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# EBBA NUS



A Friendly Report to Members of the Eastern Bird Banding Association

November, 1940

"Let Us Band Together"

Vol. 3, No. 8

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## REGIONAL MEETING IN PHILADELPHIA

Banders of Eastern Pennsylvania, members of this association, held a meeting on October 24th at 8 p.m. at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia. Horace Groskin presided and Raymond J. Middleton acted as secretary. Fifteen members and several visitors were present.

The chairman opened the meeting, offering a number of suggested subjects that might be discussed. He then called on Dr. C. Brooke Worth, President of EBBA, for a few remarks. Dr. Worth stated that the American Philosophical Society was considering the organization of an amateur scientists' group, and an invitation would be extended to the members to join. This invitation was accepted and the Eastern Pennsylvania Section of Ebba joined this council.

Raymond J. Middleton, of Norristown, Pa., who operates 56 traps, reported the banding of 160 White-throated Sparrows within the last three weeks. Horace Groskin reported banding 128 in a similar period.

George W. Pyle, of Berwyn, Pa., reported the banding of over 150 Purple Grackles during the past season.

A discussion took place on the determination of age and sex of the White-throated Sparrow, and also on the characters that separate the Black-capped Chickadee from the Carolina Chickadee. Dr. Robert M. Stabler suggested that sex may be determined by the method now used in sexing chicks, which may prove useful to banders in sexing live birds. Dr. Stabler intends to experiment along this line.

Bait and traps, including the use of glass traps, for various species, were also discussed, as well as such subjects as station records, animal interference and activities of raptors around a station etc.

Cooperative efforts between banders were suggested by Horace Groskin, covering such investigations as homing instinct, plumage variations and changes, measurements, etc.

Dr. Stabler, who brought a live Duck Hawk to the meeting, also reported he had measured the circumference of the legs of many live raptors, and this measurement is especially helpful to banders in determining the proper size band. Almost every member present took part in the discussions of the meeting. The meeting was



a total success, as was indicated by many members who wanted to know when the next meeting would take place. It was suggested that the next meeting be held at the banding station of one of the members.

The following members were present: Dr. C. Brooke Worth, Swarthmore; Horace Groskin, Ardmore; Raymond J. Middleton, Norristown; Joseph M. Cadbury, Philadelphia; George W. Pyle, Berwyn; Caroline Reed, Philadelphia; Dr. Robert M. Stabler, Wallingford; John Dornan, Chestnut Hill; Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Stratton, Drexel Hill; Russell C. Richards, Berwyn; Hunter Muse, Berwyn; Dr. W. L. Doyle, Bryn-Mawr College; James H. Wright, Philadelphia; Charles E. Mohr, Academy of Natural Sciences; Albert E. Conway, West Chester; and also several visitors.

#### FLORIDA MEMBERS MEET

In the latter part of September, Ebba members living in Florida attended a meeting with members of the Florida Audubon Society at the Chinsegut-Hill Sanctuary at Brooksville, Florida. Miss Lisa von Borowsky, one of our councillors for the Sunny State was in charge of the program. This was held out of doors in the evening and was a feature of the society's "annual camp-out". From all reports, the well-known and justly famous southern hospitality was never more graciously demonstrated before or since than upon this evening.

Among the member banders who did their part to add to the interest of the evening were Thomas Davis, Jr. of Orlando, who spoke on banding in general; William J. McIntosh, Jr. of Panama City, who delved deeply into the subject of attractive trap baits for different species and Miss von Borowsky, who displayed two reels of colored movies taken by herself, while she was busy banding Sooty and Noddy Terns of Fort Jefferson a year ago last June.

Mention was made of the three day Audubon Annual Tour to Okeechobee which takes one into a bird paradise. Any member planning a visit to Florida this winter and at all interested in going on such a tour is recommended to write Miss von-Borowsky at the above address for full details.

#### NEWS FOR THE BIRD BANDERS

Miss Mabel T. Rogers of Milledgeville, Ga., reports a very busy month in October. Between banding a large number of Chimney Swifts passing through her area, meeting some of the other Ebba banders in her state and contacting non-member banders, inviting them to join our happy throng and last but not least the meeting of the Georgia Ornithological Society at Athens has kept matters humming, ornithologically speaking.

Fred M. Packard of Estes Park, Colorado, now with the National Park Service in the Rockies, plans to spend a month's vacation in December in New York, meeting with several banders and discussing his work as Ebba's special western representative.

