

A BANDING STATION SIGN

By Betty Knorr



There are many ways in which I have benefited from the banding station sign which we put up in front of our home. I feel certain that many other banders could benefit by this idea also. Since all banders must depend on the general public for band recoveries, anything that makes people favorably more aware of bird banding should increase the percentage of birds recovered.

verbal warnings did much good. The "NO HUNTING" posters that were put up by the park employees were quickly torn down by vandals and poachers, many of whom knew very well that this section of the park is rarely patrolled.

Our home is situated on a dead end road that directly borders the nature study and wilderness area of Cheesequake State Park, N. J. When we first moved into our new house we had a terrific problem with gunners hunting here illegally and no amount of

Unfortunately, as is the case with many parks and refuges, the understaffed crew is overworked and the park must operate with inadequate funds and equipment. Every dollar has to be budgeted where it will do the most, which in our case, is the opposite portion of our park where thousands of people swarm to enjoy the bathing, fishing and other recreational facilities. It was appalling to see many of our game birds and animals slaughtered in this sanctuary area but even worse was the destruction of countless songbirds, killed by gunners using anything that moved for a target. When one of these "sportsmen" shot three Long-eared Owls, well that was the last straw!

After thinking over the situation, I purposely designed my banding station sign so it would have a sort of "official" look, hoping that it would help to discourage the gunners. After putting up the sign, the news of my signpost spread quickly and it wasn't long before I began to realize other benefits along with the decrease of hunters. The police department, the Park Rangers and employees, the local game warden, SPCA, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and local children all came forth with unexpected cooperation and interest.

Somehow word got around to the Perth Amboy Evening News and they asked to do a feature illustrated article in their weekly magazine section about my banding station - and the New York Sunday News saw and liked that article so they ran another article about my banding station. Never did I dream that one little sign could arouse so much interest!

The banding sign also brought a certain degree of respect, particularly from individuals who had at first regarded me as the eccentric bird watcher that is often joked about by comedians and cartoonists. Still another pleasant aspect has been the occasional arrival of an unusual or out-of-the-ordinary species, brought to me by people who have heard of my banding activities. One of the most recent arrivals was a very affectionate Horned Grebe that had been found stranded along a road, far from any water.

The Screech Owl in the photo was also brought to me when someone found it along the Turnpike where it had been struck by a car. The owl is recovering nicely and will soon be released. In the meantime though, he is the star attraction of my live bird programs which I give regularly for Scouts and other interested groups.

All things considered, I'm sure many banders could definitely further the interest in the banding program as a whole, as well as their own pet projects, simply by putting up an appropriate banding station sign.

Cheesequake, South Amboy, N. J.

PURPLE MARTIN STUDY Mr. J. C. Finlay, 6710 - 102 A Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, is making a comprehensive study of the Purple Martin, and requests the assistance of EBBA members in this project. Apart from banding data, he needs information on arrival dates in the spring, departure dates in autumn, nesting data, and so forth. Banders who have information on Martins - or have active Martin houses - are urged to get in touch with Mr. Finlay at the above address.

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