



THE HONEY-JAR FEEDER

By David Junkin

Trapping birds has become such a hobby to many of us, that we have found ourselves experimenting with new ideas for traps. Some of these ideas naturally come as a result of our own thinking, while others appear unexpectedly. An example of the latter appeared this past winter at the Field Station of the Massachusetts Audubon Society's Drumlin Farm Sanctuary in South Lincoln, Mass.

A one-half gallon honey-jar was suspended by wires from two branches of a red cedar. The purpose was to have a bird feeder for attracting potential band-wearers to the area. Sunflower seed was put inside the jar which was four and one-half feet above the ground.

In February a small flock of American Goldfinches showed up and we soon realized that the greedy Goldfinches, which like to have a feeder all to themselves, would fly in and extract the seeds from their shells, leaving the jar full of shells. On the other hand, Black-capped Chickadees and White-breasted Nuthatches (as is characteristic of them) would take one seed and leave.

One day, one of the men decided to run out to see what affect a scare would have on the Goldfinches. It was discovered then that the Goldfinches had a hard time finding their way out and as a result, could be easily trapped inside the jar. Pine siskins also showed the same characteristic. Chickadees and Nuthatches could never be caught by this method, though it was tried a few times. Furthermore, besides being a good trap, this feeder never again attracted any Goldfinches previously caught in it, while this device continued to help draw other birds into the area. The photographs on the preceding page both show Pine Siskins caught in the jar-feeder.