

Price \$6.00 express collect. NATURE RESEARCH
CENTER, Pemberton, New Jersey

* * *

CONCERNING GRACKLES

Mrs. Christella Butler, of Parkland, Bucks County, Penna., writes as follows concerning Purple Grackles:

"I have banded more Purple Grackles than any other bird. Last year I started taking notes on these birds with the following results. The young birds have no iridescent coloring, their eyes are dark and change gradually to the yellow of the adult birds. Also, the inside of their mouths are pink while those of the adults are black. They vary greatly in size and weight, although I have not used a scale. Some young birds are very heavy and some are very light. I believe the large ones are males, but I have no proof of this. (Who does?--Ed.)

"The grackles seldom repeat. In the spring I see many banded grackles feeding before I have banded any for the year but few of them enter the traps. They soon learn to remove the food without being caught. I band mostly young grackles. The adult birds raise the feathers on their heads when they are angry. They harbor bird flies (Hippoboscidae) which burrow down under the feathers and are hard to dislodge.

"One thing which I have noted is that I have more birds in my traps on a Sunday morning than any other day. This has held true over a period of years, and I wonder why. There is no change in my set-up in any way, yet the birds, especially the grackles, congregate at my traps on Sunday."

* * *

MORE ABOUT BAND SIZES

On pages 6 and 7 of the May-June issue, Dr. Charles C. Blake made various suggestions concerning the use of bands of sizes other than those recommended or suggested in Bird Banding Notes. Under dates of October 17 and 24, 1953, C. Haggood Parks sent the following comments concerning the size changes suggested by Dr. Blake:

"I must take exception to one band size which is included in Dr. Blake's list as published in the current EBBA NEWS. He recommends Size 1 for Slate-colored Juncos. I used to use that size but changed to Size 0 when the #1 size seemed loose. I have used the Size 0 on 111 members of this species without finding a single case in which it was too snug. In fact, I can not imagine a more perfect fit.

"When I sent you a card recently re Size 0 bands for Slate-colored Juncos in preference to the #1's as recommended by Dr. Blake, I overlooked his suggestion of #1B bands for Eastern Song Sparrow.

"I have found considerable variation in size of tarsi among Eastern Song Sparrows, but I have used #1 bands on all of this species (29 individuals) banded during the past four years without finding a single instance in which the number 1 band was too snug.

"A study of our foreign retraps (or recoveries--Ed.) indicates that too many banders use too large bands on too many species. I believe that it is a serious menace to the birds."

* * *

NEW MEMBERS

We are happy to welcome the following persons who have joined EBBA during the last few months. Of these, Mr. Schaub is a former member whose rejoining has not heretofore been given official recognition. The list follows:

Aharrah, Ernest C., 16 North Mann St., Yeagertown, Penna.
Crenshaw, Dr. Fred, Batty State Hospital, Rome, Georgia
Davis, Dr. David E., 615 N. Wolfe St., Baltimore 5, Maryland
Field, Marshall, R. R. No. 2, St. Thomas, Ontario
Pittman, Miss Jeanne, 73 N. Union St., Lambertville, New Jersey
Schaub, J. Benton, 1040 Isabella St., Wilmette, Illinois

* * *

A COMMUNICATION FROM A NEWER MEMBER

Mrs. John E. Bacon, 74 Taylor Road, Hamburg, New York, a newer bander and EBBA member writes the following enthusiastic letter: