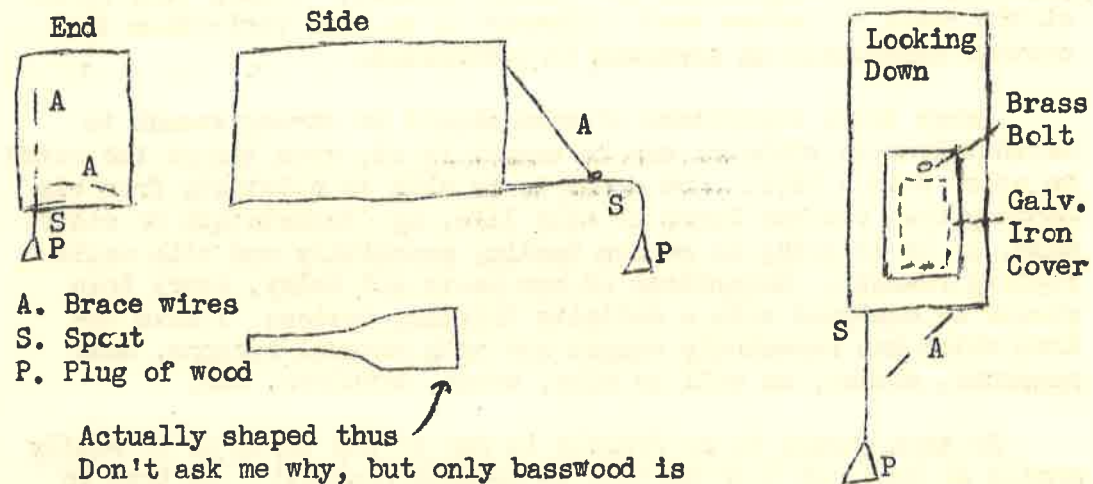
Every trap, regardless of size should be strong enough to definitely hold whatever may be caught in it, even though the catch be other than a bird. One needs to be able to eliminate from his banding area various forms of wild life, by deportation or otherwise, if he is going to pursue banding peacefully and with satisfactory results. Regardless of how heavy and bulky, every trap should be equipped with a delicate tripping device. I have one trap which has repeatedly caught and held several racoons, many opossums, skunks, as well as mice, wrens, warblers, etc.

No trap should be so fragile in any of its parts as to easily spring or bend and thereby fail to operate properly. No trap is really satisfactory that is liable to close as a result of a slight jar or a gust of wind; neither is one which fails to close, or sticks in closing, permitting a bird to escape."

M. L. Jones, Ledges State Park, Boone, Iowa, describes a water drip set-up as follows:

"The one-gallon can is supported by 4 yard long sticks made from 3/4" lumber cut 3/4" wide, (or good straight willow sprouts are O.K.).

Hay baling twine (treated) is used as a "swing" support between the two front stakes. Same, of course, for back pair. The can is a used Prestone can with the openings soldered shut and a spout soldered in place. This spout I formerly made of 1/8" brass hollow tubing as used in the old fashioned gas lights, but I am now trying ordinary copper tubing of a small size (3/16" or near). This spout is braced vertically and horizontally by a small (#16 or 14) galv. wire soldered to the can, twisted once around the spout out 3" or so then back to the can.



- A. Brace wires  
S. Spout  
P. Plug of wood

Actually shaped thus  
Don't ask me why, but only basswood is satisfactory for these plugs.

I formerly used a "screw on" cap and soldered the drip wire into it. Mostly I now use the one sketched here and shown in the photo so I don't have to remove the can to fill it. I cut a rectangular hole in the top about 1-1/2 x 3" and place a cover slightly larger over this to keep out mice, bugs and trash. This cover is pivoted on a brass bolt at one end.

This one-gallon drip is dirt and dust proof as I found was not true of a bucket. It will last a half day, or two or three days, depending on how tightly the plug is pushed in. The whole outfit is very easily moved to a new site."

### JUNCOS

Mr. G. Hapgood Parks, Hartford 5, Conn. continues the Junco discussion:

"Referring to Mr. Smiley's 'tentative conclusion' #1 (see page 2 of EBBA NEWS for August, 1951) may I report that, during the past summer, I was successful in trapping 3 adult, breeding Slate-colored Juncos, and 10 locally-hatched juveniles of the

same species.

Tailfeathers were collected, but time has not yet been found to study them in detail.

Regarding bill pigmentation, however, adults trapped during July showed bills completely pink, with no semblance of gray or brown. Repeats of these same adults after mid-August revealed the appearance of tiny areas of gray at the tip of the bill and a change of the remaining pink areas to purplish.

Meanwhile, the bill of every one of the juveniles was heavily pigmented with dark brownish gray.

To just what age this distinct difference in pigmentation persists our records fail to show, for we are unable to continue our study in the breeding area after Labor Day, and all of our repeats from this group show the young birds still in their streaked-breasted juvenal plumage.

Here is a common species which rates a whole lot more study. There must be an answer to the enigma of the apparent inconsistencies of their age-sex-plumage-pigmentation interrelations."

Banding of summer Juncos on the breeding grounds appears to be a must if we are to work out some of the problems discussed in these pages during the last few months. Nearly every bander can contribute something to our knowledge of this common species.

EBBA subscribers to BIRD-BANDING will receive a statement in January, at the reduced rate of \$4.00, and thereby will renew their subscriptions directly with the BIRD-BANDING Treasurer, Mr. Richard M. Hinchman, 75 Fairbanks Rd., Milton 86, Mass. To start a subscription to BIRD-BANDING: EBBA members can get it for \$4.00 (others \$5.) by subscribing directly with the BIRD-BANDING treasurer.

A Christmas present suggestion: a subscription to the EBBA NEWS and/or BIRD BANDING.

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