

1965 WORKSHOP SESSION ON WARBLERS
Reported by Robert L. Pyle

Chandler Robbins' detailed tables and keys for ageing and sexing Wood Warblers (family Parulidae) have been given wide circulation in EBBA publications. They have opened the eyes of many banders to the possibilities for making definite determinations of age and sex, even in this large and most confusing group, when one has the bird in hand and knows exactly what to look for. However, Chan's keys presuppose that the bird already has been identified to species. This prerequisite has occasionally proven to be an embarrassing hindrance to full application of the keys. A bander hates to let a bird go unbanded just because he isn't sure of its species --- it hurts his pride. So Chan's workshop session this year was devoted entirely to the problem of determining the species of a warbler in the hand.

In general, said Chan, this is "pretty easy" in spring, but much more difficult in fall. The 37 species of warblers that occur normally in EBBA territory fall naturally into three groups. Group 1 includes those that precede the genus Dendroica in the A.O.U. Checklist order (10 species of 6 genera); Group 2 is the genus Dendroica itself (15 species in one genus); Group 3 includes those that follow Dendroica (12 species of 6 genera).

Group 2 -- the genus Dendroica -- all have pronounced wingbars or wing patches, and large tail spots.

Groups 1 and 3 in general do not have wingbars, and may or may not have spotting in the tail. Unfortunately, there are some exceptions --- it would be completely out of character if there were not. In Group 1, the Black-and-white, Blue-winged, Golden-winged and Parula have distinct wingbars, and the Tennessee may have faint ones. In Group 3, the Redstart has large obvious wing patches and tail spots.

Tail spotting is somewhat less distinctive as a criteria for separating the groups. Chan pointed out that standard field guides stress marks that are useful in the field, and often do not indicate tail spotting in plates or text unless this happens to be important for identification in the field. Thus one cannot depend on the field guides for a definite determination of the presence or absence of tail spots. In some cases banders who examine live birds closely in hand have an opportunity to add to present knowledge on tail patterns. For example, the tail band of Magnolia warblers is frequently wider in males than in females. But is this uniformly true, or do individuals vary enough to make this unreliable as a sex determinant?

In his subsequent discussion, Chan brought out many more points which help in making a positive species identification. He had so much useful information to impart that the bell marking the end of the session found him still going strong with more species still to be covered. Chan

has an encyclopedic knowledge of the more subtle characteristics of bird species, and we in the EBBA are especially privileged to have this exposure to it at our workshop sessions each year.

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CONSERVATION AWARD WINNERS

Two EBBA members are winners of American Motors' 1965 Conservation Awards. These awards were inaugurated 12 years ago to emphasize the need for conserving the nation's natural resources. They are presented annually to 20 individuals for outstanding personal efforts in various areas of conservation. Ten men are named as winners of professional awards and ten are selected for non-professional awards.

Dr. Maurice Broun, in the professional category, and in the non-professional, Elting Arnold, are the EBBA members cited. Their citations read as follows:

Dr. Maurice Broun, Kempton, Pennsylvania, curator of the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, for his leadership in the establishment of the 1,400-acre sanctuary at a site which previously had been the scene of senseless slaughter of migrating hawks. Broun placed his life in jeopardy and actually was fired upon during his campaign to convert Kittatinny Ridge into a sanctuary which attracts thousands of visitors annually.

Elting Arnold, Chevy Chase, Maryland, attorney and counsel to the Inter-American Development Bank, for his many years of volunteer service to conservation -- including serving as secretary to the board of the Nature Conservancy since 1956 and leadership in the Audubon Naturalist Society of the Central Atlantic States. In essence, Arnold is also legal counsel of the Nature Conservancy on a volunteer basis.

The winners will receive sculptured bronze medallions designed by Robert Weinman, noted sculptor. An honorarium of \$500 is also given to each winner in the professional category.

Winners were selected by a committee of distinguished conservationists which includes Arthur H. Carhart, C. R. Guterthuth, Harold Titus, Carl W. Buchheister and Richard H. Pough.