



PLAYING 'POSSUM' OR HYPNOTIZED

By Joseph J. Malek

A mental or physical condition seems to exist in all species of birds, when turned over on their backs they lay quiet, with eyes closed, sometimes the tail or feet quiver, as tho this may be a nervous trait. In some birds such as the Junco (photo), for as long as five minutes, in others as the chickadee only a split second. The flash did not disturb the Junco.

I have tried this on different species and it seems that the ground feeding birds, Juncos, Sparrows, are more susceptible and stay in this position longer than birds that feed in the trees and bushes, Titmouse, Chickadee, Nuthatches.

TV TOWER CASUALTY

By John V. Dennis

One of the strange things about these ceilometer, tall building, and TV tower casualties is the absence of reports on banded birds. Talking of this on different occasions with persons who ought to know as Chan Robbins and Herbert Stoddard, I did not hear of a single instance of a

banded bird being found. Therefore it was with interest that I learned that a Catbird I had banded had been picked up dead at a TV tower. Here are the details:

On July 1, 1957, I banded an adult Catbird near Leesburg, Virginia. The bird was taken in a Japanese mist net and was given band no. 23-112522. On October 2, 1957, according to the 3-624 form from the Banding Office, this bird was found dead at the Auburn TV tower, 7 miles south of Raleigh, North Carolina. The bird was found by William Craven and reported by Harvey T. Davis.

(John Dennis writes that he has moved to the Miami, Florida, region, where he is working for the American Petroleum Institute on problems of coastal oil pollution. He says that he is poorly situated for bird banding, although he expects to do some. His new address is 1748 N.E. 173rd St., North Miami Beach, Florida.) ★ ★ ★

GRACKLE Grackles banded by Oliver F. Irwin, 1789 Glenview, Memphis,
RECOVERIES Tennessee, have been recovered recently in Arkansas, Iowa,
 Illinois, Indianam Kentucky, Tennessee, North and South
Dakota, Wisconsin and Mississippi.

Of the 22 recent recoveries, 6 were reported "shot", 4 "killed", 10 "found dead", one "flew into a window" and one was "killed by large hailstones".

Bander Irwin urges EBBA members to search winter "blackbird" roosts for dead birds bearing bands.

★ ★ ★

HIGH FLYING BIRDS Your Nov-Dec issue quotes some altitudes reached by
By E. Alexander birds. Like bird speeds, much of the information
Bergstrom gathered to date is of uneven value. The best treat-
 ment of it is by Meinertzhagen, "The Speed and Alt-
 itude of Bird Flight", Ibis, 97:81-117, 1955. The "geese at 29,000 feet"
is apparently based on a poor photograph which has been variously inter-
preted and is considered unreliable. The "giant vulture at 24,500 feet"
seems to refer to a Lammergeier estimated at 24,000 to 25,000 feet on
Everest; not by the party which reached the top but by a party in 1922
or shortly before. The "Godwit and Curlew" were by the same party. Note
also records of two species of Choughs at 19,000 and 21,000 feet in the
Karakoram range; also Wall Creepers at the same elevations. ★ ★ ★