

SAGE THRASHER -- A FIRST FOR VIRGINIA

By Jane Pickens Church

I have a nice rara avis report from here -- I banded a Sage Thrasher on December 5. According to the Fish & Wildlife records, this is the first banding east of the Mississippi and only the fifth time the bird has been sighted east. It was the first record for Virginia.

It was confirmed in the hand by Dr. F. G. Sheider of Washington, D.C. and photographed by Dr. J. J. Murray of Lexington, Va. and by Dr. Alexander Wetmore of the Smithsonian Institution. I also checked skins at the Smithsonian.

Incidentally, the bird was first identified for me by Chandler Robbins at Patuxent via long distance telephone -- this in itself sets some sort of a record for competence on his part! (And competence on Jane Church's descriptive ability! -- Ed.)

Janelia Farms, Ashburn, Virginia.



USE DECOY FOR CEDAR WAXWINGS

By Harry H. Goehring

(Reprinted from Inland Bird Banding News)

During the past fall (1960) I have banded 104 Cedar Waxwings within a two-week period. The two most important factors which made this possible were the presence of two mountain ash trees loaded with berries and the use of one or two banded Waxwings placed in the traps. Of course, at this time of the year most of the birds migrating through St. Cloud, Minnesota are immature birds. They seemed to have little fear of me as I came to empty the traps. The fact that there were one or two dozen birds in the traps at this time, so near to me, indicated to them, I suppose, that there was little danger present. Being such a "flocky" bird, I reasoned, a decoy of banded Waxwings would bring more to the trap soon after it was emptied. Such was the case because I banded over 40 birds in less than one hour.

For this operation I used a large figure eight government sparrow trap and another trap with top opening shaped, as viewed from the end, in the form of an M. Pails of dripping water were used for "bait." The noise from the dripping water, I am sure, attracted the first birds, but the banded decoys kept them coming down from the trees once I started the banding operations.

It would seem that using banded birds to decoy would work for other species of birds which travel in flocks.

St. Cloud, Minnesota.