

other miscellaneous paper around. He played a tape recording he had made for the breeding season, three minutes at 25 mile intervals. My cousin wandered in and he complimented her on picking out a warbler.

Since I asked about Martins, he brought out his records of returns and recoveries and the banding dates for nestlings. A large closet was his reservoir for reference. It was surely a ton of magazines and material of all sorts. Everything was neatly arranged on shelves to the ceiling, and on the floor up as well.

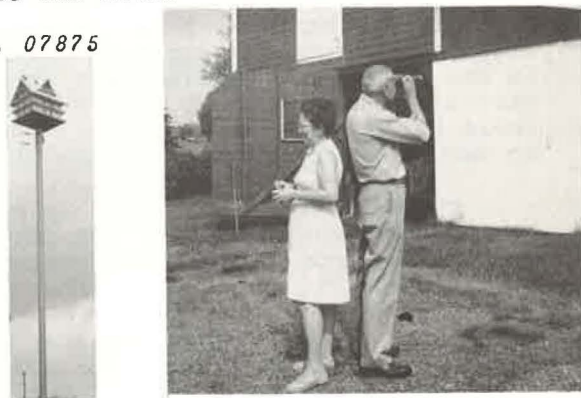
We went out to his banding shed, where I was interested in the bird gathering pails he had made. We went up on the roof to see his Starling traps, he had a Starling in one. I liked his water drip trap and winter bird shelter, giving me ideas for improving my own. While we looked at his Martin houses he gave me some pointers on Purple Martin identification. A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was sounding off faintly from the wooded area nearby and he asked me if I had any around my place and I had to say "No."

The accompanying photo portrays Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Bell, trying out my battery operated zoom binoculars looking in the direction of his Sparrow Hawk nest, where the racoon disaster described in a recent *Diary* occurred. Mrs. Bell is standing near the martin house that she got him for his birthday (second photo)

My Pennsylvania cousin and her husband were very impressed with the visit. I had certainly taken them to the right place to see what bird banding was like, and the kind of people it can attract.

A little visiting around helped me determine what kind of a bander I wanted to be. It also helped determine what to do with this banding experience and data.

--Box 174, Stillwater, N.J. 07875



BIRD TRAPPING WITH A TAPE RECORDER

By B. J. Speek

In 1966, a small Dutch Ringing Group, Mr. Koning, Mr. Van Spanje and Mr. Vader, operating in the dunes some miles south of Zandvoort, discovered that it was easy to decoy Meadow pipits (*Anthus pratensis*) to their clapnets by playing the song of this species with a tape recorder.

The trapping area of the clapnet is 10 x 3.8 meters. Two rows of turfs with high grass are placed in this area. In one of the rows a loudspeaker is hidden.

This speaker is connected to a tape recorder in a hide. The recorder has an output of 1 Watt. The song of the Meadow Pipit is taken from a record, the best phrases being repeated after each other on the tape, so that the recorder plays unceasing the song of the Meadow Pipit.

Most of the birds land beside the net and then walk to the loudspeaker. The clumps of high grass are necessary partly to hide the speaker, but more so to attract the birds. Meadow Pipits don't like short grass, (they prefer to creep in high grass). Catches are usually 1-5 birds, sometimes more.

In Holland, the trapping period is August-November. The peak is the last week of September - first week of October. The best time of the day is 0800 to 1300 hours.

Normally a Dutch fowling yard (*banding station. Ed.*) along the coast catches 30-40 Meadow Pipits in one autumn. Now they catch with one clapnet 2000 individuals in 70 days.

With a 6m long clapnet I trapped in my own garden, 200 kilometers inland, 314 pipits in 14 days during October 1969.

That the influence of this trapping method for ringing purposes is important may be seen from the concluding table:

Meadow Pipits ringed in Holland

1911-1965:	5454	(without recording)
1966:	2057	(with tape recording)
1967:	4163	"
1968:	3379	"
1969:	6558	"
1970:	8150	"
1971:	4260	"

After this technique became better known, the Dutch Ringing Centre established a library where the songs of over 400 species of birds are on file. Many banders obtained recording tapes from the Centre so that they were able to experiment extensively.

