

## A SPECIAL BOOK REVIEW

The frequently expressed desire of new banders during the past few years to secure a copy of the out of print "Manual for Bird-Banders" can now be adequately fulfilled by the purchase of a copy of "Bird-Ringing: The Art of Bird Study by Individual Marking", by R.M. Lockley and Rosemary Russell.<sup>1</sup>

That the senior author is admirably fitted for presenting his subject is evidenced by his having banded over 20,000 birds of many species, a total reached during a life time by relatively few banders. The junior author, Rosemary Russell is well known to many EBBA members for having been, at one time, Executive Secretary of the New Jersey Audubon Society.

The book is adequately illustrated with eight black and white plates as well as with 55 line drawings.

The scope of this little book is shown by examination of the chapter headings: "The History of Bird-Ringing", "The Value of Bird-Ringing", "The Technique of Bird-Ringing", "Trapping Birds", and "Rings, Records, and Field Equipment". In addition, there are three sections in an appendix dealing with "A Model Life-Study by the Ringing Method", "British Bird Observatories", and a bibliography.

The first chapter gives an excellent survey of the historical antecedents of modern bird banding both in Europe and the United States, presenting material which is relatively unavailable to many of our newer banders.

The second chapter treats of the various uses to which bird banding can be put, including life history studies, migration studies, and homing experiments. In connection with life history studies, reference is made (P. 13) to a number of the outstanding studies in

<sup>1</sup>Lockley, R.M. and R. Russell, "Bird-Ringing: The Art of Bird Study by Individual Marking", 1953, Crosby Lockwood and Son, Ltd., 39 Thurloe St., London, SW 7. Pp. viii + 119, 8 plates. Available in United States from Killian's, Box 63, Water Mill, New York, for \$2.25. (Killian's is owned by EBBA member C. K. McKeever.)

bird psychology and behavior made with the aid of banding. No mention is made of the value of bird banding in game management studies or in longevity studies. This chapter also contains interesting results of banding work.

The techniques of bird banding are covered in the third chapter, including such topics as handling birds, attaching bands, removing bands, and the use of various methods of color marking. Readers of EBBA NEWS hardly need be reminded that use of two or more metal bands on the same leg is dangerous for the bird involved and is not to be recommended.

The chapter on trapping birds will undoubtedly be of greatest interest to the average reader since not only does it present many of the best traps and other devices used in the United States but it also shows many traps and other devices, such as various forms of nets, not in wide use in the United States and relatively unknown to many of our banders.

No mention is made of Verball Hawk trap, presented elsewhere in this issue, and some of our excellent traps such as the Modesto, Mason, Middleton, and Low traps either are not mentioned or appear in disguised form. The excellent treatment of nets is incomplete only by omission of any reference to the Japanese mist net which is so widely used in this country. Many readers will be surprised by the variety both of kinds of nets and the purposes to which they can be put.

The final chapter considers bands, records, and field equipment of the bander. Comparison is made of British and United States bands. Instructions and suggestions are given for weighing, measuring, and the collection of parasites. Hints are given on baits appropriate for various groups of birds, and it should not be too difficult to decide appropriate American counterparts of the European species listed. Most American banders will probably be surprised at the suggestions for the use of dead or live decoys or calls which are presented, yet it has been the experience of the writer that such devices can be very useful in banding operations.

Any bander who wants to do more than merely see how many birds he

can band will do well to study carefully the material in the appendix relating to a model life history study.

This excellent little book is one that should be in the ornithological library of every bird bander in this country; indeed, it should be in the library of every person who has more than a passing interest in birds. -- Albert E. Conway

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#### A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION

Mrs. Mary W. Lair, Landenberg, Penna., writes as follows concerning the initial banding activities of the Rev. Garret S. Detwiler, of Salem, New Jersey:

"It is my thought that Mr. Detwiler of Salem, N.J., had an excellent opportunity to exterminate a lot of pests, instead of spending time and bands on so many Starlings.

"Starlings are surely pests, as we can see here on our Chester County farm, and we destroy all we can, but I never get many from traps as other food is too plentiful.

"They enter Bluebird boxes, destroy eggs, young birds, and even adults. Isn't that bad?"

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