

BANDING OF PURPLE FINCHES AT WESTPORT POINT, MASS.
DURING SPRING AND SUMMER OF 1963
By Malcolm Oakes

During the spring and summer of 1963, I banded 645 Purple Finches, more than during any similar period since I started banding in 1958. Returns from previous years were also substantial, 125 birds (44 in full male plumage and 81 in brown plumage) or 37% of the 336 birds banded in 1962. Two very active days were July 23rd when I banded 40 new birds, had 7 returns and 46 repeats, a total of 93 birds, and August 24th when 33 new birds were banded, with 3 returns and 81 one-time repeats, a total of 114 different Purple Finches. In addition, 15 of the 81 repeats were trapped twice on that day.

SUMMARY OF PURPLE FINCHES BANDED SINCE 1958

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Days Banding</u>	<u>No. of Birds Banded</u>	<u>No. of Birds Which Returned in 1963</u>
1958	5	42	0
1959	17	190	6
1960	45	170	15
1961	39 *	110	21
1962	92	336	81
1963	67	645	2
	265	1493	125

* A correction from previous reports.

DETAILS OF BANDING BY MONTHS DURING 1963

<u>Month</u>	<u>No. of Days Banding</u>	<u>New Birds Banded</u>	<u>Returns After 90 Days</u>	<u>* Repeats in less than 90 days</u>
April	2	38	36	12
May	5	34	39	31
June	6	18	15	44
July	16	166	23	211
August	22	204	8	304
September	16	185	4	632
	67	645	125	1234

* Figures on the number of times different birds repeated in 1963 are available.

PLUMAGE - In my report last year, I noted that of approximately 285 Purple Finches banded in 1962 after July 1st, 40 birds showed pink, or less frequently yellow, coloring on the rump and/or sides and throat, as distinguished from the complete raspberry plumage of the adult male. Eight (8) of these 40 birds returned in 1963 - 3 in full male plumage, 3 with the same pink or yellow coloring they had in 1962 and 2 in brown plumage with no sign of pink or yellow. Of the 645 new Finches banded in 1963, 15 were in full male plumage, 448 were in brown plumage and 177 had pink or yellow coloring, either at the time they were banded or when they were re-trapped in August and September. I found that of the latter 177 birds, 95 had completely brown plumage when banded in July and early August, but had changed to pink or yellow coloring when re-trapped in late August or in September. All of these facts bear out the difficulty I, as well as many others, have experienced in distinguishing between males and females in the brown, pink or yellow coloring.

Some older Purple Finches, as evidenced by returns, are shown below:

<u>Band No.</u>	<u>Plumage When Banded</u>	<u>Date Banded</u>	<u>Date Retaken</u>	<u>Plumage When Retaken</u>
61 - 70977	Brown	7/26/59	7/4/60 6/8/63	Brown Adult Male
61 - 70980 *	Adult Male	7/26/59	5/30/60 5/14/61 5/31/63	Adult Male
62 - 49145	Brown	8/22/59	6/12/60 7/14/61 7/9/62 8/5/63	Brown Tinge of Pink Brown - No Pink Very Pink Rump
62 - 49150 **	Brown	8/22/59	5/8/60 8/11/60 5/1/61 6/3/62 7/23/63	Adult Male

* Since adult male plumage is acquired in the second year after hatching, this bird was hatched in 1957 or before, and is, therefore, at least 6 years old.

** This bird was hatched in 1958 and is, therefore, 5 years old.

PLUMAGE OF PURPLE FINCHES BANDED IN 1963

<u>Month Banded</u>	<u>No. of Birds Banded</u>	<u>No. in Full Male Plumage</u>	<u>No. in Brown Plumage</u>	<u>No. with Pink or Yellow Coloring</u>
April	38	7	24	7
May	34	1	28	5*
June	18	2	14	2
July	166	4	134*	28
August	204	1	200*	3
September	<u>185</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>143</u>	<u>42</u>
TOTAL	645	15	543*	87*

Revised
Totals due
to changes
in repeated
birds..... 645 15 448 177

Remarks

- 5* 1 bird of pink plumage repeated on 7/27/63 in full male plumage.
134* 35 birds had pink or yellow coloring when they repeated in August and September.
200* 60 birds had pink or yellow coloring when they repeated in late August and September.

1963 PURPLE FINCH REPEATS (AFTER LESS THAN 90 DAYS)

140 birds repeated once	-	140
125 " " twice	-	250
80 " " 3 times	-	240
57 " " 4 times	-	228
41 " " 5 times	-	205
15 " " 6 times	-	90
10 " " 7 times	-	70
6 " " 8 times	-	48
2 " " 9 times	-	18
2 " " 10 times	-	20
1 " " 12 times	-	12
<u>1 " " 13 times</u>	-	<u>13</u>

480 different birds repeated - 1334 times