

President

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MRS. JOHN C. SCHMID
24 Bowman Drive
Greenwich, Conn.

Treasurer

MRS. STANLEY S. DICKERSON
222 DeVoe Avenue
Spotswood, N. J.Editor - Frank P. Frazier, 424 Highland Ave., Upper Montclair, N.J.
Co-Editor - Frank P. Frazier Jr. (temporarily in Army)

EBBA NEWS is published six times a year by the Eastern Bird Banding Association. Applications for membership should be sent to the Treasurer. The dues: Active Members \$2 per year; Sustaining Members: \$5 per year.



Now that January 1 has come and gone we can, with great assurance, indicate the age of all birds as adults; unless (there is always an exception to rules) there is documentary proof to the contrary. This Jan. 1 edict on age determination gives me the feeling that someone puts birds in the same category as horses!

Then there is the obituary notice of the flimsies. My last two pink flimsies were of a most unusual character and I regret I will never see another. One was a report of a robin which I had banded on Feb. 22, 1960. This bird was one of 65 banded out of a flock of perhaps 3000 robins feeding on fermented rotten apples in an abandoned orchard. The robin was recovered at Salmon Cove, near Bay-de-Verde, Newfoundland, northeastern shore, on July 30, 1961. This is the only record I can find of robins wintering around the metropolitan (N.Y.) area and nesting in Newfoundland. The other flimsy was a record of a grackle banded at Ramsey Oct. 26, 1960 and recovered at St. Martin, Quebec (80 miles south of Quebec City) the last of May, 1961.

With these two fine records I have tied my flimsy folder with black tape and laid it to rest. The tombstone reads "Murdered by IBM sometime late in the year of 1961". The flimsies did not leave us without an inheritance. We are inheriting a bunch of figures (called coordinates) indicating where our banded birds have been recovered (latitude and longitude). It is something like the numbers deal with which the telephone company has burdened us. The telephone information operator informed me the other day she had no listings by towns now, just area codes. I was trying to get the number of a party at Cape May Court House, N. J.

With the loss of flimsies we may have more time to study the birds we handle. Perhaps we can accumulate some data on the color changes in the bills of Cardinals, Grosbeaks, Tanagers, and others. Is there any correlation between eye color change and the bill color change in immature Cardinals? How long do the dark spots persist on the young Cardinal's bill, and a few other questions of that nature? There seems to be disagreement as to the eye color of the Pileated Woodpecker. Ever look one in the eye?

Artists are constantly seeking answers to eye and bill color of birds. Why can't we supply the correct answers? We work with live birds and should take notes on the soft parts.

Kay (Mrs. Thomas) Petts of Detroit, a new Sustaining Member, wrote me on Jan. 2: "The EBBA NEWS did it again! This time it was the Photo Information that was exactly what we have been looking for; and the issue that told how to use manicure scissors to remove bands was also worth more than the five-dollar membership. I pass around lots of the ideas I get and the NEWS too." Looks as though Kay should be on the membership committee!

DON'T FORGET to write your Representative and Senators in Congress urging support of the net bill - H.R. 6682.

COVER PICTURE The cover picture is that of a bird observed by artist Tom Olenchak of Mahwah, N. J. The bird was in a dogwood tree fifteen feet from Tom's living room window on Thursday, April 21, 1961 at 6:30 am. It was accompanied by four Bluejays. The stranger was eating dogwood buds. Tom watched the bird a full minute and a half and then sat down, and sketched and painted the bird. Tom showed this painting at a Fyke Nature Association meeting early this fall and asked if any of us could identify it.

The body of the bird as painted is pale gray. The wings and very long tail are an azure blue. It has a black cap over the entire head including the eyes. The legs and feet are very dark.

Oliver Austin's Birds of the World, which Arthur Singer illustrated so magnificently, had just appeared in the book stores. One person, in examining the book, found an exact copy of Tom's strange bird on page 225. It was an Azure-winged Magpie, a bird of Spain, eastern China and Japan. An excellent picture can also be found in Birds of Japan by Keisuke Kobayashi, on Plate 1. In this book it is called Japanese Magpie.

To our knowledge no one in this area ever owned such a bird.

Eleanor E. Dater
