

REDPOLL & SISKIN
BANDING ROUND-UP

Mrs. Elinor McEntee is compiling banding records of this winter's invasion of Redpolls and Pine Siskins, and requests all EBBA members who have banded either or both of these species this year to send their 1960 totals to her as soon as possible. Results of her compilation will be published in the next issue of EBBA NEWS. Figures for 1960 bandings of Redpolls and Pine Siskins should be sent to Mrs. McEntee, 490 Fairfield Ave., Ridgewood, N.J.

MEASUREMENTS
OF CARDINALS

Mrs. E. A. Beddall, 2502 Bronson Road, Fairfield, Conn. is making a study of the measurements of Cardinals at the northern edge of their range, and would like to have, from any bander who can furnish them, measurements of Cardinals and any other information of which banders may have kept a record, such as dates - early and late, sex ratios, and breeding data such as egg dates, clutch size, number hatched, and number of broods. Any such information would be very gratefully received and should be sent to Mrs. Beddall at the above address.

OPERATION RECOVERY AT CASTINE, MAINE

By M. C. Morse, Jr.

Castine is located on a peninsula extending into Penobscot Bay, from the northeast. This location apparently makes it a meeting point for birds migrating down the Penobscot River Valley and others migrating down the coast. About half of the peninsula is spruce forest; the rest is open area with numerous alder thickets, hedgerows, raspberry and blackberry tangles. Nearly all the netting was done in the latter area.

Nets were operated sporadically during August and almost every day during September and October. My wife and I banded 1149 birds of 57 species in a total of 654 net hours - maximum nets, 10, but usually not over six. The principal species banded were 344 Song Sparrows, 173 White-throated Sparrows, 123 Common Grackles, 114 Slate-colored Juncos, and 79 Swainson's Thrushes. We had three returns (excluding resident species) and about a 20% repeat rate (some repeats of migrants of over a month). The rarities included three yellow-breasted chats in mid-September; a Swainson's Thrush on October 18th; an Indigo Bunting on October 6th; and four Saw-whet Owls in October - certainly an indication of a rather heavy flight.

During August and September the nets were set primarily in alder thickets and blackberry tangles; in October they were moved out into fields and hedgerows. Most netting locations were about half a mile from Penobscot Bay. During the week the nets could only be operated early in the morning; the weekend average, generally about six hours. In October most of the netting was confined to a one acre lot which had been plowed in the spring and had grown up to wild mustard and other weeds. This natural food supply was augmented this year by cracked corn; about three

pounds per day by the end of the month. Partially surrounding this area were three net sets at ground level and one "double-decker" set made up of two nets, one above the other. Bordering the netting area on three sides beyond a thirty foot strip of high grass is a mixed coniferous forest with apple trees along the edge. Netting in this area was actually continued through the 20th of November with the addition of another 162 birds; primarily Common Grackles and Bluejays.

An average day with this set in mid-October was about 30 birds in 7 - 8 net hours; all nets were secured by 7:30 a.m. This particular plot had been equally productive for the two previous years. The most noteworthy catch from this plot was a Clay-colored Sparrow netted on October 13, 1958 - one of the first records for the state of Maine.

The family Fringillidae comprises a large percentage of the netted birds at the Castine station, averaging 71% of all netted birds over the past three years.

| | 1957 | 1958 | 1959 |
|------------------------|------|------|------|
| Song Sparrow | 31% | 26% | 30% |
| Slate-colored Junco | 23% | 3% | 10% |
| White-throated Sparrow | 16% | 8% | 16% |
| Chipping Sparrow | 5% | 13% | 1% |
| Savannah Sparrow | 4% | 5% | - |
| White-crowned Sparrow | 1% | 4% | 2% |
| Other Sparrows | 7% | 5% | 3% |
| Warblers | 3% | 9% | 7% |
| Swainson's Thrush | 3% | 11% | 7% |
| Icteridae | 1% | 3% | 11% |
| All Others | 6% | 13% | 13% |
| Total Numbers Banded | 1021 | 841 | 1149 |

This is further reflected in the much higher bird per net hour ratio in October as stated below. During the month of October the netted percentage of Fringillidae has averaged 87% of the total catch; during 1957 and 1958 it amounted to over 94%. This year the baited area attracted large numbers of grackles and bluejays toward the end of the month, thus lowering the percentage this year.

Returns and recoveries of these O. R. birds have been very poor; foreign retraps at all have been made during the three years that I have operated the Castine O. R. station. Returns for the 1957 and 1958 birds amount to less than .5% and only four recoveries have been recorded up to this date - all for birds banded in 1957: Juncos recovered in North Carolina and Tennessee, a Song Sparrow recovered in New York City, and a Purple Finch on two different occasions at the Mount Desert station which is 24 miles due east of my Castine station. These return figures do not include resident chickadees and woodpeckers.

Even for an area as far north as Maine, I would be forced to concur with Mr. Leroy Wilcox when he recommended that more banders net later in October (EBBA NEWS, 22(6):115).

1957 (Average .97 Birds per Net Hour)

| August-September | | | October | | |
|------------------|-----------|--------------------|--------------|-----------|--------------------|
| No. of Birds | Net Hours | Birds per Net Hour | No. of Birds | Net Hours | Birds per Net Hour |
| 214 | 600 | .35 | 807 | 450 | 1.79 |

1958 (Average .84 Birds per Net Hour)

| August-September | | | October | | |
|------------------|-----------|--------------------|--------------|-----------|--------------------|
| No. of Birds | Net Hours | Birds per Net Hour | No. of Birds | Net Hours | Birds per Net Hour |
| 366 | 640 | .57 | 475 | 356 | 1.33 |

1959 (Average 1.76 Birds per Net Hour)

| August-September | | | October | | |
|------------------|-----------|--------------------|--------------|-----------|--------------------|
| No. of Birds | Net Hours | Birds per Net Hour | No. of Birds | Net Hours | Birds per Net Hour |
| 381 | 380 | 1.00 | 768 | 274 | 2.80 |

**November

| No. of Birds | Net Hours | Birds per Net Hour |
|--------------|-----------|--------------------|
| 162 | 105 | 1.54 |

**not included in O. R. totals.

It should be pointed out that the high bird per net hour ratio is in part due to the large percentage of "favorable net hours" (before 8:00 in the morning). However, up in my neck of the woods, in October you certainly get the "quantity if not the quality".

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HOUSE FINCHES ON LONG ISLAND

Geoffrey Gill of Huntington, L. I., writes: "Anthony Bliss of Locust Valley, L. I., N. Y. reports that he may have House Finches among his Purple Finches. Someone else reports them in Northport, also on the north shore of Long Island. Since there is an established colony around Seaford on the South Shore and another colony at Riverside, near Greenwich, Conn. it would seem possible that there might be some interchange between the two colonies and a spreading out of the individual birds. One House Finch banded by Mrs. Geis at Riverside, Conn. was recaptured with a male Purple Finch last year in Huntington on the north shore of Long Island. The north and south shores of Long Island average 25 miles apart."
