

AGE VARIATION . . . . IN SWAINSON'S AND GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSHES (reprinted from a "General Note" by Robert B. Payne, University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, Ann Arbor, Michigan, in the Wilson Bulletin, Dec. 1961 Vol. 73, No. 4, pp. 385-6)

The degree of retention of juvenal feathers was even more variable in thrushes. Banders (e.g., Middleton, 1958. Ebba News, 21:65-66) have systematically identified Hylocichla thrushes with no spotted or streaked juvenal wing coverts (usually retained at the postjuvenal, premigratory fall molt) as adults, following Dwight's description of molt sequences. Dwight recognized the presence of "precocious individuals," but generalized that in both thrush species the postjuvenal molt involves "the body plumage, the lesser coverts and not the rest of the wings nor the tail." The TV tower sample indicated a variability among first-year birds. Not all immatures had spotted wing coverts, and those that did (most did) had different numbers of juvenal feathers retained. Using the characters of the presence of spotted, streaked, or otherwise marked or loose-webbed upper coverts and body feathers and degree of wear of flight feathers, I was able to age correctly all adult (10 male, 19 female) H. ustalata, but only 18 of 20 first-year males and 15 of 22 first-year females. Similarly I aged correctly all adult (29 male, 24 female) H. minima, but only 13 of 17 first-year males and 25 of 26 first-year females. I repeated these attempts with the same results. Others in the Museum of Zoology had the same experience with this sample. Because of this considerable variation in retention of juvenal plumage, it would be desirable for banders to check age by skull ossification on live birds as described by Miller (1946. Bird-Banding, 17:33-35) as well as by plumage.

---The Editors hope that Ebba members will find (or make) the opportunity to study the original of the above, and also the articles referred to.

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### THREE TREE SPARROW RETURNS

By Trudy Smith

|           |                  |    |                  |
|-----------|------------------|----|------------------|
| #58-55041 | -- Banded 3/4/57 | -- | Returned 1/20/62 |
| #26-74924 | -- " 12/4/57     | -- | " 1/11/62        |
| #26-74946 | -- " 12/10/57    | -- | " 1/10/62        |

Thought you might find these returns interesting. Also. . .these birds have repeated and returned during the intervening years.

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