



### EVENING GROSBEAKS IN STATE COLLEGE, PENNSYLVANIA

By Dorothy L. Bordner

The first bird we banded when we began in April, 1955, was an Evening Grosbeak - perhaps a warning of what was to come. Before the Grosbeaks left that spring we banded three more. In spite of pinched fingers, we looked forward to visits in following winters.

We feel that for winter visitors such as the Evening Grosbeak the totals for the entire winter give a better picture than a yearly total so we have done all our tabulating on this basis.

#### SEASON TOTALS

	Banded	Repeating Individuals	Total Repeats	Returns	Foreign Repeats & Returns	Foreign Retraps
1954-55	4	0	0	0	0	0
1955-56	714	179	262	2	98	13
1956-57	0	0	0	0	0	0
1957-58	1681	480	949	5	85	34
1958-59	353	56	68	4	2	0
1959-60	4933	1222	3120	30	359	153

Numbers of repeating individuals and total repeats are both included since many birds repeat more than once. Several have turned into chronic repeaters, but the champion is a female, #59-105188, banded on January 20, 1960, who repeated 175 times between then and March 20 - almost always in the same trap. To save the wear on her which would have resulted from being handled that often, her bill was painted with bright red fingernail polish which was easy to spot in the trap. The polish lasted about two weeks before needing to be replaced. She soon learned where the top of the trap opened and would fly out with it raised no more than two inches at one corner. In this way she could be released even with a trap full of birds without releasing the others. It was quite interesting to note the change in the behavior of this bird in the time she remained here. When on the feeders any other Grosbeak could chase her. She would then immediately fly to the ground and run in the trap. For the first few weeks she became disturbed if other birds followed her into the trap and would try to escape. By March she had become very antagonistic toward other birds in the trap and would chase them, although she still left the feeders when other birds threatened.

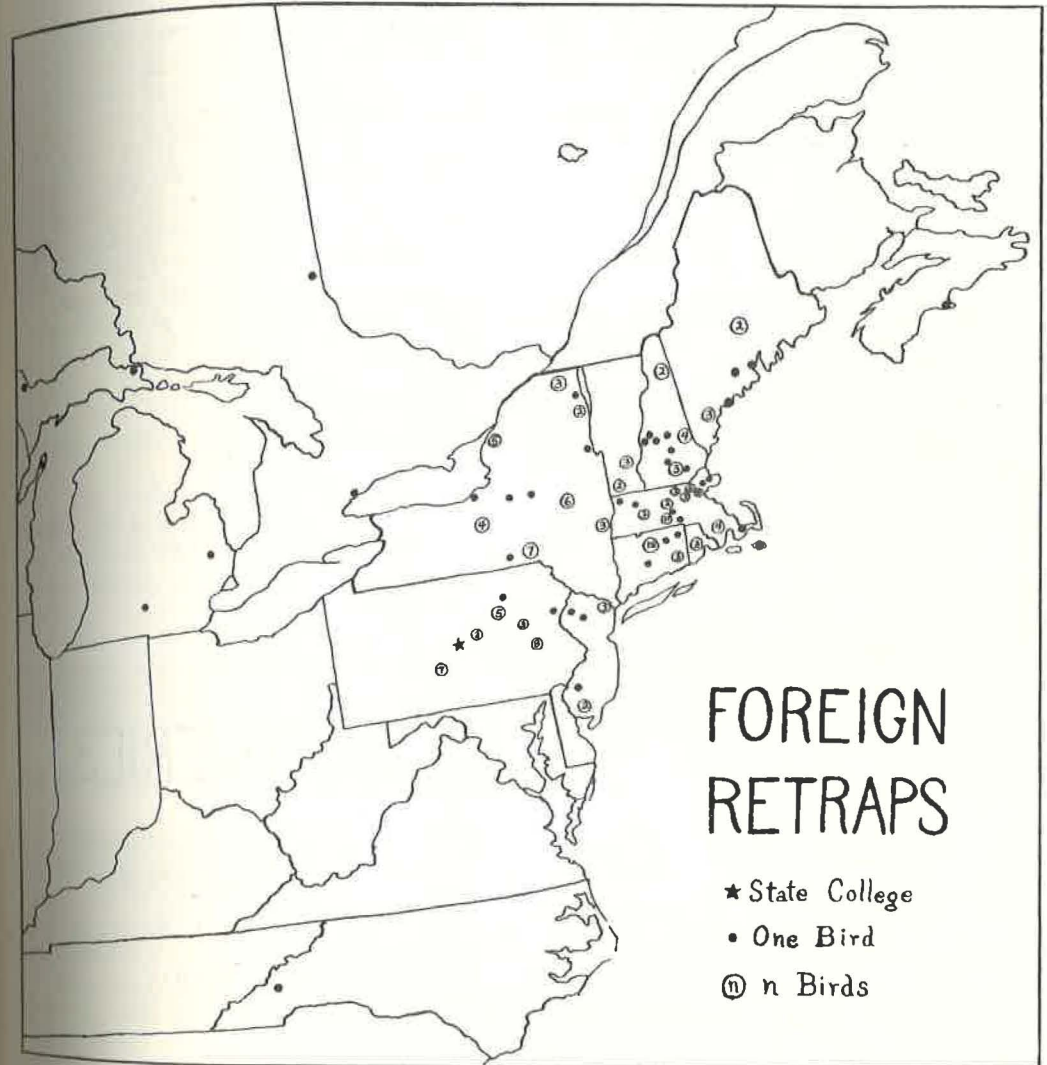
Included in the return totals are birds banded early in the winter that came back into the traps late in the winter after an absence of three months. One such bird was trapped and released over fifty miles away in the interim.

