

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

The Capture of Water-fowl in Fish Nets.—The recent note by Mr. Stanley G. Jewett¹ on the accidental capture of a White-winged Scoter (*Oidemia deglandi*) in a salmon net, is of particular interest in view of the fact that the Bureau of Biological Survey is giving attention to the use of nets to capture birds for banding purposes.²

As stated in the paper referred to in the accompanying foot-note, several forms of net traps have been successfully used, among them being the well-known "fyke" net. This contrivance is made by covering a series of four iron hoops, three to four feet in diameter, with cord webbing. When fully extended the hoops are about two feet apart, and the web cylinder thus produced is divided into two chambers by means of web funnels. The first of these has a large mouth while the second is much reduced. Short wings or guides of webbing are extended from the mouth of the trap and the whole affair is held in place in shallow water by long stakes forced into the mud.

In the marshes of the Illinois River these nets are used extensively for the capture of carp, buffalo, and other fishes, an energetic fisherman frequently running a line of forty to fifty "fykes". The nets are placed in areas where large numbers of ducks gather to feed, and it is common to find half a dozen mallards or pintails in a single net. During March, 1922, while engaged in banding work in this region, I made a practice of trying to beat the fisherman to the nets that were set in my neighborhood for the purpose of securing any ducks that might have been caught. Pintails were most frequently taken and it was noticeable that they were usually caught in flocks of four to six, indicating that they fed in small groups and were strongly inclined to "follow the leader".

In this connection, mention may also be made of a recent "return" from a Buffle-head duck that was banded by Mr. Verdi Burtch, at Branchport, New York, on April 6, 1922. Eleven days later (April 17) the bird was found entangled in a herring net in Georgian Bay, near Collingwood, Ontario.

The problem of evolving suitable methods for the capture of diving ducks for banding purposes will still require considerable experimentation, but present indications are that some form of a submerged net will prove most satisfactory. Such a device will, of course, require an arrangement that will bring captured birds safely to the surface after they have entered the chambers or pockets of the trap.—FREDERICK C. LINCOLN, *U. S. Biological Survey, Washington, D. C., August 14, 1922.*

Northward Range of the Gray Vireo in California.—While on a short collecting trip as guest of Mr. A. Brazier Howell, I spent the afternoon of July 25, 1922, on the west slope of Walker Pass, which is in northeastern Kern County, California, at the southern end of the main high Sierra Nevada. The feature of the occasion was my meeting with an adult pair of Gray Vireos (*Vireo vicinior*). The exact spot was on a steep, north-facing hillside within one-fourth mile south of "Jack's Station" (now merely a roadside camping place); altitude close to 4500 feet; life-zone Upper Sonoran, in a semi-arid phase of it. The birds were in sparse brush (*Garrya*, *Kunzia*, *Artemisia tridentata*, and *Cercocarpus betulaeifolius*); and a digger pine and a pinyon both grew within one hundred feet of where they were discovered.

I was first attracted by the broken, post-nuptially rendered song of the male—intermittent and sketchy, yet distinct enough from the songs of other vireos to be recognized at once. This male Gray Vireo was promptly shot. It proved to be in molt, with only two of the old tail-feathers remaining and with new feathers showing where old ones had fallen out, in the wings and in most of the body tracts. The weight of the bird was 12.5 grams. It is now catalogued as no. 43295 of the bird collection in the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology.

A minute or two after shooting the singing bird, I caught sight of the other bird which I concluded was the female of the pair. The only note she gave was a low harsh *churr* or *shray*, given now and then as she hopped slowly through the twiggery. From the bushes she went into the pinyon tree before mentioned, and thence into the digger

¹Condor, XXIV, May, 1922, p. 95.

²Auk, XXXIX, no. 3, July, 1922, pp. 322-334, pls. XI-XIV: "Trapping Ducks for Banding Purposes", by Frederick C. Lincoln.