

is about the same length as when first purchased. If the trammels are not shortened and the poles are simply moved further apart then the efficiency of the net is impaired in that there is no horizontal give to the net.

It is of the utmost importance that the new netter has a clear mental picture about how the net works. It will greatly simplify the setting up of the net and the removal of the birds - not to mention the increased catch if the nets are properly set up. Once the bander understands the functioning of the nets, he will realize that it is absolutely necessary that the birds are taken out of the net on the same side that they entered. In fact, it is impossible to do otherwise but a great deal of time can be wasted if an attempt is made to do so. If in doubt and great difficulty is experienced in removing the bird, chances are that the wrong side is being worked. Look first for a portion of the bird that is not covered by netting and work from there. Untangle feet and legs first, and then while holding these firmly, work one wing free and then the other, and the remaining netting can be pulled over the head just like taking off a sock. Occasionally it is necessary to cut a strand or two in removing a bird but if proper attention is given the nets and with careful handling of the bird in removal, this will be infrequent.

-- (to be concluded in the next issue)

IN DEFENCE OF BLUE JAYS

Mrs. Grace Dietze, Nutley, N.J., writes: "Blue jays may have bad reputations, but there are two here that have saved more than a few bird lives, I'm sure. At the first hint of a cat, they fly to our dining room or kitchen window (depending on which room they see me in) calling for help, because they have me pegged as a good cat chaser. Also, on several occasions I have seen blue jays fly into a feeding flock of white-throats or other birds, when some danger appeared unseen by the flock, scattering them to safety.

"Let the seed on the feeder get low, and they fly from my kitchen window to the feeder and back again, with scolding cries. Yet when I fill the feeder, they do not always feed immediately but sometimes fly off, content that I am still on the job. I never fail to be amazed how they feed happily in the flat trap except when I am in the kitchen, where the pull string is."