

HERBICIDES UNDER BIRD BANDING TRAPS

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The All-Purpose Trap in a back-yard banding station seems to function better if used on ground free of vegetation. For this condition banders use sand, saw-dust, coal ashes and/or frequent use of a hoe. To accomplish this with less work a herbicide was tested.

On June 18, 1957 the ground (10x6 feet) in and around an All-Purpose Trap was freed of all vegetation and then was sprayed from a flower watering can with two pounds of DuPont Ammate (active ingredient ammonium sulfamate 80%) in four gallons of water. The cost of this treatment was \$1.15.

At the end of the growing season, October 18, 1957, the treated area had five small weeds. An adjacent control area became thoroughly covered with plants and had to be weeded with a hoe four times, July 13, Aug. 3, Aug. 26 and Oct. 18. The lack of hoeing under the trap was appreciated.

However, while the use of a herbicide in this place seemed useful, it was discovered it should be used only with great care. The poison used must be watered in thoroughly the day after applied and since it is toxic to birds, all birds must be kept off for the first two days that the herbicide is sinking into the soil. Also, there must not be any tree roots under this treated ground or that part of the tree so supplied will die. In this experiment one robin went onto the treated ground the second day where it ate food and died, going through a pattern similar to birds dying from DDT poisoning. Birds that were in the trap on the third day repeated on future days. ★ ★ ★

THE REALITY OF EXTINCTION

As the great nations of the world, with chips on both shoulders, brandish their toys of extermination, it will not harm the individual to pause and re-read the editorial on the heath hen written when the last of this species died on Martha's Vineyard. From the April 21, 1933, issue of the Vineyard Gazette: "Now we know there are degrees even in death. All around us nature is full of casualties, but they do not interrupt the stream of life. When most living things die, they seem only to revert to the central theme of existence from which they were temporarily detached.

"There is a spirit of vitality everywhere which enfolds the dead with a countenance of consolation and bestows upon the living races more than has been taken away. But to the heath hen, something more than death has happened or, rather, a different kind of death.

"There is no survivor, there is no future, there is no life to be created in this form again. We are looking upon the uttermost finality which can be written, glimpsing the darkness which will not know another ray of light. We are in touch with the reality of extinction." ★ ★ ★