

NETTING BANK SWALLOWS

By Eleanor E. Dater

There is a sand bank about a mile from our home that has had a colony of Bank Swallows every year for about 20 years. The owner, David McKee, always reserves one bank for them until nesting is completed. This year, with the aid of a prospective bander, I tried my luck netting the birds.

On June 25th, a Saturday evening, we set two nine meter nets along one bank, one net above the other. We worked from 7:30 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. and caught 14 adults and 20 immature Bank Swallows -- no repeats.

On Sunday, June 26th, we arrived at 9:30 a.m. and worked until 2 p.m. This time we caught 17 adults and 2 immatures. We returned again at 6:45 p.m. and worked until 9:00 p.m. taking 10 adults and 20 immatures. There were 4 repeats during the day on Sunday, one of which was an immature. One adult repeated three times. On Sunday evening one adult repeated. One of the last birds to be taken from the nets on Sunday was a Rough-winged Swallow.

As the sand bank faces the east, it was extremely hot during the day. This may or may not account for there being so few immatures taken during the heat of the day.

Setting the nets: The top net was placed about one foot below the lowest tunnel entrance. This allowed the birds to enter without interference. Most of the birds were caught on the inside of the net on their way out and in the same pocket. The distance between the net and the bank varied from 5 to 9 feet, as the bank was irregular. This distance was arrived at after several adjustments. Birds returned to their tunnels about every 25 minutes allowing us time to adjust the height of the nets. The lower net acted more to prevent birds from flying under than catching them.

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DOUGLAS WHITMAN WINS
PICTURE CONTEST PRIZE

The prize for the best picture printed in this issue goes to J. Douglas Whitman, RFD 1, Jordan, N.Y. for his striking photograph of the Sparrow Hawk on the front cover. Bander Whitman wins two mist nets or a \$5.00 Geoff Gill trap. (Let us know which you want, Doug. -- Ed.)

(Inelligible for prizes are the delightful sketches by Dorothy Bordner, EBBA NEWS Art Editor, which appear as department headings, etc.)