

# EBBA NUS

NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM  
DAYTON SICK  
ALBANY, N. Y.



JUN 18 1940

A Friendly Report to Members of the Eastern Bird Banding Association

June, 1940

Let Us Band Together

Vol. 3 No. 3

## WHAT THE BALLOTS TELL !

It has been very gratifying to the officers of EBBA to see the great number of members who have responded to the recent call for cooperation and watch the ballots pour in from every area in the association's territory. Marked ballots have been received from nearly every state from Florida in the south, north to Canada. Arriving with the ballots were a few brick-bats and many compliments. All are welcome. Criticism shows life and interest. As for the compliments, we'll just be coy. Let's get to the results.

On Proposal No. 1 - One dollar Membership with EBBA NUS only. The ratio of votes were better than 10 to 1 in favoring of inaugurating such a membership and getting as many banders as possible to "Band Together".

On Proposal No. 2 - Three dollar Membership with both EBBA NUS and BIRD BANDING, - the ratio of votes ran 24 to 1 favoring such a move. The slight increase of 50¢ over previous dues met with little opposition.

On Proposal No. 3 - For more Councillors and local groups, - All votes cast favored such a plan without a single exception.

These results overwhelmingly prove that most members favor all three classes of membership and with this in view, membership will be accepted in the \$1, \$3, and \$5 classes. It should be remembered that these votes were cast by members who have found it possible to pay our previous dues of \$2.50. As many, who have put on a membership drive know, if such a ballot had been sent to all banders in our area, many who have been unable to see their way clear to join us, would have voted in favor of Proposal No. 1 and been happy to join our growing group.

In reference to Proposal No. 3, the result of such action is very clearly stated by our Councillor for Eastern Pennsylvania. We quote: "It seems to me that the annual meeting is not in itself sufficient to meet the need for personal acquaintance-ship between the members of a particular district. As is well known, there are a very limited number of members who can afford to give up the time and money to attend the annual meeting at some distance from their homes, and, therefore, it becomes necessary to have local meetings in order to maintain the interest in the Eastern Bird Banding Association."...."At such meetings it might be possible to discuss such matters as pertain to local conditions, also subjects that appear in Ebba Nus and Bird Banding Magazine. Many projects might be originated between local members that would have value in ornithological research." - Horace Groskin, Ardmore, Pennsylvania.

Get in touch with your nearest bander and arrange a meeting. If you don't know who this is, write to your Secretary.

## NEWS OF THE BIRD BANDERS

All banders have had birds at their stations which have developed the trap habit and become somewhat of a responsibility. However, it isn't many of us that have had a Scarlet Tanager develop this habit. Carl A. Pedersen of Montvale, N.J., banded such a bird on July 2, 1931 which returned to his traps every year up until 1935 when it developed this habit, repeating from mid-May until mid-August. It has been suggested by some banders that birds which develop such a habit may be either sick or becoming old and find natural food hard to find.

Miss Jeanette Boone of the Carry Nature Sanctuary of Sweet Briar, Va. reports that a Junco banded in December, 1937, returned in March, 1938 and was reported on June 8th, 1938 at LePage, Ontario, Canada.

Horace Groskin of Ardmore, Pa. has trapped birds bearing foreign bands from 5 states. He has also taken 4 raccoons and 12 opossums in his bird traps, both of which are records of note.

Mrs. Marie Dumont of Pequannock, N.J. reports that a Tree Sparrow banded at her station in April 1, 1935 was killed in Miguasha, LaButt, Quebec on May 22, 1936. Four Robins banded at her station have been recovered in the south; 1 in Alabama, 1 in Florida, and 2 in North Carolina. All but one of these were recovered during February, the odd one being recovered in the later part of January.

A Great Blue Heron, banded by J. A. Gillespie at Earleville, Md. on May 21, 1939 was shot at North Arlington, N.J. during the last of July or early in August of 1939.

Allan D. Kirk of Wilkinsburg, Pa. writes, "I had a very interesting experience with a Cowbird. Each day I drive 25 miles to and from work. Last week I picked up two females and a male Cowbird just before I left home in the morning. After banding, I took them along and released them from the office window. Three days later one female was back in the trap and six days later I trapped the other female. Showing homing instinct in birds that do not build a nest." Experiments of this kind add a zest to banding and it is hoped that they will be attempted by more and more banders. Papers have been published showing Cowbirds have territories like other birds, but more data would be interesting. To what degree are the males of this species affected by territory? If several banders will avail themselves of their Cowbird captures and conduct such transportation experiments, then exchange data with Mr. Kirk, a splendid cooperative paper based on such a subject could be easily whipped into shape.

