

BENNETT K. MATLACK

Bennett K. Matlack died December 19, 1960, of a heart attack, while engaged in his favorite hobby, banding birds. He was stricken suddenly, having completed banding fifty of approximately one hundred birds which had been taken earlier in four Australian crow traps. Ben was one of America's pioneer banders, first licensed in 1924, and at 75 years of age probably America's most active, his 1960 total exceeding 18,000 birds. His lifetime total is in excess of 81,000 birds of 165 species. Bennett devoted his life to the study of nature, traveling extensively, lecturing and displaying his beautiful Kodachromes to thousands, in his interpretations of nature. By profession he was a retired educator. He was President of the Dallas Lore Sharp Nature Club, which he founded in 1930. He kept the official weather records of Bridgeton, New Jersey for 22 years, and was an active Councillor to the EBBA organization. He took pride in having participated in the Annual Christmas Bird Census as far back as 1909. Ben has left a great void, which will require the combined energies and efforts of a great number of us to fill. God, indeed, blessed all of us who were privileged to know him.

William E. Savell, Pleasantville, N.J.

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(And from Bill Savell's letter to your Editor:) "During the nineteen months of our very happy association he was continuously submitting us (my wife and me) to wonderful new experiences. Each visit was an education, each thought a new idea, each field trip a new thrill. There was never repetition. At heart he was an energetic, enthusiastic, adventurous youth, at no time showing symptoms normally associated with many people younger than he. Although he was a deeply religious man he never preached; rather, he displayed himself in such an admirable manner as to inspire his associates to become like him. If there was ever a "Most Forgettable Character" in my life, it was Bennett K. Matlack."

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