

Checking with Roberts' Manual for Identification of Birds of Minnesota, Merrill-Wood's Bird Banders' Guide to Determination of Age and Sex, and Bent's Life Histories of North American Woodpeckers gave us no concrete help. Roberts says "the red comes in gradually on the head, and also on the throat of the male - before the black breast-patch develops." Merrill-Wood indicates all birds will (by Jan.) have some red on the head. Bent hints that "progress toward maturity continues all fall, winter, and early spring ..., but I have seen birds that had not fully completed this pre-nuptial molt by the end of April." (The underlining is mine.)

We labeled all three birds U U.

--3166 Merrill, Royal Oak, Mich. 48072

AN UNUSUAL MYRTLE (YELLOW-RUMPED) WARBLER
By M. J. Wolcott

Michael came in from the nets and showed us only the back and tail section of the bird in his hand. From the color and markings, and the tail pattern, we named it a Myrtle Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*). He then shifted his hold on the bird to reveal the head and neck to the shoulders. These feathers were entirely white, surrounding the usual yellow crown patch. Iris was black. Upperparts were bluish gray, striped with black; underparts white; heavy black striping on side of belly; two white wing bars; three outer tail-feathers on each side with the usual white spots; the four yellow spots were bright; and feet and legs were black. There were no face markings at all. This occurred on May 18, about 7:15 A.M. at Bradley's Marsh, Ontario, on the southeast "corner" of Lake St. Clair. We banded this "Michael Myrtle" with No. 1300-22009 and labeled him AHY M. His wing chord was 70mm.

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SCARLET TANAGERS WITH WING BARS?
By M. J. Wolcott

On May 13 five Scarlet Tanagers (*Piranga erythomelas*), four male and one female, were banded at Bradley's Marsh. This banding station is in southwestern Ontario. The first male received No. 107-019742. The wing chord measurement of 95mm was recorded. The solid black wings were scarlet wing bars. Everyone had a good look, notes were written on the record sheet, and the tanager was released.

The next male tanager had solid black wings, no wing bars. The third, No. 107-019748, with wing chord of 97mm, also had red wing bars. The last male, later in the day, had no wing bars.

Dwight, in Sequence of Plumages and Moults of the Passerine Birds of New York, says of the First Nuptial Plumage, "It is not unusual for

only a part of the wing coverts or tertiaries to be renewed and as a freak, scarlet coverts are occasionally assumed." We have pictures of these birds.

-- 3166 Merrill, Royal Oak, Mich. 48072

FREDDIE BLUELEGS
The Lazy Oriole
by Kendrick Y. Hodgdon

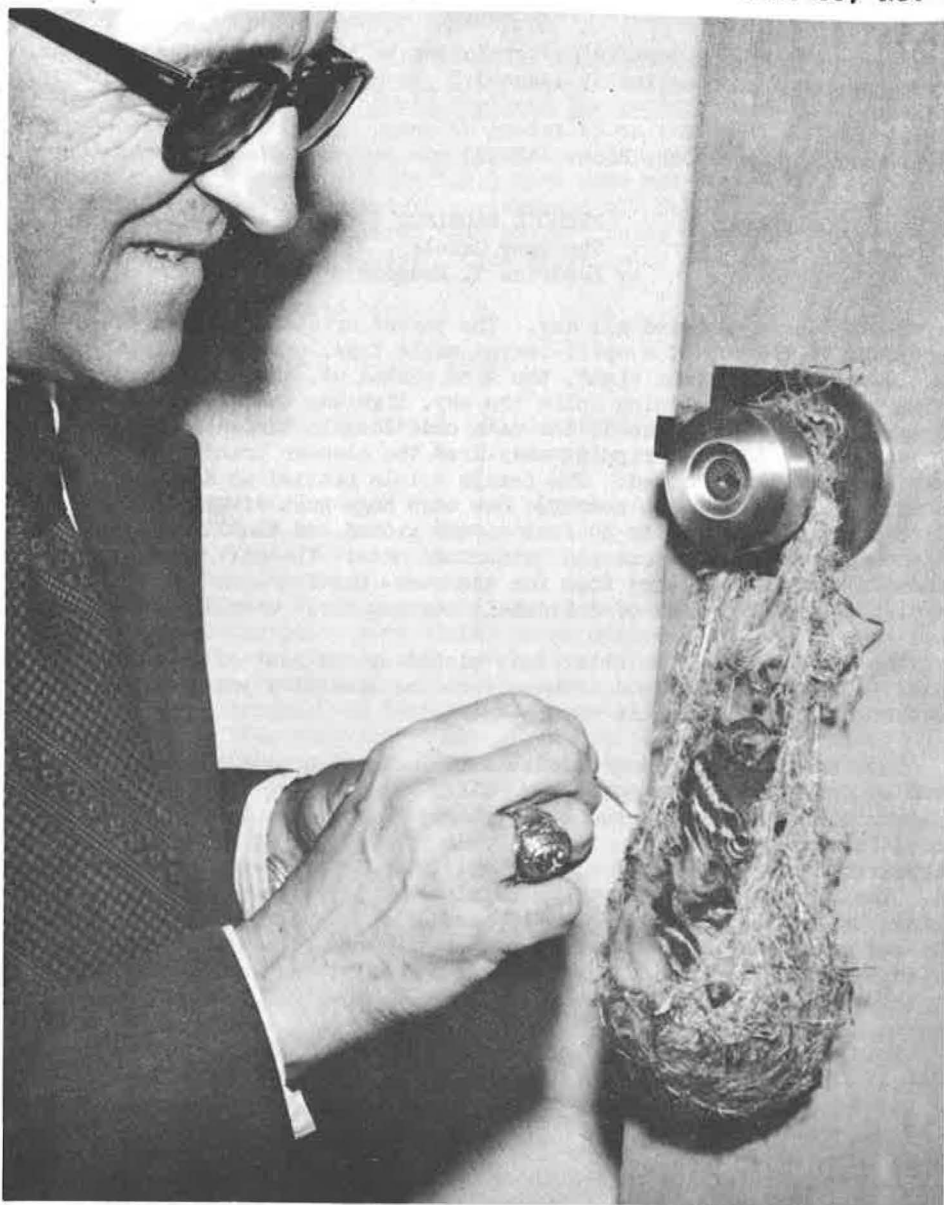
Storm clouds gathered all day. The parent orioles continue to feed their young in the top of a split-leafed maple tree, unaware of impending doom. Sometime during the night, the wind picked up, the nest swayed, thunder pealed, and lightning split the sky, lighting the area as if it were day. The winds increased, the rain came down in torrents and suddenly the nest started to tear, ripping away from the slender branches on which it was so carefully anchored. The female oriole rattled an alarm and the male replied from his perch nearby. One more huge gust of wind and the nest tore free, falling over 50 feet to the ground, as the lightning flashed. The female flew out and joined her mate. The next day they selected a tall black cherry tree for their new nesting site and started in again, the tedious task of delicately weaving their complicated nest.