While talking to a group about bird banding (in the hope some recoveries might be reported) your humble secretary was asked to band a family of young Robins. As a rule such a suggestion would be evaded as useless and a waste of bands. However, this man, an official in the department of parks, seemed sincerely interested in birds. In the event that any shore birds or ducks wearing bands were found by the workers cleaning up the public beaches he promised that they would be properly reported. This man became very enthusiastic about the family of Robins. He phoned almost every other day to tell how "his youngsters", in a spruce near his dining room, were coming along. Finally he called and said the family cat, a pet of three years standing, had put an end to his studies. He added further that the cat had been put to sleep. "His family" as he called them, didn't die in vain. It awakened an interest in bird protection and by the death of the cat it is probable that other youngsters will live to migrate again and again.

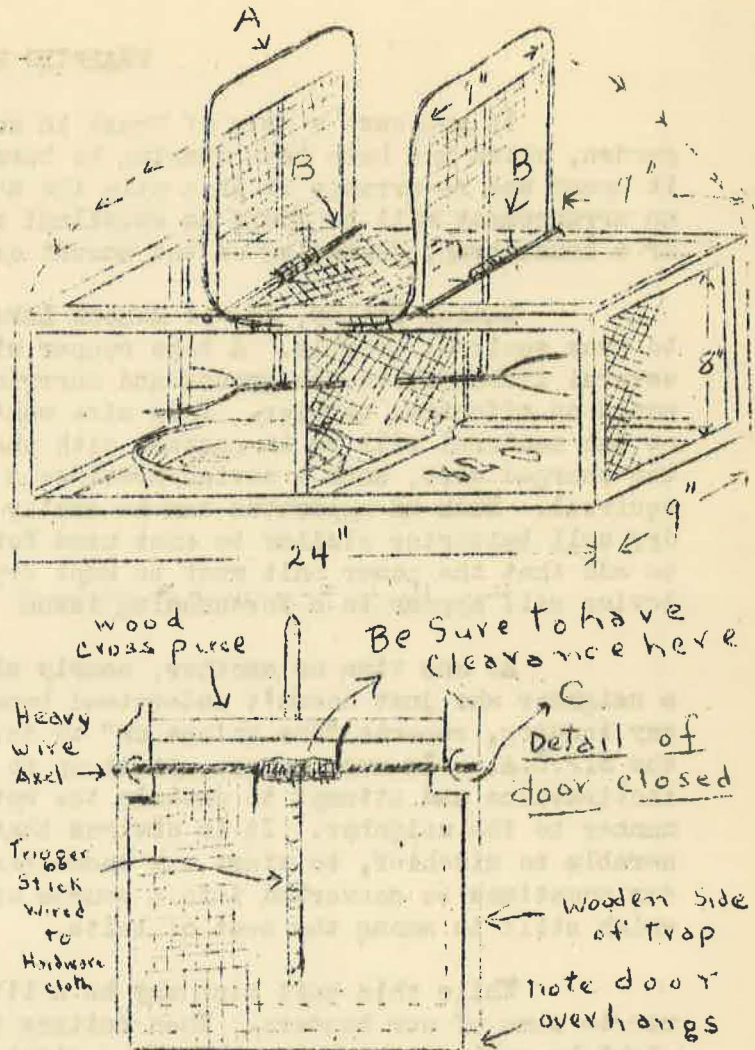
## ALL PURPOSE TOP-OPENING TRAP.

This simple trap can be built at small cost and will withstand all weather for at least 4 years. It can be used as a single trap but gives better results in a fleet of a dozen or so. It takes many birds and is especially effective with Thrashers, Grackles, Jays, Catbirds and Towhees.

