

Don't send the Editor any sketches or drawings to be reproduced in EBBA-NEWS. Present printed set-up makes reproduction impossible. — But, of course, sketches which give the dumb Editor an exact idea of what you are talking about are welcome.

Will some New Jersey citizen try to get his Agricultural Experiment Station to mail this Editor regularly those 'Bird Bulletins' of theirs. These should be useful here.

Leroy Wilcox (Speonk, L. I.): "I am right in the middle of this new duck disease which hit me 3 weeks ago, and am losing 80% of my ducks! The worst thing that has hit the L. I. duck industry in 60 years; about 55 of the 70 big farms have it; some for several months. Laboratories having difficulty fighting it; it is an air-borne virus..." — Say! that's tough, isn't it! Keep fighting, Roy! (Editor wonders if there's any such disease hitting our wild birds this season.) How about wild ducks on the East Coast?

Will some member send Editor brief description of 'Dodson Sparrow-trap', with rough sketch?

Who can throw light on Band No. 47-214331? (Species not mentioned by H. P. Mahnken!) "Bird found dead near Center Bridge, Pa."

"One of our White-throats during the course of last Winter repeated well over

300 times, from all the traps in our station." (Bowdish).

Writes Hawksley of Cornell (Laboratory of Ornithology): "I'm inclined to agree with the 'Banders' should Specialize School'. I think you'll see outstanding results of specialization on Artic Terns in a note of mine in BIRD BANDING. Soon." "We banders need more regular issues of BIRD-BANDING NOTES to help us know about large projects going on, especially. I had to guess at sizes of bands in banding gulls and other seabirds this summer. There are some new sizes out now..." "March-April 'Condor' 1949: prints a very valuable piece on Banding."

Get your local or near-by radio stations and newspapers to mention once in a while something like: "Watch out for Feral-numbered bands on the legs of birds you find or shoot! Banding is a scientific study."

## Sick Tree Sparrow

On Jan. 4, 1948 began the greatest influx of Tree Sparrows we ever experienced. Ground for weeks was continuously snow covered. Temperatures at no time above freezing until Feb. 25. In less than two months banded 182. In all, 2057 Repeats...

Jan. 22 banded Tree Sparrow No. 47-173326; little did we realize the interesting events to center about this bird in next 52 days. Started repeating often; during first 4 weeks nothing unusual noticed in daily observations.

Feb. 15 noted its tail missing; 3 days later new feathers showing; in less than 3 weeks completely regrown. When tail was half grown, bird found in trap looking nearly double normal size. — It was suffering with an "air puff".\*\* Its skin was separated from the flesh by an air sack over most of body and neck. I punctured air sack with needle, and pressure became partly relieved. Next day bird was again under high pressure; this time two punctures allowed most of air to be pressed out.

In next 3 day some air was noted but "sack" not too filled out. Bird seemed in no distress. No new puncture made. Tail growth being completed now. Following day the "sack" found blown up higher than ever before; desperate measures tried: we sterilized small blade; made incision in skin of neck 1/4" long. All air released.

During these 7 days of illness bird came 5 times or more a day; appetite seemed normal. The last days of February brought higher temperatures — and all but our bird disappeared. For next 9 days our patient fed daily, apparently entirely cured; then it left for good...

As we looked back over nearly 28 years of banding (32000 banded; 1135 Returns; over 33,000 Repeats); it is doubtful if any other bird has interested — and fascinated — us as much as did this little Tree Sparrow.

We wrote R. J. Middleton (of Norristown, N. J.) who sent the above story, to tell us more about this odd condition Here's gist of his reply:

"Regarding the inflation condition of the Tree Sparrow that I wrote about, I have never read or known of any con-

dition similar to this except in pigeons.

In a book on pigeon diseases it is listed as appearing at times but rarely, and mentions only one cure, that of cutting open the skin to relieve the pressure.

We have a pigeon farm of some 16000 birds, that is my main business, raising squabs.

About once each year we find a pigeon with this disease and have cured them the same way, it is not contagious as have never seen two to have it at the same time. Knowing how to cure pigeons was the reason I knew what to do for the Tree Sparrow.

Dr. Alfred M. Bailey of the Denver Museum was here while I was capturing this bird and he told me he never heard of this before in wild birds.

... Had a terrific flight of birds of many species going thru here yesterday, best I have seen for several years, mostly warblers. (Sept. 19, 1949)."

Raymond J. Middleton

Well, Middleton, with all of the U. S. swinging into an inflationary cycle, it wouldn't be so surprising if some of our native birds felt the effects of it too!

As Editor finishes writing most of this month's copy, there comes to hand BIRD BANDING NOTES for August 1949. (Vol. 4, No. 2). And is it packed with directives and other valuable reading! We urge each of our members to study this document with particular care; first, to influence his own reporting, and second, to discover if in his reactions to it he has anything he feels he ought to comment upon in EBBA NEWS. Editor sort of expects to receive a lot of comments and queries.