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EBBA'S PRESIDENT SAYS: The membership of our Eastern Bird Banding Association now totals considerably more than 300 active banders. Of these about half have never attended an Annual Meeting. This year you may be making up your mind for the first time: To go? Or Not To Go?

Quite a few years ago, a certain young bander pondered the same questions and about eight o'clock that Saturday morning he decided in the affirmative. EBBA NEWS articles by Jeff Gill, Ray Middleton, John Gillespie, Horace Groskin, and Dr. Harold Wood and many other banders had intrigued him. He wanted the mimeographed names of those banders to become faces. So meekly, and as unobtrusively as he possibly could, this bander slipped into a side door at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia and made his way to the meeting hall. For a minute as he stood in the doorway he was awed by that big crowd of banders, but he took a tighter grip on his program and made his way down the center aisle toward an empty seat beside a short and somewhat bald gentleman.

Instantly the gentleman chirped up, "I'm Doctor Wood from Harrisburg." The young bander took an even tighter grip on his program -- the great Doctor Wood -- the President of EBBA! He would have to pick that seat! But the slightly bald gentleman was still talking, "Do you know how to tell the age of a junco?" he said.

This bander certainly did not. But he learned in less than 30 seconds flat, from the glass slides the Doctor from Harrisburg carried in his pocket. Between those glass slides were the tail feathers of half a dozen juncos!

Then the meeting began and banders rose to read papers packed with banding information that still rings in this bander's head as he rounds the trap line at Washington Crossing. When he left the Academy of Natural Sciences that afternoon, this bander knew more about banding than he had learned in a couple of years of wholesale gracklesnatching along the Delaware. More important he left his feeling of inferiority, and the lonely feeling that banding had heretofore given him, behind in the lecture hall of the Academy of Natural Sciences. Now he was one of that big happy party of busy banders who were mutually enjoying the most wonderful hobby ever devised.

Immediately doors began to open. No one was more surprised than that young bander when the next issue of EBBA NEWS carried his own yarn about the Great Horned Owls on the Alcan Highway. A few weeks later he was even more surprised when the front door opened and the short and somewhat bald Doctor from Harrisburg walked into his own hallway. And his front door has been opening to a steady procession of banders ever since.

Whether you have been banding for a decade, or whether you are a youngster-bander with your first strings of bands, this year's ANNUAL MEETING in Philadelphia is for you. For \$2.00 you have taken out a membership in one of the most interesting bird clubs in the world. You can stand shoulder to shoulder with ornithologists who have tagged birds in remote corners of the globe, and you can put a question to a bander who has banded forty thousand birds.

There's something about a banding meeting that will never be described with adjectives and adverbs. If you're the typical restless birder, you might say that going to an ANNUAL MEETING "satisfies." All year long you work alone, and talk to people who don't know or care about banding. Then suddenly the room is full of people talking about grackles, starlings and warblers, in the pleasantly worded jargon of banding.

This year the hall at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia will be open as always to any bander who wants to walk in. Papers have been scheduled covering virtually every phase of banding. Bring your toughest banding problems along, and somebody will be sure to help you. Only one thing can spoil a banding meeting: Staying Home!
