

"The one thing Mrs. Gstell mentions -- that I have had no previous foreign recoveries -- is a point that had not occurred to me before; I thought it was just my luck. But, in former years when I had a more active station, I had plenty of returns and repeats among my own birds, so I do not find the lady's suggestion too disturbing. (Actually, the chances of one bander capturing another's birds are quite small, with or without cats; many large-scale banders have never trapped another bander's birds. A conspicuous exception, however, is in the case of gregarious species, banded in large numbers, notably Purple Finches and Evening Grosbeaks.--Ed.)

Since I obviously can't get rid of the cat without depriving myself of my family at the same time, do you think that she means I ought to give up bird-banding? If so, this means that the EBBA has cause to proclaim a retro-active impeachment of one of its presidents.

Mrs. Gstell implies that cats are my first love. Shocking! I think cats are fine, but I am much fonder of birds -- always have been. What I like best of all is that cats make birds so alert that it is real sport to observe and trap them. If it weren't for cats, we could all go around with salt shakers instead of helping Jess Gill by buying his wire contraptions." --516 Walnut Lane, Swarthmore, Penna.

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WHAT NEXT?

"I am informed that Common Tern No. 553-20538 reached Icacos Bay, Trinidad, British West Indies, after being banded at Stone Harbor, N.J., in the Summer of 1954. The report from the F&W Service is somewhat cryptic in that it merely states that the 'How' of it was 'Found band removed'. Moreover, it indicates that the finder addressed a letter to F&W on April 18, 1955, one day before the 'How' was found and removed. Such foresight is indeed in line with the sort of extrasensory perception that has become so popular among your ilk. Does this suggest that bird-banding is on the threshold of becoming equivalent of bird-watching, i.e., one returns from a bird walk and says not, 'I saw a Black-throated Blue Warbler', but, 'I shut my eyes, and a Green Heron stalked past, wearing a band stamped X-34343?'

--C. Brooke Worth