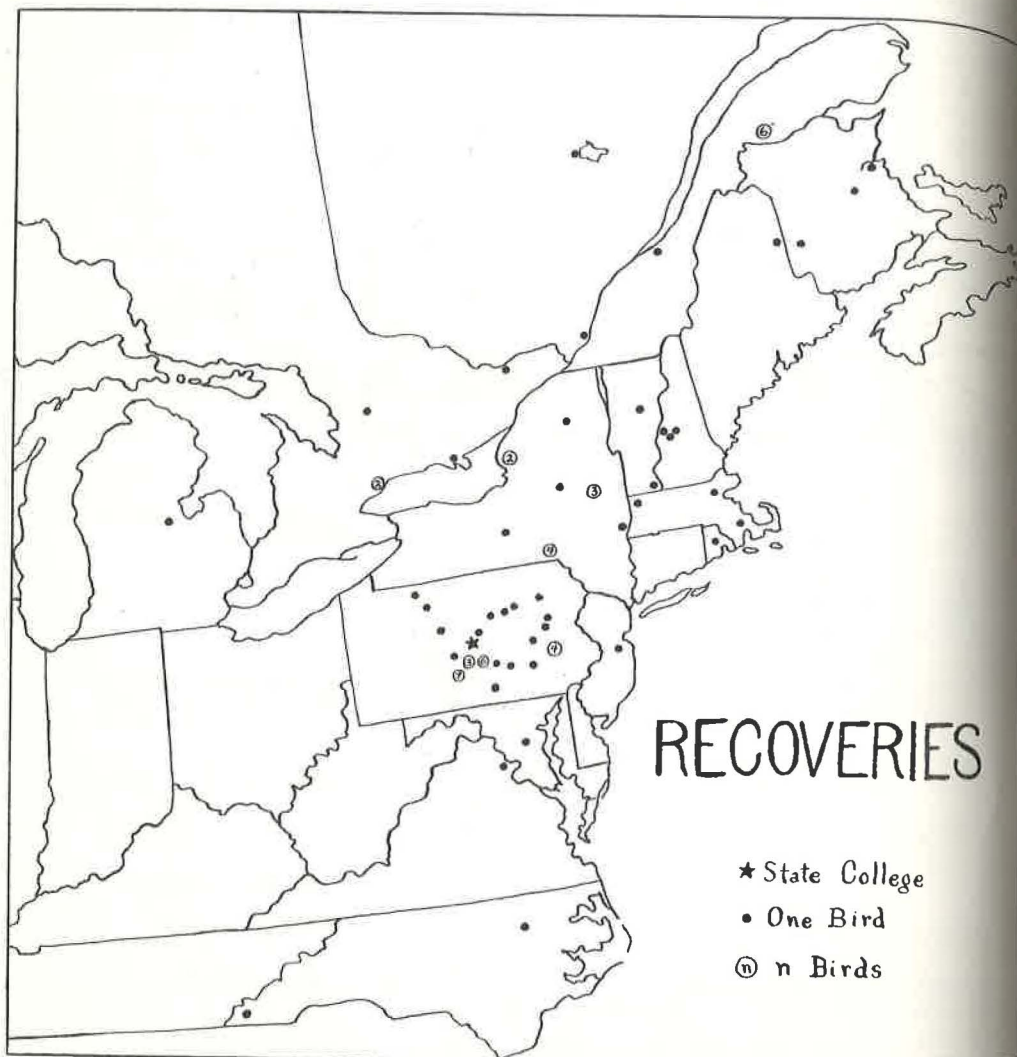
The location of Professor Merrill Wood's banding station about a mile away across town has provided an opportunity to study movements in State College and supplies the "foreign repeats and returns" on the totals. Many times birds have been caught at both stations in the same forenoon. In the following chart of percentages of repeating individuals the letters B and W stand for Bordner and Wood respectively. (i.e. B-B denotes banded by Bordner - repeating with Bordner, etc.)

