

IT'S LATER THAN YOU THINK
By William Pepper

Little as many of us like to think of it, one never knows when one is going to band one's last bird. This was brought home to me when I attempted to complete and send in the final banding records, returns, bands, etc., of one of our members who had lost his memory due to a terminal illness.

In this case the member's family knew nothing of his methods of record keeping and had no real interest in birds or bird banding. They only wished to keep him happy, and allowed him to continue to band for some time after his mind had begun to fail. Possibly you can imagine the results.

This is told only to emphasize the following suggestions, which perhaps do not apply to those of us who are blessed with a wife or husband, daughter or son, who is our ardent helper in our chosen hobby.

I believe, however fortunate we may be, we should all attempt to have our records in such shape that either a member of our family or a fellow bander could, if necessary, complete our records at any time; that someone knows where our records, etc. are kept and how we keep them.

For some of us it might be wise to give our family the name and address of a fellow bander who would be willing and able to help them if the need ever arose. It might also be a good idea to have our family or friend understand that we want them to make it impossible for us to continue banding if there was any suggestion that we were not fit to.

I do not mean to suggest that it is necessary to keep our records in the final sending-in form from day to day. Most of us cannot always find time to do this, especially if we are banding large numbers or, as is usually the case, have to fit in our banding and record keeping around our real job.

Some of us, in addition to our annual records which we send in to the F. & W. L. Service, sooner or later have what at least to ourselves seem to be valuable notes, statistics or other information. We always intend to do something with this eventually, possibly for an EBBA meeting. Some of this material is of real value, but few of us know just what to do with it. I for one do not know what to suggest be done with such material, in whatever form it may be, under any conditions as well as that of such a case as I have here mentioned. I would like advice as to what to suggest to the member's family should be done with a large amount of this type material. I believe it should be saved and not

thrown away or given to an uninterested library as the family might be tempted to do.

This also brings up the question of what we want done with our bird books, files of EBBA NEWS and BIRD-BANDING, etc. Our traps should be given or sold to another bander or be destroyed lest they get into the wrong hands.

I offer these thoughts for what they are worth, both as an aid to better record keeping and as a possible help to our families at a trying time.

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A DICKCISSEL AT ROCKAWAY, N.J.
By Gail C. Cannon

On December 1st, 1957 we had in our traps a Dickcissel. It was an immature bird which we thought would be a male on maturity. We banded it and released it. It repeated in the traps on December 5th, 12th and 15th. Then on March 15th, 1958 it returned to the traps, at which time it was definitely developing into a male bird. That return was within a day or two of our big snow storm when the snow was 26" deep in the open. At that time the left foot had been frozen and the toes were healing, but together, and the right leg was quite shriveled. The bird seemed on the road to recovery, so we released him after making note of his condition. We kept a generous supply of food handy for him at all times.

On April 30th he repeated, in the nets this time. Then he had no toes on either foot and he had a hole about 1/8" in diameter in his abdomen. The hole was healing and he was plump and bright-eyed, so we released him again.

He repeated on May 15th in the nets. At that time his right leg was off 1/8" below the heel and the band was gone. The left leg was the same as before, the hole in the abdomen all healed over.

This bird remained at the feeding station until early in June. He had difficulty in landing, always taking a head stand at first. After his motion was stopped he propped himself up on his wings to eat. He looked well fed and bright so we kept plenty of food out for him. He had spent his time with a flock of House Sparrows. That was the last we saw of him. Tragedy probably overtook him.

After watching him all spring, who among us had any troubles?

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