



### EXTREME AGES OF BIRDS

By Charles H. Blake

Perhaps a summary by groups of the extreme ages (in round numbers) in the data on longevity in "The Ring" nos. 33, 34 (1962, 1963) may help banders answer that too frequent question: "How old do birds get to be?"

Loons	23 yrs.	Auks	10 yrs.
Petrels	12	Pigeons	11
Pelicans	10	Owls	17
Gannets	16	Swifts	21
Cormorants	18	Woodpeckers	11
Herons	24	Tyrant Flycatchers	8
Storks	19	Swallows	16
Ducks, etc.	20	Crows, Jays	20
Hawks	25	Titmice	9
Osprey	20	Nuthatches	9
Falcons	16	Wrens	5
Galliformes	12	Mimic Thrushes	12
Rails, etc.	18	Thrushes	18
Oystercatchers	28	Starlings	20
Plovers	19	Icterids	14
Sandpipers	31	Passer	10
Gulls	32	Finches, etc.	12
Terns	27		

We should distinguish between the mortality of birds and the mortality of bands. The latter has been serious in such groups as shearwaters and cormorants. Some remedies are now at hand. The longevity of captive birds may be quite another matter. I believe the all-time record is held by a European Eagle-owl, 68 years. Herring Gulls have lived nearly 50 years in captivity. I have not seen any data to prove the stories of century-old parrots, geese or swans.

As a rough generalization, any bird of robin size or larger has a potential life span in the wild of 20 years or more and even the smallest birds can approach 10 years. Wrens and the galliform birds may prove to be exceptional.

A few birds are noted as exceeding 25 years in the wild:

European Kite	25 yrs.,	8 mos.,	24 days
European Oystercatcher	28	5	9
European Curlew	31	6	21
Lesser Black-backed Gull	26	1	0
Herring Gull	31	11	10
Black-headed Gull	30	3	12
Caspian Tern	26	0	21
Arctic Tern	27	0	1

P. O. Box 613, Hillsboro, North Carolina



SOME AGE RECORDS OF AMERICAN BIRDS  
As They Appear in "The Ring"  
By Frank P. Frazier

The American records are far from complete, according to Dr. W. Rydzewski, Editor of "The Ring". To supplement Dr. Blake's article above, some of the age records printed in No. 34 (1963) of "The Ring" follow:

Tree Swallow	7 yrs.	11 mos.	26 days
Barn Swallow	6	11	12
Purple Martin	5	10	27
Blue Jay	12	9	21
Black-capped Chickadee	9	1	14
Tufted Titmouse	6	7	20
White-breasted Nuthatch	9	5	1
House Wren	5	0	0
Mockingbird	5	5	21
Catbird	8	11	13
Brown Thrasher	11	10	5
Robin	11	7	23
Wood Thrush	5	10	0
Hermit Thrush	5	3	24
Red-eyed Vireo	5	10	12
Redwinged Blackbird	14	1	26
Baltimore Oriole	6	10	16
Common Grackle	14	2	15
Cowbird	7	9	4
Scarlet Tanager	7	10	11