Keahon Garland of Demarest, N.J., a Deputy Game Warden as well as a bird bander recovered from the bag of an Italian hunter on October 12th three banded Blue Jays, 6 additional Blue Jays unbanded and a Towhee. The jays had been banded by Beecher S. Bowdish of Demarest, 1 about two years previously and the other two about a year previously. Such goings on may shed a light on where all the birds we band go. When it is mentioned that the hunter was fined and paid \$200 all that Ebba can add is that bander Garland deserves a big hand.



## TIPS FOR THE AMATEUR SPEAKER

In time, the activities of a bander will naturally spread throughout their community. Just as sure as night follows day, some one will invite the bander to tell a local luncheon club, or similar organization, all about it. The average bander is flattered by the invitation and while realizing the help in the reporting of recoveries such an educational onslaught might achieve, they hesitate, not being public speakers and never having attempted such a "bold" undertaking before. To such banders who might decline through timidity and who have never spoken to an audience in their lives, these helps are addressed.

Giving an informal talk on banding is easy. Your topic is interesting and the only other requisite is a confidence in your own ability. This qualification we will discuss. Assuming that you are not naturally gifted to speak, few of us are, it is possible to acquire the ability. Remember, ALWAYS, when speaking about banding, YOU know more about the subject than anyone in your audience.

When accepting the invitation, make sure of a few points. Say that you will need a bridge table as you plan to bring a small trap to show how it works. Find out if your audience will consist of men, women, school children or a mixed group. An afflicted group, such as blind people, should be addressed as though they were not afflicted. Learn the size of your audience, and when you should speak if there is a program. Learn whether someone will introduce you or you just stumble on. Don't arrive too early for you will find waiting to be called upon your hardest task. Finally, learn how long you are expected to hold forth. With this knowledge as a guide you can plan your first 10 minutes. Remember, ALWAYS, you know more about banding than they do.

Please don't read a prepared speech or recite something memorized; give an informal talk.

Before you are called upon to speak, place your trap on the table you requested and cover it lightly with a cloth. This adds mystery and arouses the curiosity of your audience. Nearby on the table, spread an assortment of bands, government forms, interesting return cards, pliers, your record book, etc. This prepared, then wait to be called.

Like taking an ice cold shower, the first few moments on the platform are the most agonizing. Expect this. Plan for those first few moments, when your knees just won't behave and you don't know what to do with your hands.

Finally, you are called upon. Walk up naturally without haste or lag. Once on the platform, move the table to the center of the stage or away from it as the case may be. Don't be fussy, but casually see that everything is on the table and just where it is. Remember, you are stalling for time and allowing the audience to get a good look at you and accustom yourself to be the focus of everyone's eyes. The folk will not stare and will shift their gaze very shortly. With one hand still on the table (to reinforce those knees) turn to your audience and with a smile, casually begin, "Ladies and Gentlemen" or an appropriate salutation.

Admit at once, that as a public speaker you are a pretty good bird bander, which brings up the subject of your hobby and the subject you are going to speak about at this time. As proof of your inexperience, tell them you wish to thank them in advance for the opportunity to talk to them. You realize that once you get talking about birds even your wife can't make you hush. You are liable to forget everything else and rather than forget an ordinary courtesy, you wish to thank them before you begin. Get this over in a naive, sincere manner and your



(Tips for Amateur Speakers - continued)

audience will be with you from there on. If you recognize anyone in the audience who can speak, point out that you are sorry that you haven't the gift of your friend so and so, sitting just off the center aisle, but that you will do the best you can. The mere mention of some one in the audience, shifts the direct attention from yourself for a moment, while your audience cranes their necks and wriggles about to see who you are talking about.

Assume that your audience knows nothing of bird banding. You are usually safe in such an assumption. Then take from your table a string of bands. Keep the trap covered until you want to demonstrate it. Hold the bands up before the listeners and explain about the numbers and how they are placed on birds without hurting them. Then ask one or two in the crowd to pass the strings of bands through the audience. Add that they must be returned as they belong to Uncle Sam.

These bands take the focus of eyes away from you again and by this time, your knees behave, you recognize your own voice, and your hands are hands again. Go on from there, tracing the banding movement in America. From there, you relate your own banding experiences and you'll find that time flies. Five minutes before your time is up, bring your talk to a close and say that you will be glad to answer any questions anyone would like to ask. Questions will be slow at first, so ask yourself a question or two and answer them. Soon questions will pour in. If one is hard, take your time and ask them to repeat the question, feigning you didn't hear it clearly. If you are talking to school children and one or two get fidgety, address a question directly at the lad or lads, or say, "Isn't that so, boys?" and get their interest back at once. Once children start to squirm, close your talk quickly. Children are easy to interest and ask entertaining questions. Don't talk down to them. Take their questions seriously and answer them with care. Don't be too serious yet don't try to be funny. Remember, you are not a comedian. Stick to your subject, be natural and sincere, and you can speak to any audience.

