

Water may attract birds which do not come in for food. A full bucket with a small hole in its bottom is placed on top of the trap with a metal pan below inside to catch the drip. Birds are attracted by the sound, particularly during hot weather.

Mrs. Rose is to be commended for the superb canvas banding kit which she made. Everything you needs fits securely into its own compartment -- bands, pliers, rulers, clip board, etc. It zips together with twin zippers which meet at top center -- this insures that the kit may be opened out flat for easy use.

Fred Mears had brought his "Annual Banding Kit" with him. It was much larger and held 2000 bands on long wires, pliers rulers, pad, etc. This would be rather elaborate for the back-yard bander but should be invaluable for people who change banding locations regularly. I again forgot to see how much it weighed but it looked heavy. A standing board with screw eyes or nails attached is an excellent simple device for holding strings of bands. The band-size numbers may be written in above each string for quick identification.

This was an excellent Workshop session. The only improvement might have been a greater variety of traps on display. For example, there was no Bal Chatri and no woodpecker trap. This is a small criticism for an extremely interesting and informative hour and a half.

Janelia Farms, Ashburn, Virginia.



RECORD KEEPING AND PROJECT PLANNING SESSION - EBBA WORKSHOP By Ruth J. Rose

My husband and I are very interested in methods of keeping records, other than our own, and also the type of data which might be of value in project planning. We found in this Workshop Course the answers to many of our questions.

Our instructors were Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Dickerson and Mr. Allen Duvall, Chief of the Banding Office.

In leading the discussion, Mrs. Dickerson brought out the important data which should be kept in order to send accurate records to the Banding Office each year. While most of us are aware as to what is necessary data, it is a good idea to recheck your records frequently to make sure you haven't left out something of importance. The accuracy of your Band Numbers is of vital concern on your records, with the small size bands being double checked for accuracy. Next in order should be the Name of the Species. If there is any doubt as to the identity of the bird, you

must release it unbanded. Of course, if there is another bander close in your area who can help on identification, by all means consult him or her. The bird can be kept in a darkened holding cage for a period of time without injury.

All too many of us do not know how to Age and Sex Birds, it was pointed out. Since not all the birds we band are nestlings and not all birds are as easy to identify in the matter of sex as are adult Cardinals, we are at a loss as to sex and age of the so-called "adult" birds. So for our records, we must list this data as UNKNOWN. The Date on which the bird is banded is really necessary -- especially if you have a "retrap" and wish to know how long it has been (for there is a 90 day period between reportings) since it was originally banded or last reported. If you band birds in more than one area, then the Place of Banding is also very important to record.

While not necessary data for the Banding Office Records, many banders also keep a record of the Time when the bird was banded, Weather Conditions, as well as Weight of Bird, Fat Class (when necessary) and Wing Measurements. This data, we learned from Mr. Dickerson, would come in handy for a special project or research.

Many people make their own record sheets, or you can purchase them (and help EBBA's finances at the same time) from EBBA's Editor (see the "Bander's Aids" page in this issue for details.)

Mrs. Dickerson has also kept additional records as well as her Daily Records. These she calls her Species Books. These are loose leaf notebooks with a page for each species banded. The individual pages record all the above information including the extra data which is not necessary for the Banding Schedules, and therefore serve as a double check. Naturally all this must be done with complete accuracy to be of value. Mr. Duvall voiced his accord on the need for accuracy and completeness of records, in order that the inquiries which we receive from the Banding Office can be completed expeditiously.

Walter Bigger and Alex Bergstrom each reported using a spiral bound student notebook for each species -- thereupon they can allow for many repeats and returns.

Very logically, the problems and methods of record keeping blend into the area of Project Planning. Stanley Dickerson initiated his presentation by emphasizing that worthwhile banding projects originate when the bander begins his perusal of the material already recorded and/or published.

Basically, a project consists of four elements: (1) an idea, (2) a need to inquire, (3) recording observations or information from which conclusions may be drawn -- pro or con, and (4) adequate time.

The bander can save endless hours by just familiarizing himself thoroughly with what has already been accomplished in the specific or allied area of inquiry. Try to determine short cuts and techniques -- gain some idea as to what is worthwhile observing and recording for your particular purposes. Make sure you can devote enough time to your efforts or you will lose the basis, the point and meaning of your original project.

Mr. Dickerson made a few suggestions for projects which were verified by Allen Duvall later. The first was on Netting Projects -- you might consider one or two subjects but certainly not all of them at once:

1. Netting catches each hour.
What kind of species at different hours.
2. Relating them to Weather Conditions.
3. Relating the catches to the Seasons of the Year.
4. Relating them to the Time of Day.
5. Checking the weights of birds at different periods of the day (after netting them) and tallying them according to the averages for morning hours and late afternoon hours using standard measurements. The purpose of this check, of course, is to see when the birds are eating the most during the day.

Another area which could be studied is on Plumage Changes. Plumage in the Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer. Why they change? Or along a similar line, you might choose a study on Brood Patches, using the following as a starting guide:

1. Is there already a Brood Patch when the birds return from the south?
2. Before nesting?
3. During Nesting.
4. Comparing Brood Patches with postjuvenile molts.

There are really many areas yet to be explored and reported on, so if you would really like to try one, now is the time to start.

Thanks to our instructors we left the session in Record Keeping and Project Planning thoroughly aware of the considerable contributions the average bander can make to the field of ornithology.

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