

MORE ABOUT TRAPPING WOODPECKERS

by Ann N. Wansk

While I don't know how many Downy Woodpeckers have been banded by Mr. Lester R. Marland, of Ware, Massachusetts, whose letter appeared in the May-June 1954 issue, judging from my own experience, I'm inclined to think that no matter how few he has trapped, he has been extremely successful.

We have a Baldwin-type trap on a tree, it being an automatic. The trap has a front opening of 4" x 5" for the removal of the captives. The bait is peanut butter which is spread on the bark of the tree inside the trap; some is also spread on the tree below the entrance.

Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, nuthatches, and one Brown Creeper have been trapped. We've also trapped an odd assortment of Starlings and Catbirds.

The woodpeckers, nuthatches, and chickadees are resident here, and I think we can safely say we've banded them all. The only difficulty seems to be that the population of these species is somewhat low.

As an illustration, during the 1953-1954 banding season, we banded 10 Downies, 3 Hairies, and 9 nuthatches in the Baldwin trap. In the season ended December 31, we banded 4 Downies, 4 Hairies, and 9 nuthatches. Figures for chickadees caught in the Baldwin are not available at the moment.

We do not believe that we've missed many of these species since we don't see any of them unbanded, and, if we do, we seem to trap the unbanded birds within a few days.

Our experience raises a question somewhat different from Mr. Marland's, but we think it interesting. While we have retrapped Downies, nuthatches, and chickadees, we have never retrapped a Hairy -- as a matter of fact, we have never seen a banded Hairy at our station. What has been the experience of other members in this respect?

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