The five Phoebes, six of the Chipping Sparrows, one Field Sparrow, and one Catbird were nestlings or immature birds of the 1950 season.

Of the 23 Juncos that were banded in January and early February, there were 9 returns or 39%. This was the flock that stayed around the banding station all winter. Of the others that were migrating, or at least starting to move around, only three out of 44 (9%) returned.
--14 East Walnut St., Kingston, Pennsylvania

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HOW DOES ONE HANDLE BANDS, FOR EXAMPLE, ON A COLD WINTER DAY?

by Rev. Garrett S. Detwiler

Being new at bird-banding, I would appreciate learning how other banders have surmounted that which I consider a very real problem in bird-banding. I refer to the actual handling of the bands during the process of banding birds, for instance, on a real cold wintry day.

To band a single bird presents little or no problem at all. In my situation, however, I often have from 5 to 20 birds in my traps at one time. To band properly each bird and, at the same time, to keep the bands in numerical order on a real cold day does present a very real problem.

To overcome this difficulty, I have tried several ways of going about the task of banding the bird properly, recording its sex, age, and keeping the bands in their proper numerical order at the same time. At first I brought the birds indoors for banding; I soon found, however, that a bird accidentally left to escape into the room and to become entangled in the lace curtains could very well prove all that is necessary to cause an immediate cessation of all banding operations at the station. Such conduct on the part of the bird does not endear bird-banding in general, or the bander in particular, to the other half of the household.

When this manner of banding proved inadvisable, I attempted to count the number of birds in the traps from inside the house and to take a sufficient number of bands outside with me.

It is amazing how many bands can become temporarily lost in the small confines of one's pockets in so short a time!

I found that it was very difficult actually to count the exact number of birds in any one trap or to keep the bands in order even when I could count the number of trapped birds. The problem of cold, clumsy fingers and steamed-up glasses only added to the difficulty. The problem is further increased by finding that the birds trapped were not Song Sparrows as supposed but White-throats, and, therefore, requiring an entirely different band from those brought out. It was often found that there could very well be some Cowbirds and Purple Grackles mixed up among the Starling you observed in the traps.

With this multiple problem in mind, I believe some device for dispensing the proper sized bands in sufficient quantity in the proper numerical order is a must for the bander who bands more than singles or 2 or 3 birds at a time.

At present, I am experimenting with a gadget that I believe has possibilities. Though it is somewhat crude in construction, it does work fairly well, and I submit a description of it so that banders with longer experience may pick it to pieces, with the hope of evolving a workable device for aiding the bander.

The gadget I now use is made from a piece of aluminum, 1/8" x 1½" x 4", tapped to accomodate 6 thin machine bolts of varying lengths and diameters, threaded at both ends and capped with nuts. The bands, sizes '0' to '3', are opened sufficiently to slip over the tarsus of the bird for which they are intended and are strung on the bolts in numerical order. The bolts are screwed into the tapped holes in the aluminum piece which, in turn, is fastened to a block of wood with screws. The bands are easily removed by simply removing a nut at the end of any particular bolt and sliding the bands off in their proper order.

New bands can be placed on the bolts in numerical order by removing the bolt from the aluminum piece and sliding them onto the bottom end of the bolt. The nuts retain them all in place and make the gadget spill-proof.

All of us have thought everyting but kindly of the bands when they spilled into the snow on a cold, windy day.

Now, when I visit my traps, I carry the gadget which holds six sizes of bands and, no matter what may be in the traps, I have the proper bands in numerical order, partially opened for sliding over the

tarsus of the bird, and, best of all, they are readily accessible.

If any of the other banders have worked out a better device or have any improvements to suggest for my contraption, I will be happy to have them correspond with me. (Or via EBBA NEWS, Ed.)--194 Seventh Street, Salem, New Jersey

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THE 1955 A.O.U. MEETING
by Merrill Wood

The seventy-third stated meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union was held October 25-29 in the New Museum of Science in Boston, with the largest attendance, nearly 300. A number of E.B.B.A. members attended and three (A. A. Allen, James Bond, and Maurice Broun) presented papers.

Fifty-six papers were presented, most of which were well illustrated with slides, and several persons presented movies or tape recordings. These papers dealt with bird-banding (1), behavior (6), behavior and classification (5), conservation (2), distribution (5), ecology (6), hybridization (3), life histories (4), management of bird populations (5), migration and homing (2), mortality at ceilometers and high TV towers (2), reproduction (2), song (4), taxonomy (5), temperature of birds (2), photography (2), and birds on postage stamps (1).

Exhibits in the Museum of Science included a complete set of mounted birds of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the original Fuertes and Brooks paintings uesd in Forbush's "Birds of Massachusetts and Other New England States". In the Art Gallery of Boston's Symphony Hall was an exhibition of bird paintings. At the Houghton and Widner Libraries of Harvard University was a display of ornithological illustrations and books from the Middle Ages to the present.

An interesting field trip was taken to Plum Island (Parker River National Wildlife Refuge) and the Newburyport mud flats. The outstanding species for most folks was the Purple Sandpiper on a stone jetty. -- Department of Zoology and Entomology, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania.

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