

Goldfinch 105-78560, with the band on left leg, the bird that started it all, finally entered my trap on 22 December. It has been banded 20 April 1971 at Storrs, Connecticut, by members of the Natchaug Ornithological Society.

Goldfinch 123-55563, banded by me as an immature male on 13 December (the first day of operations) was "found dead along highway" at Erie, Pennsylvania, on 15 July 1972. It was reported by a gentlemen from Harrisburg. Both goldfinch recoveries point up what all of us know: these birds really get around.

And so, I have demonstrated what one small trap can do, ideally located, among large numbers of birds. But it presupposes a lot of elbow grease. I wonder how many times I raised and lowered that window to haul in over a thousand birds (repeats included)?

Bandings from one trap, 13 December 1971 - 10 May 1972

<u>Species</u>	<u>Returns</u>	<u>Recoveries</u>
26 Chickadees		
6 Tufted titmice	2	
6 White-breasted Nuthatches		
2 Cardinals		
1 Indigo bunting		
382 Evening grosbeaks (166 males)		2 (1 local)
180 Purple finches (39 adult males)	2	
1 Common redpoll		
23 Pine siskins		
181 Goldfinches (146 males)	4	3 (1 local)
27 Slate-colored juncos	4	
55 Tree sparrows	10	
<u>5</u> Field sparrows	<u>1</u>	<u>—</u>
895	23	5
23		
<u>5</u>		
923 Total		

--Strawberry Hill Farm, R. D. 1, New Ringgold, Pa. 17960

PURPLE FINCHES - 1958-1970, Storrs, Conn.
By Ruth A. L&f

Purple finches have been an intriguing bird to observe and study. For some time it has interested me to try to establish means to improve determination of sex through plumage variations, but as yet I have discovered no simple rules which apply to every case.

My property has open lawn with shrubby edges bordering woodland containing mostly deciduous trees, also a few hemlock groves and an occasional pine tree. Abutting the property is a large open field. Mostly, I have used Potter traps on a stand to capture purple finches. However, the year that I had an abundant population, I set Cloverleaf and Mason traps on the ground and caught them 15 and 20 at a time.

The first year that I banded a substantial number of purple finches was in 1959 when I banded 192. This stimulated my interest in the species. Each year thereafter it appeared that I could depend on a reasonable number coming to my station in the spring. Also, returns and recoveries were beginning to show up. (See record at end of paper)

During the year 1963, which happened to be a "finch year", I banded 682 in March, April, and May. This was truly a fine opportunity to make careful observations of plumage with the expected hope of seeing at least an average return the next year. Of the 682 birds, 254 were in male plumage, and 428 were in varying shades from plain drab brown to spotty and extensive olive, yellow, orange, and rosiness mixed with brown. A year later only four birds returned: two that had been banded as males, one banded in brown plumage returned as adult male, and one brown bird that was still brown. I also had three foreign recoveries a year after banding: one each from North Carolina, Nova Scotia, and Ontario.

So recovery of seven out of 682 was disappointing, and my plans for seeing again many of the finches on which I had made plumage descriptions had to be abandoned. The following years have never produced additional recoveries on the birds banded in 1963. It was an unusual year, and the purple finches that were here must definitely have been out of their regular flight pattern.

In spite of the low recovery on the 1963 birds, in a total of 1452 purple finches banded from 1958 to 1970, 80 birds returned or were recovered elsewhere. This makes a recovery rate of 5.5%.

One interesting recovery was on an AHY-U bird that I banded on 02-26-68 which was trapped and released on 01-29-73 at College Station, Texas. This seemed particularly interesting because it is the first record of a purple finch of mine going so far west. My previous record was Mississippi. Mostly, my records of recovery and foreign retraps run from Alabama to Nova Scotia and Ontario and states in between.

Returns and recoveries have indicated the following age records: 8 have returned or have been recovered in 1 year, 34 in 2 years, 19 in 3 years, 8 in 4 years, 8 in 5 years, 1 in 6 years, 1 in 7 years, and 1 in almost 11 years.

On the day the oldest purple finch returned I was trapping a few birds to take with me for a talk to some girl scouts. Not recognizing the old number as my own I took the bird with me where I held it for the children's close examination. Upon returning home and looking up the number, I was surprised to find it was my own bird. I released the bird here with great care, and it flew off seemingly none the worse for its girl scout meeting. This bird was banded on 04-21-60 in brown plumage, and returned on 12-06-61 in male plumage. I did not see it again until 03-10-70.

Eleven brown birds showing noticeable additional coloring have returned after one year or more. Six of the birds having olive or yellow coloring on head, neck, shoulders and rump (on all these areas or maybe only on one area) were still in brown plumage, so I assumed these were female. One brown bird showing olive coloring when banded returned a year later in adult male plumage. Of the four birds showing a rosiness all over or reddish tints on head, back, and rump, three returned still in brown plumage, and I assumed they were female, and one was in adult male plumage.

An additional olive-colored bird was a trap casualty upon repeating ten days after banding. This bird was dissected and found to be a female.

However, my records indicate that several brown birds, which showed no yellow, olive, or rosy coloring, have returned after one year as both males and females. Why do some of the brown birds show so much coloring and others none at all? Is it because of banding in the spring when some of the birds may have worn away dark feather edges, as in the adult male plumage, thereby allowing the color to be more noticeable? Or does the color itself wear off?