#### THE COWBIRD QUESTION

George Dock, Jr. of Scarsdale, N.Y. writes in regard to a paragraph carried in the September issue concerning his activities with Cowbirds. He raises a point that was not foreseen when the September issue went to press. Here are the highlights of his letter:

"I don't wish your readers to think that I set myself up as a judge of the economic worth of Cowbirds. I trapped 63 in 2 days, 30 of which were males which I banded and released. Of the 33 females, I released unbanded all but 12. This dozen I put in cages for use in experiments calling for live birds in a hawk trap. 6 of these I later released, 4 died and 2 are still in confinement.

"The reference in Ebba Nus may lead some banders to infer that I go about slaughtering species that do not please me. It may also cause banders to assume that we are free to slay birds. We have no such right, as our permit restricts us to trapping and banding and does not allow us to kill or collect birds. Hawks can't reach and kill my bait birds.

"I happen to believe in the principle of economic balance and question the right of only a few species to a free existence. I grant that when I saw these hundreds of Cowbirds come through, a couple of weeks ago, I looked on every one as the destroyer of at least a brood of yellow or other warblers every year. Warblers probably do more "good" than Cowbirds, from an insect-destroying standpoint, no less than their attractiveness around our farms and gardens. Had I not felt that way about it, I would not have confined any of them."



## SOMETHING DIFFERENT

In a recent letter from an Ebba member, Jesse V. Miller, of New Hyde Park, L.I., N.Y., he described a rather unique club of junior bird banders at nearby Manhasset. This club has great potentialities in more ways than one. From just the educational angle and the improved possibilities of a banded bird when found being reported correctly, it is thought that such an organization should have our support and approval; but let Mr. Miller tell about it in his own words.

"Last April a Bird Banding Club was organized among the students of Manhasset High School. Members were carefully chosen for dependability, interest and careful working habits. The roll call now stands at 19.

"The members of the club do not actually handle the birds at first, but after preliminary training in my hands, this Fall they have been allowed to set and bait the traps, run the trap lines, collect and bring the birds to me to band. Members help to keep records of the original banding, repeats and returns. They also make out the government records. I hope eventually to be able to train some of the older members to handle birds and place bands.

"Last year one of our traps was destroyed by some vandals. The suspects led a miserable existence for the rest of the year. We are not expecting a repetition.

"From April to June, 1940, we banded about 50 birds, a good start for the first year. We hope to pass the 100 mark before the Fall migration is over. (Secretary of the club reports 107 banded on Nov. 1).

"All 9th grade general science classes receive information through the members of the club in their classrooms. All my general science and biology students, numbering about 150 a year, see birds banded.

"The educational value of this work is clearly recognized by our Superintendent and science teachers".

## NEWS FOR THE BIRD BANDERS

Rev. Edward Stoehr of Washington, D.C. reports banding 33 species of warblers, totaling upwards of 600 individuals in the last 2 years.

Winn Jones of 199 Chatham Rd., Columbus, Ohio would like to contact any bander who has made a banding exhibit such as shown in the August issue of Ebba Nus.

Leroy Wilcox of Speonk, L.I., N.Y. reports that 2 terns banded by him in July, 1938 were trapped on Tern Island, Cape Cod this past July by Dr. Oliver Austin. Mr. Wilcox also reports that he expects to visit Washington, D.C., a bander in Delaware, and certain other banders on his trip some time this month.

Your intrepid secretary after 16 years of banding is now happy to report that he has finally captured some other bander's bird. After banding about 300 purple grackles this season he finally caught one with a strange band on October 19. Washington reports this grackle as banded by our fellow member, Bander R. B. Fischer of Flushing, L.I., N.Y., who banded the "critter" on April 6, 1940.

Please notify your councillor or any officer, as to when and where you would suggest the Annual Meeting be held. This meeting is usually held in February or March and any suggestions you have will be most welcome NOW.

Hate to mention it, but dues will be soon due. To save Ebba postage and to enable us to make your news-letter, just as big as we can, won't you send in your dues with your suggestions NOW.