



Connie Katholi's note in the January-February issue of EBBA News (Vol. 31, No. 1, p. 46) about the unloved creature at the left, has prompted several articles and notes...

STARLING BEHAVIOR
By Dr. Charles H. Blake

Mrs. Katholi's recent note on Starlings escaping from Potter-type traps reminds me of some points in their behavior. In the European literature it is pointed out that Starlings get a considerable amount of their food by prying up small stones or bits of wood. In so doing, they acquire a rather unusual food, millipedes. I should think that these would be very disagreeable to eat because of their repugnatorial secretions. In fact, in some cases, the secretion, on exposure to air, releases hydrocyanic acid. This mode of feeding would seem to require that a Starling be able to look close to the end of the beak binocularly. If you hold a Starling facing you, you will find that the eyes can swivel around so that they look right at you, so evidently they do have the proper kind of binocular vision.

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STARLING LONGEVITY
By Dorothy L. Bordner

Among the many longevity records published recently there have been none for Starlings. Perhaps this is because many banders consider them pests and do not band them. Two Starlings have provided us with interesting records in the last few months.

On January 6, 1968, we trapped and released a male Starling, No. 532-64383, which was banded February 16, 1958. Unfortunately, I was not aging Starlings in 1958 so do not know if the bird was a second year bird or older at the time of banding. He had not repeated or returned at any time in the intervening ten years. The band was worn thin on the edges and was replaced, but was not much more worn than some four year old bands that we replaced earlier in the winter.

No. 532-42697, also a male, banded on April 4, 1957 was recovered (found dead) in State College on March 27, 1967. Again, I do not know the age of the bird at the time of banding. He returned to us three times: March 2, 1959; December 23, 1960; and February 4, 1963. Although we have no breeding season records for him it is possible that he was a member of