REPEAT PERCENTAGES

Season	B - B	W - B	W - W	B - W
1955-56	25.2	23.1	8.5	8.1
1957-58	28.5	21.1	7.2	5.9
1958-59	15.8	16.6	0.0	0.6
1959-60	24.8	23.5	7.4	4.2

An unexpected pattern has been noted in these repeat percentages. Each station gets essentially the same percentage of birds banded at both stations. This may reflect the large area covered by the Grosbeaks in feeding. (Have other banders who exchange Grosbeaks noticed the same situation?)



FOREIGN RETRAPS

Winter Banded	Retrapped		
	1955-56	1957-58	1959-60
1951 - 52	0	2	0
1952 - 53	5	2	2
1953 - 54	0	1	1
1954 - 55	5	3	4
1955 - 56	3	23	24
1956 - 57		1	0
1957 - 58		2	33
1958 - 59			59
1959 - 60			17

One of the foreign retraps caught in 1957-58 returned in 1959-60. Although more foreign retraps have come from Ware, Massachusetts, and Hartford, Connecticut, than any other locality, no recoveries have been obtained from either place. From a study of the summer recoveries and the direct recoveries taken in May it appears that most of the birds banded in State College are breeding in Eastern Canada and New England.

The percentage of males has varied from 27% to 46% of the total banded in a season. The sex ratio of foreign retraps corresponds to the banding ratio, but the recoveries show a higher proportion of males, about 50-50.

Now we are wondering if the word has been spread among the Evening Grosbeaks that the people in State College run some good hotels. This past winter nine tons of sunflower seeds were fed to the birds in State College.

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Treasurer Elise Dickerson writes, "Have another new sustaining member who wrote: 'Several hours spent recently in reading through back issues of EBBA NEWS showed me what a wealth of useful information I have been missing. I had no idea such valuable material for banders was being published. EBBA NEWS is well worth \$5.00 to me (herewith enclosed) -- Hope that puts a rainbow on your day,' Elise closes with. It does indeed. But EBBA NEWS will only improve if members write in about the things they think are lacking -- that makes us stir our stumps \*\*\* writes Fred Gallup of Escondido, Calif. in the WBBA 'News from the Bird Banders': 'Received several recoveries on the California gulls. The serial numbers were read with a telescope by Mr. R.F. Oldaker of British Columbia, a new way of reading numbers. The gulls were banded June 23, 1959 at Mono Lake, Calif. and observed by telescope in Vancouver, October 9 \*\*\*"