The next morning, a neighbor lady picked up the nest of five baby orioles, all calling for food. These were the same five young orioles that were brought to my house this spring.

Last season, four young orioles were brought to me also, which I raised by feeding them raw hamburger, kitty vittles, egg yolk, gravel, and cod liver oil. Another one had been brought in two days later, but I had noticed its eyes were closed, yet it would grab food away from the others. It appeared otherwise healthy and ate well, but in the morning, it was dead. The next day, one of my four orioles had its eyes closed and acted healthy, but on the following day, it also died. I segregated the other three and succeeded in raising them and seeing them off as young adults. They would follow me around outside for a few days, then gradually they left the area, one by one.

This year, a pair of orioles are nesting in our maple tree and I wonder if they, or one of them, could be one of our young ones that we hand raised last season. I have tried to catch them in my mist net, but so far, I haven't succeeded.

Having successfully raised those three orioles last season, I again started with my five new babies by feeding them chopped raw hamburger, cooked egg yolks, and strawberries, then cherries, some blueberries later on, and raspberries. I remembered the kitty vittles and fed it to them, but one morning, all the babies refused it and instead readily accepted the strawberries. Perhaps they decided as a group that they were birds,



KEN HODGDON WITH FIVE YOUNG BALTIMORE ORIOLES
(Photo: Dennison Studio, Piedmont, W.Va.)

not cats. Each night, as I weighed and measured them, I would add grit and a drop of cod liver oil to their food, which I gave to them on a toothpick.

I brought the birds in their nest, to my office and hung the nest on the top knob of my filing cabinet, so that I could feed them whenever they would get hungry. Of course, the staff all had to watch.

That night, when I first weighed them and measured their wings, I noticed that there had been a sixth young bird in the nest. It was dead at the bottom of the nest, probably not surviving the fall.

The next day we took them with us to visit an elementary school and a high school. Needless to say, they created a lot of interest. We stressed that students should always leave young birds alone. Only in time of some tragedy, such as death of parent birds, or a nest blowing down, should aid be given.

Two of the birds died rather suddenly and one, for which I no longer had hope, as it was again closing its eyes and its legs appeared to be developing rickets, probably would die. I gave more cod liver oil and started adding pieces of clover for greens to the remaining birds. Two of them flew right away and were apparently ready to leave. But one day, both refused to fly. I had noticed that they had been losing about two grams a day for the last two days. In the meantime, the one for which I had no hope was hopping around on the ground, catching bugs, eating dirt and other things. That night, one of the fliers died, and in the morning, the other was dead. Either they had been into something in the basement that had harmed them, or sugar that was inadvertently put on the strawberries affected them. I wasn't sure.

