

MANOMET BIRD OBSERVATORY

The value of permanent bird observatories accumulating many years of comparable data has been proven in Europe, and the need for similar facilities has long been recognized in North America. In recent years the first full-time bird banding stations have been established at Point Reyes, Cal., Long Point, in Ontario, and in the Ligonier Valley in Penna. They have already made fine contributions to basic research in avian ecology.

The Manomet Bird Observatory, situated on a sea cliff overlooking Cape Cod Bay, has been established at Manomet, Mass., and is scheduled to begin full time operation in July 1969, contingent upon obtaining sufficient funding by that time to cover initial expenses. 18 acres of land with shore front and a house to serve as headquarters have been offered by Mrs. Roger Ernst to a tax-exempt trust. The observatory will offer facilities where scientists and amateur naturalists can investigate environmental biology problems with emphasis upon ornithological studies.

Field investigations began at the site in 1966 as a part of the Operation Recovery program; readers of O.R. Corner in EBBA News know of the accomplishments of these first three autumns. Almost immediately "Manomet O.R." began to attract scientists, teachers and students interested in many of the natural sciences. It soon became apparent that there is a great need in this part of the country for a center for research and education in environmental biology and that Manomet is ideally suited to this purpose, being strategically located and having a variety of habitats.

The Manomet Bird Observatory begins its services with a valuable backlog of records on both seafowl and migrant land birds. It will operate a year-round banding program, and sponsor bird population, behavior and migration studies. Aging and sexing techniques will be investigated and banding classes will be held for novice banders. An active program involving area schools has already begun. The facilities and living quarters at the observatory will be available to qualified researchers and volunteer helpers, upon prior arrangement with the Director.

The Manomet Bird Observatory seeks members and possible donors to its endowment fund. It is hoped that all members of the Eastern Bird Banding Association will wish to encourage and support this first permanent Atlantic Coast Bird Observatory. With your support as charter members, the M.B.O. can make a most useful contribution to the scientific and educational world. John Fiske of Petersham, Mass., is chairman of trustees and Kathleen S. Anderson of Middleborough, Mass., will serve as the first Director. Those seeking more information about the observatory and its program may write to Mrs. Anderson at Manomet Bird Observatory, Manomet, Massachusetts 02345.

Kathleen S. (Mrs. Paul T.) Anderson, RFD 2, Winter St., Middleborough, Mass. 02346

and other net lanes. The most memorable of these were the Yellow-throated Warbler which Mabel caught, Bob Yunick's Sharp-shinned Hawk, Bill Pepper's Brewster's Warbler and our Clay-colored Sparrow. On each visit to I.B.O.R. we had almost perfect weather - and recall with nostalgia watching the beautiful sunsets over Barnegat Bay, whilst the full moon rose over the Atlantic Ocean in the east.

In the early part of 1967 we moved from Philadelphia to St. Louis, and were fortunate enough to find a suburban house with a yard which attracted a large number of birds. Here I banded 277 European Tree Sparrows, and a brood of young Flickers which had conveniently been reared in an old willow stump by the clothes post! We were introduced to a charming retired couple, Burrell and Ruby Pickering, who own a private wildlife refuge in the Ozark country. Here we had many pleasant days, netting and banding a variety of species. We recall most vividly one day when 13 Red-bellied Woodpeckers almost fell into the net whilst raiding ripening peaches - and another day when the Summer Tanagers were so busy gorging on raspberries that to be netted and banded was only a minor inconvenience to their activities! Here also, we helped to reestablish and increase the population of Bluebirds making and putting up suitable nest boxes in the early spring. These were enthusiastically inhabited for two or three broods.

Our last year was spent in Georgia and, again, we found a house with a perfect yard which was a miniature bird sanctuary - and a bander's paradise. We saw no less than 71 species of birds in the yard (including a Pileated and six other species of Woodpeckers) and caught and banded all but nine of these. In December 1968, an apparent "invasion" of Evening Grosbeaks and Purple Finches started, followed by a lesser invasion of Chipping Sparrows and American Goldfinches. We banded 931 Evening Grosbeaks and we have the scars to prove it! We banded over 2,000 Purple Finches in the year we occupied the house, as well as 823 Chipping Sparrows and 183 American Goldfinches - and spent many tedious hours removing over-eager repeats from the nets.

In the Georgia swamps, with the invaluable help of Milton Hopkins, Jr. (a well known local ornithologist) we located from the air a number of "rookeries" containing nests of Anhinga, Little Blue and Green Herons and Cattle and Common Egrets. In 40 hours of wading up to our waists in slime and duckweed, we tagged just under 1,500 young birds. Other highlights of these expeditions into the swamps included the discovery of young Wood Ibis, Prothonotary Warblers (duly banded) and a roost of about 150 Black Vultures.

There are countless other highlights which we shall recall with pleasure in the coming years. We have so very many happy memories.

43 Silverdale Road, Hull, E. Yorks, England

MIGRATION TRAPPING OF HAWKS AT CAPE MAY, N.J. - SECOND YEAR

By William S. Clark

This article reports the results of this Fall's (1968) hawk trapping at Cape May Point, New Jersey. (See Clark, 1968 for the first year's results.)

Throughout, I shall use the more esthetic and appropriate names of Kestrel for Sparrow Hawk, Merlin for Pigeon Hawk, and Peregrine Falcon for Duck Hawk. The two latter falcons are subspecies of European species having the preferred names, while the former is more closely related to Falco tinnunculus, the European Kestrel, than to Accipiter nisus, the Sparrow Hawk, for which it was misnamed. It is indeed a shame that the recommendation of Peterson in his famous Field Guide has so long gone unheeded.

The Trapping Station. Because the trapping method employed for flying hawks is much different from the mist net setup so many of us are familiar with, the following brief description of the hawk trapping station is included.

The station is located at Cape May Point, within sight of the lighthouse. A blind is used to prevent the hawks from seeing the trapper. It is situated on the western side of a plowed field which is about fifty yards wide. The blind faces to the east and is about ten yards from the field. The primary lure for the flying hawks is a pigeon which is harnessed in a leather jacket. Attached to the jacket are two lines, one of which comes to the blind through a bow trap (see Meng, 1963 for a description), and the other line returns to the blind after passing through two guides located at the top and bottom of a pole. These two lines are joined at the blind. This arrangement allows the trapper to "fly" the pigeon when a hawk is seen in the air by pulling on the second of the described lines. (The pigeon in this rig appears injured to the hawk, and his predatory instinct is aroused.)

If the hawk decides to "stoop", the pigeon is brought back to the center of the bow trap by pulling on the first of the above-mentioned lines. (The bow trap is located out in the plowed field.) If the hawk continues his stoop and "binds" to the pigeon, the bow trap is set off and the hawk captured. The trapper then leaves the blind to retrieve the bird for banding and subsequent release. However, most hawks do not bind, but only "zip" across the lure. In order to catch these hawks, two large mist nets (Bleitz #15) are placed behind the bow trap, one atop the other. This gives coverage from just above the ground to a height of 15 feet, with sufficient bag to take hawks up to the size of a Red-tailed Hawk.

This was the basic setup used at the station last year. This year, a pair of smaller bow traps, baited with House Sparrows, were used. These lure birds were also encased in leather jackets attached with two lines