



There were about sixty in attendance at my first Annual Meeting in 1957 at the Academy of Natural Science in Philadelphia. The highlight of the weekend for me was the traditional Sunday field trip to local banding stations. A caravan of twelve carloads visited the homes of Bill Middleton, George Hitchner, Ben Matlack, and Garrett Detwiler.

At each station we had an opportunity to observe different banding techniques, learn the most productive locations for traps, sketch or photograph traps we planned to duplicate, analyze different methods of record keeping, and get into all types of discussions. I remember Bill Middleton explaining how his solenoid trap device worked and Alex Bergstrom demonstrating with live specimens how to sex Starlings.

Now that our attendance at Annual Meetings has grown from two to thousands of times as great, visiting small backyard banding stations is no longer practical. I think this is most unfortunate. True we have instructional workshop sessions and opportunities for discussions at receptions and field trips, but I don't think they completely replace on-the-scene visits where actual banding is being done. There's a lot to be gained by exchanging information in small groups.

So why don't we hold local backyard banding meetings throughout EBBA territory? Eleanor Dater held one at dawn last May at her home in Ramsbury. She invited both experienced and new banders and reported the meeting was most successful based on the number of questions and exchange of information. I believe coffee was served and everyone was home before noon.

It seems to me this is an excellent way to informally revive the visiting of banding stations. It would also provide an opportunity for banders to get together who are not able to attend each Annual Meeting. If successful, these meetings could be expanded as a training program for new banders. There's a lot that could be accomplished.

So let's give it a trial this Spring! Everyone who would like to host to banders in your area send in your name, the time and date of your meeting, and any directions required to Frank Frazier, who will put notices of these meetings in the March-April issue of "EBBA News." Let all participate, get on the phone and invite your neighboring banders, and contact Frank before March 15.

Hope to see a record number of banders at the Annual Meeting at Ocean City, Maryland, on April 23, 24 & 25, 1965. Charlie Blake has put together what will probably turn out to be the best program we've ever had.

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