

OPERATION RECOVERY AT McCLINTIC
By George Ballentine

The first effort of "Operation Recovery" at McClintic Wildlife Station was done from September 10th through September 17th. While the seven day participation was comparatively short for a study of this kind it was thoroughly worth while since it gave a very good idea of what might be expected at McClintic during a longer period and under weather conditions more conducive to migration. No doubt the study will be repeated next year and for a longer period.

The term "Operation Recovery" is applied to a continuous banding operation during the Fall migration. The Fish and Wildlife Service encourages these studies during the period from the middle of August through the month of October. Two weeks of continuous banding is considered a minimum study period. A location is chosen that is likely to attract birds. Such a location would have plenty of food, water and shelter.

The McClintic area was rich in food. There were 15 kinds of fruit including Autumn Olive, several species of Viburnum, five kinds of Dogwood, orange and yellow Bittersweet, Wild Cherry, Poke berry, Wild Grape, Mulberry and Multiflora Rose hips. In the seed department was Brown-top Millet, Buckwheat, Sorghum, Yellow Soy beans and field Corn, also Japan Clover, Korean and Bicolor Lespedeza.

There was no rain during the entire week. Atmospheric conditions varied from very heavy morning fog to nights as clear as a clear sub-zero winter night. The wind was usually less than five miles per hour and never reached ten. The temperature ranged from 31°F to 89°F. Most days were sunny.

Seven licensed banders and two assistants participated using from 9 to 25 nets depending on the number of banders present. The total operation required 1,345 net-hours.

All birds caught were processed following methods suggested by Fish and Wildlife Service. This included identification as to species, age and sex; measurement of wing and examination for fat; and determination of weight.

During the seven day period 282 birds of 41 species were banded. Most numerous were Indigo Buntings (43), Catbirds (34), and Song Sparrows (34). There were 15 species of warblers with Yellow-throats (9), Chats (9) and Palms (7) leading in number.

Banders participating were Charley Handley, Maxine Kiff, Ann Shreve, Conny Katholi, Mable Edgerton and Ruth and George Ballentine. The very able assistants were Jack Kain and Oscar Mairs.