

## OPERATION RECOVERY

For details of this opportunity to participate in a migration study that may provide answers to many of the problems concerning the fall migration in the Eastern United States refer to your memorandum of July 9, 1956, from the Bird-Banding Office. Note particularly that although it is desirable to have the banding station located right on the coast, if it is more convenient and perhaps more productive to band or observe in your own locale this is permissible providing you are no more than 50 miles from the sea coast.

It is even desirable to have banding done along the coast just on the weekends during the prescribed periods, if you are unable to go during the week. Target dates (which are inclusive) are as follows:

- Sept. 1-16 -- Long Island, N.Y., & Northern New Jersey.
  - " 8-23 -- Southern New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia & North Carolina.
  - " 16-30 -- South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama & Florida.
- (North of EBBA territory, target dates are earlier)

If you feel that you can join in this project this year please notify James Baird, Norman Bird Sanctuary, Third Beach Road, Newport, R.I., stating where and at what times you will be able to operate the netting station, and he will send you another circular containing particulars concerning the program.

## THE REVISION OF THE BIRD-BANDING MANUAL

A committee composed of one member from each of the four bird-banding associations is working on the revision of the banding manual. Suggestions from EBBA members should be sent to Geoffrey Gill, 24 Overlook Drive, Huntington, L.I., N.Y.

The original 1929 banding manual, by Lincoln and Baldwin, has long been out of print and obsolete. An abridgement of it, with some new material on forms and procedures, was printed in 1947, and described as a stop-gap pending a complete revision.

In 1953 some progress was made, with the release of some looseleaf pages for an entirely new manual, by Seth Low except for a few pages by



John Aldrich. The pages were obviously only a small part of the proposed whole.

Alexander Bergstrom, Editor of BIRD-BANDING, has suggested a framework for the manual that included the following points on which members can be especially helpful:

Methods of recording data by individuals. This is of course a matter of suggestions not requirements, and tastes vary, but surely the less experienced banders would benefit from a discussion of the various systems and their merits.

Band sizes. This starts with the present list, but should reflect Dr. Blake's papers on a leg gauge and measurements, as real progress is being made.

Trap sites and baits. Here I would include not only the immediate problems but the kind of habitat best for trapping, and how to improve it, with some brief discussions on planting for birds, bird feeders and bird houses. This is a big subject and will need many people working on it.

Trap design and construction, including nets. This is probably the most important section. . . "first catch your rabbit". One important part will be general principles of construction (materials etc.), and here I think the recent report of the NEBBA Trap Standards Committee will serve as a starting point (anyone may secure free copies by writing to Mr. Parker Reed, 27 Hayes Ave., Lexington 73, Mass.)

This isn't to be an encyclopedia of all trap designs, or those which have caught birds, but a selected list of recommended ones, bearing in mind ease and cost of construction. Personally I doubt any station needs more than two basic designs, one a ground trap like the Mason, one a "winter finch" trap like the Potter - particularly if nets are in use. Accordingly, I would hope we could keep the list to a dozen or so at most, allowing for special designs like collapsible traps, vulture traps, etc.

We badly need some good illustrations, and usually a photograph isn't clear enough on dimensions and operating principles. Good line drawings are ideal. Each trap we show ought to be described well enough for a beginner to build.

Suggested projects and methods of analysis. This again is an important section, but need not be exhaustive. Reference to the better banding papers now being published will help a great deal. The section should include a list of species on which Patuxent sends copies of all recovery reports to some one individual, preferably giving name and address. There are eight Passerines in this group now, perhaps one or two more.

Aging and Sexing. This could be an extremely important section. Dr. Blake has been thinking of setting up data sheets, species by species, showing what we know on these points and where we need more data and study.

Bibliography. This would not attempt to be exhaustive, but could be extremely useful, perhaps under subheadings corresponding in part to the sections of the manual itself. Mrs. Austin writes that the WBBA has a small committee working on this. Here again help from a great many people will be useful.

#### 534 ROBINS IN A YEAR

By Ralph K. Bell

I believe that habitat plays a very important part in the trapping of Robins. I agree with Dr. H. B. Wood that nestlings disperse widely soon after they leave the nest. If the habitat is suitable, I feel they are more likely to be trapped as they move about the country.

During the year 1955, 534 Robins were banded within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of our house at Clarksville, Greene County, Pa. We live about a mile from a small town. Our yard is a little over an acre in size with a stand of young evergreens on one side. These evergreens, I might add, are very attractive to Robins. Two other main places for trapping Robins are a small woods  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile from the house and a farm pond where Robins enter traps set mainly for Killdeer, Sandpipers and Meadowlarks. These traps are not baited - just a heart-shaped trap set along the water line.

The "All Purpose Trap" with dripping water catches by far the most Robins. Two of these traps are in the yard and two are in the woods. The traps in the woods have two drip pans in each. I sometimes feel that the more water the more attractive the trap seems to be, not only to Robins but other birds as well.