



## O. R. CORNER

Edited by: Robert P. Yunick

Since the formal banding part of Operation Recovery-1967 is now past, all that remains is the record keeping and analyzing. No doubt everyone involved is presently busy with records, so with the next issue I hope to begin a systematic reporting of station activities.

1967 Summary Lists Available. So far, the following people have indicated that they have or will have station summaries available. If you send for one of these and do not receive it promptly, please understand that considerable time is necessary to prepare these lists.. Please note that some people request stamps to cover mailing. If anyone else has a station list available, please let me know.

- 1) Manomet, Mass. from Mrs. Paul T. Anderson, RFD#2, Winter St., Middleboro, Mass. 02346, 20¢ for postage, available after Jan. 1, 1968.
- 2) Block Island, R. I. from Mrs. Stanley Dickerson, 1490 Long Road, Somerville, N. J. 08876, available after early Dec.
- 3) Island Beach, N. J. from Mrs. B. J. Warburton, 300 W. Trenton Ave., Morrisville, Pa., 25¢ postage, available in Dec.
- 4) Hooper's Island, Md. From Henry T. Armistead, 3627 Hamilton St., Phila., Pa. 19104, 10¢ for postage.
- 5) Vischer Ferry, N.Y. from Robert P. Yunick, 1527 Myron St., Schenectady, N.Y. 12309, 10¢ for postage.

Additions and Corrections to O.R.-1966. The station summary that appeared in the last issue should be corrected to indicate a total of 2619 birds banded at Block Island - the October total was received late. Also, the Manomet, Mass. station was omitted. The station was operated by Kathleen S. Anderson and recorded 649 birds in September, 1135 in October, and the commonest species was the catbird.

News and Notes. The results in Chan Robbins' "Progress Report No. 1" of October 15, 1967 covering August and September indicated that the reporting stations were weighing and measuring a high proportion of their birds - a good sign. The mail from New England these days seems to come only from "hills." From "Wolf Trap Hill", Kathleen Anderson writes that this year's Manomet OR work produced no foreign retraps or recoveries compared to one foreign retrap and three recoveries last year. From

"Harrier Hill", Elise Dickerson writes that wind and storms prevented banding on 11 days from late-August to mid-October. As of October 11 she had 2351 birds of 86 species in 42 days with the list highlighted by a clay-colored sparrow as rarest and 673 yellowthroats as commonest.

Henry Armistead's take at Hooper's Island OR for 22 days amounted to 770 birds of 69 species in 1132 net-hours. An early note from Fred Schaeffer indicated that Tobay OR's August take was way down from that of 1966. It sounded as though Fred had his hands full with 1) trying to track down a possible wheatear that was reported seen, 2) adding new or rare species such as a cerulean warbler to his station list and 3) trying to track down data on four foreign retraps taken during August.

At Vischer Ferry OR, Walt Sabin and I Accounted for 953 birds of 57 species in 2114 net-hours. Once again the song sparrow was most frequently banded at the rate of one out of every three birds. Another sharp-tailed sparrow of Nelson's race (the 1966 bird was reported accidentally two issues ago as an acadian) was banded. Twelve new species were added to bring the station list to 85. A write up will follow. Hopefully the above station leaders will have write ups for EBBA News at a later date.

From October 25 to 29, my wife, Anne, and I had a grand time at Island Beach OR. There we enjoyed seeing EBBA members Bruce Adams, Ken Prescott, Charl Warburton, Fran Hornick, Fred Mears, Ron French, Gail Goldbeck, and of course everyone there was glad to see Mabel Warburton up and around pitching right in with the banding. In addition we were glad to have a surprise visit by Margaret and Bill Pepper for dinner with the gang on Saturday. Half the fun of Island Beach is the camaraderie at dinner each evening at one of the ever popular local eating establishments.

To my wife this was her first stay at Island Beach. The first day she stayed at the motel to do some reading and catch up on letter writing. On the 27th she decided to get up early and visit the net lay to see what all this nonsense was all about. Up until this point in the five and one-half years I have banded, one could describe her feelings toward the game as generally very tolerant, but personally uninterested and sometimes rather upset at my preoccupation with the whole thing. Well that all changed on the 27th when she became personally involved. As a matter of necessity and with no formal instruction, she was thrown into the hustle of removing birds from the nets, because we had birds and more birds. We banded 545 birds by early afternoon - a birthday present I had not counted on. She was indispensable as she brought in case after case and kept asking for empties. I was amazed at her calmness and proficiency. Only once when she screamed and I heard the distress call of a cardinal did I know that she was in trouble. That was the only bird that day that she could

not remove from the net. On Sunday when we banded 503 birds in almost five hours, she was an old pro at the technique. Thus we ended our Island Beach sojourn with a phenomenal 1189 birds in four days. I am sure that she'll not forget her first stay at Island Beach.

I mention this not only because I am proud of the way she met the challenge, but because there is a lesson in this experience. Undoubtedly there are other banders whose wives, husbands, relatives, friends, etc. watch banding from a distance and cannot be coaxed to participate. Anne would never have believed me if I had told her on the way to Island Beach that by the time we were to return home she would have removed several hundred birds from the nets. But she was on hand, and getting involved turned out to be a perfectly natural thing. Get that sideliners up on the front line and watch what happens.

1527 Myron St., Schenectady, N. Y.

#### WOODPECKER QUESTIONS

By Dr. Charles H. Blake

A few observations and a statement in the Stresemann's Die Mauser der Vögel (The Molt of Birds) raise some questions about woodpeckers to which banders can find answers.

It is possible to obtain a usable measurement of the short, tenth (outermost) primary by measuring from the end of the tiny coverts sheathing its base to its tip. For the Downy Woodpecker I have a few data. The juvenal tenth is 22 to 26 mm. long and the first winter one is 15 to 18 mm. long. Is this shortening the rule in woodpeckers? What is the amount of shortening? Is there further shortening at the first postnuptial molt or later molts? Is there any sexual difference? Does shape of the tip of the tenth primary differ in successive plumages? How much does the wing length change as a result of successive primary molts?

The Stresemann's emphasize that in woodpeckers the postjuvenal wing molt is peculiar in that the primaries are replaced but not the secondaries. Do the secondaries fade more than the new primaries so that eventually the first winter plumage is recognizable by having the secondaries browner than the primaries? Are the tips of the juvenal secondaries differently shaped from those of later plumages?

The question just above is tantamount to a more general one. There is little evidence that in some passerines the shape of the secondary tips is different in the juvenal secondaries from that of later secondaries. On the negative side of the question I have some evidence that there is no change in eastern titmice and mimic thrushes, the Blue Jay, Carolina Wren, Rufous-sided Towhee, and Cardinal.

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