Wing measurements were taken on a sample of 70 purple finches. Measurements on 28 males fell between 80-86 mm. with the majority measuring 82-83 mm. On 42 brown birds wing measurements fell between 78-86 mm. with the majority measuring 80-81 mm.

Through the years in the month of April I have occasionally noticed what appeared to be incubation patches, mostly on brown birds with olive tints on shoulders and rump, and not as often on birds showing a rosiness. I did not use this as a means for sexing, because I thought it might be too early, in April, for such an occurrence. Therefore, when on 06-13-68 I had two brown birds showing such a patch I felt justified to sex them as "female". The next year on 05-07-69 one returned in adult male plumage! Also, the same year on 04-29-69 I had two male purple finches which showed similar patches. (I have also seen the same thing on male evening grosbeaks.)

In a private communication from Dr. George A. Clark, Jr. of The Biological Sciences Group, University of Connecticut, he mentioned that R. E. Bailey claimed that only females "have patches in. . .most, if not all Passeriformes." Quoting Dr. Clark, "He (R. E. Bailey) examined several dozen passerine species and never found an incubation patch on a male. (The Purple Finch was one of the species studied). . .To my knowledge, patches have not been reported for Evening Grosbeaks or Purple Finches. At least some passerines lose feathers in an apparently random pattern through the year following the Fall molt; possibly an absence of feathers on the Grosbeaks and Finches might be due to such loss. Alternatively, perhaps there is individual variation within these species and some males do develop patches." It would seem I shall now have to recognize the difference between loss of feathers due to incubation or regular molt.

Out of 19 foreign retraps I have had some interesting age and flight records on purple finches. The following ages have been attained at the time of retrap: 5 at least 1 year old, 4 at least 4 years old, 2 at least 5 years old, and 1 at least 6 years old.

For flight records, one bird seemed to be in reverse migration, because it was banded 03-04-63 in Sterling Junction, Massachusetts, about 50 miles northeast of here, and I caught it in Connecticut 15 days later. Another interesting spring flight was a bird banded 03-25-66 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, which I captured on 05-02-66. Then there was a flight from Collegedale, Tennessee, banded there on 04-22-66, and I captured it here on

05-06-66. Another interesting record was that of a purple finch banded at Cape Porpoise, Maine, on 06-22-63 by a young lady who lived there before she was married. After marrying she came to Storrs to live. A few years later on 04-22-68 I captured her bird at my home station, about 2 miles from where the young lady was living and operating a banding station here in Storrs.

This article has been a record of the pleasure I have had studying this species, and my attempts to add to information supplied by others. I find purple finches a constantly interesting bird to observe, also delightful to listen to in the spring. Some nest here, although I have never found the nest. Although the numbers have been down the last few years, I look forward to their return each year.

Record of Purple Finches Banded and Recovered

Year	No. Banded	No. returned or recovered after 1 or more years		Percentage of Recovery
		Returned to Home Station	Foreign Recovery	
1958	7	1		
1959	192	4	1	
1960	85	14		
1961	145	10		
1962	51	5	1	
1963	682	4	3	
1964	49	11	1	
1965	12	1		
1966	91	10	1	
1967	37	10		
1968	67	1	2	
1969	30			
1970	4			
Total 1,452		71	9	5.5%

--R. R. #2, Storrs Connecticut 06268

EBBA ANNUAL MEETING: May 31, June 1 & 2, 1974

This will be a joint meeting with the Northeastern Bird Banding Association, at Manomet Bird Observatory, Manomet, Mass.

The map on this page shows the location of the motels recommended to our guests. A pre-registration form will either be inserted with this mailing or sent separately from EBBA NEWS.

Manomet, which is located @ 5 miles south of Plymouth, can be reached easily from Boston via Route 3, or from Providence, R.I., via Route 44. Boston and Providence can be reached via several interstate highways. By air, one would fly either to Boston or to Hyannis on the Cape but it would be necessary to rent cars from there.

The following is a listing of local motels. Prices quoted are dated November 1973 and are subject to change. The number in parentheses refers to the little map.

- (4) Blue Spruce Motel, State Road, Manomet 617-224-3990
 Double (1 bed, 2 people) \$12
 " (2 double beds, 4 people) \$20
 " (2 double beds, 2 people) \$12 plus taxes
 1 small house for 6 \$25-\$30
- (7) Gov. Bradford Motor Inn, Water St., Plymouth 617-746-6200
 Single room \$16.
 Double room \$22) - per Mr. L. Cheney, special rate
- (8) Gov. Carver Motor Inn, Summer St., Plymouth 617-746-7100
 Single Room, \$19 and \$20.
 Double Room, \$24 and \$26) - Summer Rates
- (9) Honeysuckle Motel, Point Rd., Manomet. 617-224-3571
 Double room (2 people) \$14., plus \$2 add'l for each extra person (total 6 rooms avail.)
 Annie Marcucilli, Manager
- (5) Mayflower Inn, Point. Rd. + Manomet. 617-224-3311
- (6) Double Occupancy \$24 (40 rooms)
 Patricia G. Wilson, Function Mgr.
- (1) Pilgrim Sands Motel, Warren Ave, Plymouth 617-746-4360
 Double (double occ.) \$14-22
 Extra person, \$3 p.person
- (3) Red Oaks Motel, State Road, Manomet. 716-224-2500
 Single \$10; Double \$12
- (2) Yankee Traveller, Warren Ave, 617-746-3000. Single \$10; Double \$12.
 These are winter rates which may go up by spring. Breakfast bar will be open in Spring.