The best way to make this trap is to build several at a time. However, here is how to make one. Get 16 ft. of 1 by 1" lumber, (An 8 ft. piece of 1" by 2", often called shingle lath, ripped lengthwise will serve.) From this wood, cut 4 pieces 2 ft. long and 6 pieces 7" long. Take two 2 ft. pieces and three 7" pieces and build a rectangle, nailing the short pieces inside the 2 long pieces, one at each end and 1 in the middle. This is the base of the trap. Repeat this process with the remaining cut pieces to build a similar frame for the top. You now have 2 frames exactly alike. From the balance of your lumber, cut 6 pieces 6" long and nail them between the frames at the 4 corners and middle intersection. When this is done measure 7" from each end on the top and nail in 2 cross bars on the top of the trap, (B), which should leave a 10" space between them. The wooden part of the trap is now completed. Paint it and let it dry.

The next step is to cut  $\frac{1}{2}$ " mesh hardware cloth to cover the sides and ends. A piece 3 ft. long by 2 ft. wide is sufficient for 1 trap. Tack on the wire with small staples and put the center partition in first, then the sides and ends. Cover the 10" top space last. You are now ready to install the doors. These should be built of hardware cloth and are  $7\frac{1}{2}$  by 9 inches wide. Cut the wire at least 2" wider than this and bend the excess back to size, making the door more rigid. Then take 2 springs from mouse traps, (2 for 5¢ at any store) thread each spring to the center of a piece of wire 9" long and as thick as will go through the spring. These will form the door axles. Wire each of these axles to a 9" side of a wire door then snip off  $\frac{1}{2}$ " of the hardware cloth as shown, (C). Staple each axle in place on the top of the trap and test to see if it snaps shut when opened. When it works satisfactorily lash a trigger stick or wire to each door with fine copper wire and with forked twigs for perches, some white bread for bait, you are ready to catch birds.

As birds often perch on the doors and spring them, it helps to install 2 hoops of stiff wire as shown, (A), stationary to the top of the trap about an inch above each door.



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## TRAPPING HINTS

If you have a pile of brush in some out-of-the-way corner of your garden, which you have been meaning to burn as soon as you find time, tear it apart and re-arrange it in a pile the shape of a horse shoe. Inside such an arrangement will be found an excellent site for a government sparrow trap or a house trap, depending on the amount of brush you have available.

Daniel Smiley, Jr. of Mohonk Lake, N. Y., has discovered an answer to gray squirrel trouble. A bare copper wire encircling each trap arranged several inches above the ground and carrying a low charge of electricity becomes an effective barrier. This wire won't interfere with bird visitors but as the squirrel will be in contact with the ground at the same time it touches the charged wire, such a device provides a warm welcome for the marauding squirrel. Such an apparatus can be easily arranged and is connected to two dry cell batteries similar to ones used for a door bell. It seems needless to add that the power unit must be kept dry. A diagram of this anti-squirrel device will appear in a forthcoming issue.

At one time or another, nearly all banders have some annoyance from a neighbor who just doesn't understand banding operations and before making any inquiry, reports "the goings on" to the police or some authority such as the S.P.C.A. In such a case, it is up to the bander to rise above natural inclinations and attempt to explain the work of bird banding in a friendly manner to the neighbor. It is obvious that traps in the garden are too vulnerable to mischief, to start any back-fence feud. Such inquisitive neighbors can sometimes be converted into a source of supply for stale bread or rolls which still is among the best of baits.

While this bait hint may be a little late, it may be still of some use to some of our banders. When baiting traps with string for orioles, it might be well to carry the thought a little further and bait some sparrow traps with horse hair, if and when it can be procured in these days of the horseless carriage. Recent reports from Mr. and Mrs. Chipping Sparrow state that this needed commodity is becoming hard to find. A discarded horse hair stuffed chair is a good source of supply. A discarded snake skin, whenever found, might also be used to trap Crested Flycatchers.

## DATA WANTED

In back issues of Bird-Banding there have been some notes published, relative to the controversy as to whether Blue Jays are sedentary or migratory in part. Scattered throughout the correspondence of this organization there are many individual records of Blue Jays found dead at a distance from the place of banding. These records, grouped together might make a very interesting note for our official magazine.

With such an undertaking in view, members of Eastern are requested to send any such records they may have among their data to the Secretary, who will assemble them. Please submit complete data, giving date banded and date and place recovered with the approximate distance if known. It might also be helpful to state the number of jays banded in each season. Such information can be easily placed on the back of a penny postcard. Credit for the cooperation will be fully acknowledged.