The one I had given up on didn't fly for several days. I eased up on the protein, less hamburger, more lettuce and greens, thinking his body weight might be too much for his wings. One day, when I tossed him into the air, he gained a bit, and flew into a tree. He didn't fly on his own for some time, unless I tossed him into the air or he'd be hungry and would see me feeding dog food, egg yolk and grit to some young barn swallows; then he'd fly onto my head or shoulders, begging to be fed again. He would just eat and sit and call for more. His chirping and rattling kept me posted as to his position in the yard.

Did you ever try to feed a young bird with its mouth wide open, while you're holding a piece of hard boiled egg yolk on the end of a toothpick and have the bird suddenly close his bill? You try again -- open up he does, but then, the egg falls off the toothpick. I never had this problem with the orioles, but others, like the barn swallows, gave me fits!

I named my oriole Bluelegs, but my daughter was calling him Fred; thus, an oriole, sex unknown, became a male -- Freddie Bluelegs.

I banded him and turned him loose a few days ago, and if he ever gets over being lazy, and starts flying away as he should, he'll do okay.

Freddie has been flying around the yard, following me to the garden, where I feed him raspberries, service berries, and an occasional worm. He sleeps outside now and meets me at the back door in the morning. We have a hard-boiled egg, some lettuce, dog food, and raw hamburger on our kitchen window sill for Freddie's cafeteria, where he dines several times a day. He eats better than I do!

Once, while Freddie was walking, as usual, not flying, in our border of geraniums and marigolds along the backside of our house and looking for leaves to pick at, bugs to challenge, and grit to swallow, a whirlwind struck. I looked up to see a ruby-throated hummingbird at our coral bells. He was three feet over the oriole's head, but his rapidly beating wings stirred up the sorrel and clover leaves and ruffled Freddie's feathers. He just crouched in terror until the "thing from outer space" disappeared.

Another time, he accidentally landed in a cup of water, loved it, and found that he couldn't fly while wet. I've had to watch him in rainstorms as he gets down on the ground, and not being able to fly, just hops -- very attractive to neighbors' cats. When I'm watering the garden, he lets out a rattle of joy and dives in. I pick him up and put him on his perch in the backyard maple tree, where he suns and dries out. However, he's learning to stay perched when wet.

Now, as he begins to go it on his own, if he can stay away from cats, cars, poisoned bugs from spray on neighbors' gardens, and learn the proper flyway route to the south, he'll succeed in returning and raising his own family. Who knows?

Attached are notes on weight and wing growth.

-- 945 Weires Avenue, LaVale, Maryland 21502

ORIOLE STATISTICS
(about one week old)

Weight and Wing Growth

	Weight (grams)	Wing meas. (mm)	1974 Date		Weight (grams)	Wing meas. (mm)	1974 Date
#14	11.8	43	6/12	#15	21.5	51	6/12
	17.8	46	6/13		20.5	54	6/13
	19.2	50	6/14		20.8	57	6/14
	18.4	51	6/15		21.5	58	6/15
	17.0	53	6/16		20.0	60	6/16
	16.1	53	6/17		19.6	62	6/17
			Died 6/18/74		21.7	62	6/18

Weight and Wing Growth

	Weight (grams)	Wing meas. (mm)	1974 Date		Weight (grams)	Wing meas. (mm)	1974 Date
#15	21.6	62	6/19	#16	28.2	85	7/2
	22.6	62	6/20		28.4	85	7/3
	23.0	67	6/21		28.8	85	7/4
	23.4	69	6/22				(released)
	22.1	71	6/23		30.2	87	7/5
	21.3	72	6/24		30.8	87	7/6
			Died 6/25/74		29.6	87	7/7 (fed all day on his own)
#16	20.1	49	6/12	#17	20.5	47	6/12
	21.2	52	6/13		20.0	52	6/13
	21.5	57	6/14		20.0	56	6/14
	21.3	60	6/15				Died 6/15/74
	20.2	60	6/16	#18	20.8	52	6/12
	20.3	62	6/17		20.8	52	6/13
	23.2	65	6/18		22.4	58	6/14
	23.6	65	6/19		20.8	60	6/15
	24.5	70	6/20		20.7	61	6/16
	24.6	73	6/21		20.7	62	6/17
	22.9	73	6/22		22.7	65	6/18
	23.1	74	6/23		23.5	66	6/19
	23.0	75	6/24		25.1	70	6/20
	24.8	76	6/25		26.4	71	6/21
	25.3	77	6/26		26.7	72	6/22
	27.4	78	6/27		26.2	75	6/23
	26.3	79	6/28		24.3	75	6/24
	27.1	80	6/29		22.4	76	6/25
	28.2	81	6/30				Died 6/26/74
	28.1	85	7/1	#19	15.0	49	6/14
					13.1	49	6/15
							Died 6/16/74

These weights and measurements were taken at approximately the same time each day, between 7:00 and 8:00 p.m., just before putting them to bed.

You will note that just before the birds died, they started losing weight, for what reason I do not know. I was feeding all the birds the same food and in the same way. All the birds ate readily at intervals of 30 minutes to one hour. ##

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