

EDWARD EMBREE WILDMAN DIES

EBBA member Edward Embree Wildman, for many years a bird bander, science teacher and author of books on nature, died on May 6 at his home in Moorestown, N.J., at the age of 81.

THE USE OF MIST NETS IN FLORIDA

By W. M. Davidson

Malcolm Lerch's article in the November-December 1955 issue of EBBA NEWS on the use of mist nets prompts me to say some words about the use of these traps in Florida.

My Federal permit allows me to use up to ten mist nets, but I have never used more than 3 nets at any one time, since these are as many as I have been able to attend to without risk to the birds.

In Florida my use of the nets falls into two categories: first, for banding land birds, mostly during the winter season; second, for banding shore birds more or less the year around except for the duration of the hunting season in midwinter. In the first group are included migrant sparrows, particularly Chipping, Swamp and Savannah, and migrant warblers, particularly Myrtle and Palm. These five species winter in Florida in large quantity. It is possible to set up the nets at desirable stations and chase the sparrows into them, but for warblers which can rarely be chased the nets are set up near the feeding sites of the birds. I have found nets not very effective in taking Grackles and Redwings, but good for Robins, Catbirds and Brown Thrashers. Cardinals, though easily taken, I try to avoid. To extricate them requires more than two hands to avoid being nipped.

In the second category, shore birds, I have had no luck on the ocean beaches, but very good results on mud and sand flats. Depending on the birds' behavior I set up the nets either at right angles to the shore line, or parallel to the shore line and in the water. If the birds are feeding along the shore they can often be driven so as to fly into the nets at right angles, or they can be worked along the shoreline and put up opposite to the nets placed parallel to the shoreline and a few feet from it in the water. Occasionally when some of the flock is trapped the remaining birds return and increase the catch. Sandpipers in good numbers trapped in nets include Least, Western, Semipalmated