

A REPORT ON THE A.O.U. MEETING IN AUGUST, 1959

By Dorothy L. Bordner

The meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union in Regina, Saskatchewan will stand out as worth every effort expended in going so far. From the early morning field trips to the banquet given by the Government of Saskatchewan everything was well organized and carried out. The papers sessions were held at the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History where spare minutes could be spent viewing the excellently prepared exhibits of birds and animals. Although few of the papers dealt directly with banding, several may be of interest to EBBA members.

Dr. George J. Wallace of Michigan State gave further comments on Robin losses because of insecticides on the university campus which followed up the paper given by Dr. John F. Mehner at the EBBA meeting in April. After a Robinless campus in 1958 there was an influx of new Robins in April 1959. On April 8, 21 birds were counted. On April 26, seven pairs and three singles were counted. Then began a die-off of one or more a day. 47 dead and dying Robins were found. At the end of the study there remained five to ten Robins on the campus. When it is recalled that the original population was ten pairs, it becomes obvious that restocking was taking place from outside the campus. Therefore the spraying is actually affecting a much larger area than that directly involved in the spray operations. The last census yielded 3 Cardinals, 2 Orioles, 2 Chipping Sparrows, and no Wrens, Titmice, Chickadees, Woodpeckers or Warblers -- indicating that these species were also greatly affected.

Dr. O. L. Austin, Jr. reported on banding Sooty Terns in the Dry Tortugas. 12,963 were banded between 1936 and 1941. Nine of these birds were recovered for a recovery percentage of 0.07%. This was compared to 0.2% recovery of Common Terns banded on Cape Cod. In 1959, 1,963 adults and 5,500 immatures were banded. 600 birds were taken from five nets in three hours. The following table shows the return records in the Dry Tortugas over the years.

| Year Banded \ Year Returned | 1938 | 1939 | 1940 | 1941 | 1959 |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1937 | 2 | 22 | 27 | 8 | 2 |
| 1938 | | 1 | 15 | | 3 |
| 1939 | | | 95 | 14 | |
| 1940 | | | | 17 | 5 |

It is interesting that there were ten birds taken in 1959 which were nineteen years old or older. It is hoped that the study and banding on the Dry Tortugas can be continued in future years.

Mr. Harold D. Mitchell reported on nestings involving Prothonotary and Yellow Warblers near Buffalo, N. Y. A male Prothonotary Warbler which sings a Yellow Warbler song has defended territories from Yellow Warbler males and has fed young in a nest with a Yellow Warbler female three different years. Two of those years, a Yellow Warbler male was observed feeding the young in the same nest.

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A REPORT FROM MALAYA

By H. Elliott McClure

I just recently returned from a bird-netting trip to one of the highest peaks in Malaya, 6600-foot Mount Brinchang. The daily winds sift clouds over this peak providing moisture which nourishes a fascinating grey-green tropical cloud forest of ericacea shrubs and low trees. The avifauna here is distinctive, many species of which are limited to these high altitudes. Therefore birds banded here could be expected to be local in distribution.

In January I banded Siberian Thrushes and Grey-headed Thrushes which have long since departed for North China and Southern Siberia. But several of the local Babblers and Bulbuls which were marked in January were renetted in June in nets placed in identical places.

Work in these Malayan hill forests is fascinating and reminds one of the cool rolling hills of Virginia or Pennsylvania in June, except that there are no pines and conifers. Besides birds, there are squirrels of several species, many forest rats, civets and an occasional tiger. A tiger crossed the road near one of my nets sometime during the night. They do not constitute any real danger, but accounts of their proximity make good news print and I can see headlines reading, "Tigers are a hazard to bird banders".

The biggest hazard in these forests is your own clumsiness, for a broken ankle miles from town can be a killer. The biggest hazard to the nets are bats. Bats were a rarity in the nets in Japan and I suspect that they are in the U. S., but here nets are quickly riddled by them. Worst offenders are the fruit bats, cute little fellows with a dog-like face from which they get their name, but with sharp teeth that chew enormous holes as they struggle to free themselves. Seven or eight of them in a net in one night can ruin it. Because our netting was far flung over several miles of jungle trails, it was not possible to take them down each evening and replace them in the morning, besides we were interested in the bats as well as the birds.