

has been on the wet side much of the last few years. A dry spell in May or October will double the number caught. Then also there is the scarcity of birds during many migrations. This has been in evidence much of the last five years; the fall of 1949 and the spring of 1950 were excellent with birds abundant but in the fall of 1950 birds were very scarce. Possibly unusual weather conditions slow up migration making birds seem more abundant at a given area and then when they take off again they may take longer hops and do not stop off at as many places as generally expected. This could explain some having greater numbers than usual while other areas find them scarce or many species almost entirely missing.

Now as to injured birds captured, we often catch birds with only one leg, others that have had broken legs and have healed crooked. We also catch an occasional bird with a wing injury; if the injury affects only the joint at the bend of the wing we have had them recover full flight in less than two weeks. None where the entire wing was broken recovered flight. A number have been taken with tail missing, these grow in full in a month.

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GENERAL NOTES

High Return W. Percentage of Tree Sparrow.—On January 21, 1950, forty-three Tree Sparrows, *Spizella arborea arborea* (Wilson), were banded at Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Northampton, Hampshire Co., Massachusetts. In the period Dec. 23, 1950, to March 22, 1951, the year following banding, nine returns W. were taken from the 43 birds banded on January 21, 1950. This is 21%, which seems to be an unusually high return figure.—Edwin A. Mason, Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Northampton, Mass.

Banding Nestling Mourning Doves.—While associated with the State Natural History Survey investigation of the Mourning Dove in Illinois, a problem encountered was the number of nestling doves found that were too young to be banded and have the band remain on their leg. These birds were being left unbanded in nests in remote territories. In a number of such cases the investigators were travelling the state covering areas that did not warrant a revisit. In other cases they would not revisit the nesting territory containing these young (one to eight days old) frequently enough to band them when their legs were large enough to hold the bands on. In addition, some areas that were revisited at regular intervals occasionally harbored a few young that were classed as "doubtful."

A method which was thought of to overcome this situation involved using two, four, six, eight or ten day gut; piercing the fleshy part of the leg with a needle and drawing the gut through, then tying it onto the band, anticipating that the gut would dissolve in the prescribed time and that the band would remain on the leg. After discussing this method with a local physician, the opinion was that an infection might result in the leg at the points of broken skin. The idea was then discarded. The doctor suggested and furnished two rolls of elastic adhesive tape one-half and one inch wide, which were used experimentally as follows: After applying a band, a piece of tape was cut long enough to result in a long overlap when wrapped around the band. Only about one-half of the width was fastened onto the band, the other half was made secure to the upper part of the leg, mainly on the down or light hairs, which then prevented the band from sliding up above the heel or down and off of the tarsus. Another method was to place about half of the tape on the band and turn the remainder slightly in on the under side where it would adhere to the tarsus and prevent the band from slipping off. The first method of applying the tape appeared to be more satisfactory.