

of sunflowers, cosmos, zinnias, centaurea and Swiss chard. Also I scattered some thistle seeds from Nigeria that I use in winter. I have doubts about the thistles maturing this year. It may be one of the two year variety. Should Goldfinches respond favorably to my invitation I will have a study group some time this fall. Anyone interested send me a self addressed postal card and I'll return with the date. (P.O.Box 111, Ramsey, N.J. 07446.)

A bird that needs meticulous study is the White-throated Sparrow. At present no one has come up with a foolproof formula for sexing them plumage-wise. Several people have ideas. James Lowther of Toronto, Canada has a theory that appeals to me. Dr. Charles Blake and Betty Downs have different thoughts on the subject. I don't know but I wish I did. Certainly the text books are of little or no help. I would thoroughly enjoy a good argument or study on the White-throat.

And while I am on the subject of sparrows I would like to find a bander who has access to Swamp Sparrows in numbers. I have always felt that it takes a complete post nuptial molt for a Swamp Sparrow to attain full adult plumage -- the kind shown in field guides.

P.O.Box 111, Ramsey, N.J. 07446

#### HOW TO HELP THE BANDING OFFICE

If banders have taken the opportunity of reading Bird Banding Notes and other information recently issued by the Banding Office, they undoubtedly have been impressed by the increase in the program over the past few years. This applies not only to the number of birds banded, but to the number of recoveries received and processed by the Laboratory. A number of problems frequently arise which cause unnecessary work and could very easily be eliminated by a little extra effort from banders. Frequently two banders living within the same city (or on the same island) will retrap one another's birds. These numbers are frequently reported to the Banding Office when the original banding date was but a few days or weeks prior to the time it was recaptured. A bit of telephoning between local banders could greatly lessen the work of processing these records.

The second situation involves the banding of gulls and terns. Young birds of these species often experience a fair percentage of mortality before they leave the colony. This frequently results in many dead banded birds remaining in the colony after the young have dispersed. Thus a second bander going into the colony (or some other person) will frequently turn in a large number of bands from these chicks. This again requires much extra work for records which are of little value. Had the bander taken the effort to return to the colony after the dispersal of the birds, he could have deleted the numbers from his schedules and saved the Banding Lab this unnecessary amount of processing.

Mr. Anonymous - July 22, 1965