TWO FLOCKS OF BLUE JAYS
By Mrs. Lillian Cardinali

From May 1 to 20, 1958 I banded 108 Blue Jays. May 9 and 10 were large days in the first group that I trapped. The birds were larger and most of them were trapped between 10 A.M. and 3:30 P.M. Sunday May 18 started another good day and Monday May 19 was tops. The birds were smaller and most were banded between 7:30 A.M. and noon. Very few after lunch time. I re-read the article in EBBA NEWS (Frazier 18:4:45) because yesterday I had one that seemed as if it was going to sleep perched on my fingers. When I opened my hand to release the bird it stayed perched on my fingers with its eyes closed. But when it took off, it really went!

(Editorial note: Have other banders noted the difference in size between different flocks of Blue Jays? Has anyone taken measurements?)

Jamesburg, N.J.

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B. FRANKLIN SAYS: (Attention: prospective contributors of articles to EBBA NEWS.) It is a recognized fact that many persons who might otherwise send in interesting and valuable bits and pieces to this publication are reluctant to do so - through diffidence and other reasons. But listen to this:

"Even short hints and imperfect experiments in any new branch of science, being communicated, have oftentimes a good effect, in exciting the attention of the ingenious to the subject, and so become the occasion of more exact disquisition and more complete discoveries."

- Benjamin Franklin, in a letter to Peter Collinson

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A STUDY OF THE VERTICAL DISTRIBUTION OF BIRDS
By Dr. Richard P. Riesz

INTRODUCTION Most investigations of the spatial distribution of birds are concerned with the distribution in a horizontal plane. The introduction of mist nets as a method of capturing birds affords the possibility of observing the distribution in a vertical sense as well. This paper describes an experiment undertaken during Operation Recovery 1957 to determine the usefulness of mist nets in the study of this vertical distribution. The experiment was designed as an intensive study, that is, concentrated capture effort was made in a small geographical area for a relatively short time. Thus constancy of geographic, botanical, and meteorological environment was assured, and results assigned to these specific environments.

STUDY AREA The study area was located at Lat. 39° 50'N., Long. 74° 5'W., Island Beach State Park, New Jersey. This is one of the long narrow barrier beaches of the Atlantic coast, and in the study area was approximately 200 yards wide. The botany of the area is particularly important for the study. The shrubs and trees grow in extremely dense thickets, but in general are between 6 and 7 feet in height. When mist nets are set in narrow lanes in this brush they are in a position to intercept all birds moving through the vegetation. This is important, as it assures a sample capture of a specific segment of the population present and eliminates, for instance, those birds making flights large with respect to the study area.

The study here reported was performed on September 6, 7, and 8, a period of relatively constant weather conditions. Winds were moderate southerly, temperature 72 to 78, with overcast and light showers characterizing the period.

METHOD OF CAPTURE The capture technique used exclusively was that of mist-netting. Nets were strung in sets of 3 to 5 in narrow lanes in the dense vegetation. All lanes ran generally perpendicular to the length of the island. Each net was set with its lowest trammel about 1 ft. above the ground and its highest trammel about 6 or 7 ft. above ground. In each case the highest trammel was at or above the level of the top of the surrounding vegetation. In the study area of 100 by 200 yards ten nets were set. This is a relatively intensive placement, but certainly not sufficient to disrupt the normal activities of the birds. One of the proposed extensions of this study involves the determination of the highest net density which may be used without perturbing the activities of birds in a study area.