

Literature Cited:

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A SISKIN INVASION AND A REMARKABLE RECOVERY
By Maurice Broun

During the winter and early spring of 1964 the headquarters area of the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary was literally taken over by Pine Siskins. A dozen or so of the birds appeared in late January; at least 200 were present by late February; well over 400 swarmed at the feeders during March; the show continued into the first week of May, then tapered off rapidly until the last bird departed on May 21.

Walnut screenings were the great attraction, but sunflower seeds, suet, even doughnuts were consumed by the invading hosts of Siskins. Utterly fearless, aggressive, the birds would flutter about me, take food from my outstretched hands - until I began a systematic banding of the birds; then they became cautious.

The sassy Siskins swarming at our smorgasbord were the feature of the season, charming our many visitors. And the eager sprites enabled me to carry on continuous banding demonstrations for the edification of our numerous visiting groups.

I trapped and banded 550 Siskins though well over 600 birds must have sojourned with us. They were inveterate repeaters, a few up to 8 times. Two Siskins came to us already banded: the first, on February 13, had been banded March 16, 1963 at Washington Crossing State Park, by Dr. Paul Fluck; the second bird, on April 15, had been banded two months earlier, at Murray Hill, N.J. (18 miles west of Manhattan) by Darwin Wood.

Of all that throng of Siskins banded during those memorable weeks, one bird only has been recovered: history-making 108-08458, banded on May 2. This bird was "found dead" apparently, nearly 20 months later, on December 30, 1965, clear across the continent at Seattle, Washington, as reported by a Mr. B. Vanderpol of that city.

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