While we learned that singing males could be easily trapped on their breeding grounds with the aid of recordings, we also discovered that many species reacted favorably to breeding songs during migration.

Another possibility is the roost. Good results have been obtained when the songs of birds found there, are broadcast, beginning well in advance of the arrival of the birds that are known to frequent the roost.

In 1969 and 1970 we captured swallows in a reed field of approximately 400 x 60 meters. Since the roosting area wasn't the same each time, we had to use about eight net lanes of 60 meters each, distributed over the whole field. Even so, it was a question of luck.

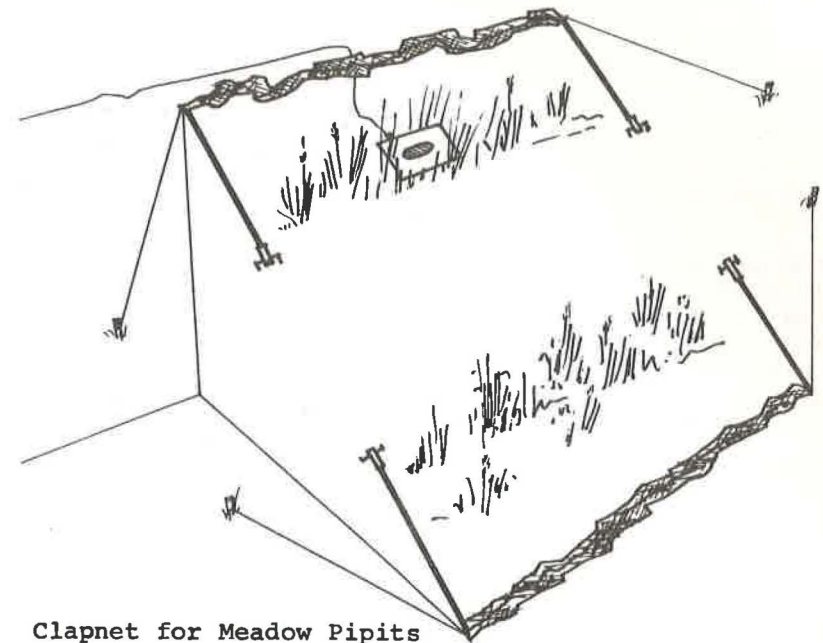
In 1971 we discovered that the swallows preferred to roost around the speaker when it played their song. Since then we only used one net-lane of 60 meters and we captured more birds. In the fall of 1971, we caught circa 2500 swallows!

In 1972 we found that the swallows were even more attracted when we used pre-amplifiers. Thus, we captured 5899 swallows in 47 evenings. We designed a small portable amplifier for the banders, capable of a 4 Watt output.

Based on these latest experiments, we have drawn up the following assumptions:

- A. To capture one or several birds, a recorder which has a 1 Watt output is quite sufficient.
- B. The larger the group of birds, one wishes to decoy, the more volume one has to produce. To capture passerines in groups of 50 to 1000 individuals, an output of 4 to 10 Watt is usually sufficient. For greater numbers of birds, one must use a recorder capable of more than 10 Watt output.

--B.J. Speek, Head of the Dutch Ringing Scheme
(Ministry of Education, Arts and Sciences)
Bird Migration Station, Arnhem, The Netherlands.



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

We, at EBBA NEWS, have a unique opportunity to aid banders all over the world. Although not many American banders are working with tape recordings, we know there are some who do use this method of capturing birds.

If you have any experiences with recording as a method of decoying birds, please write up your experiences, emphasizing the technical details of the equipment you have in use.

Any papers received will, of course, be published in EBBA NEWS. Copies of same will also be forwarded to Dr. W. Rydzewski, editor of THE RING, a bird-banding magazine which has world-wide distribution. In addition, Mr. Speek will be sent a copy with a translation by your editor.

F.S. Schaeffer
Editor
(Co-Editor, THE RING)