

P R E S I D E N T ' S M E S S A G E

Another year has passed, banding reports are due and our Annual Meeting in Wheeling, W.Va., is well along in the planning!

....But, let's go back to those banding reports! As you transcribe your data from the field sheets, have you ever wondered as to why you got birds you did in the particular HABITAT AREA you band in? Have you speculated in which Ecological NICHE these birds stay, OR the role they play in the local TERRESTRIAL FOOD CHAIN and PYRAMID OF LIFE?

These are some of the very real questions I've been called upon to answer by my high school trainees and young men in the various environmental workshops I have conducted over the past eight years, especially on those days when "nothing hits the nets!" These young people want an explanation as to why, with all the birds flying around, there is not even one in the net that can be banded. It's on days like this that you realize you should have spent more time in observing the FOOD CHAIN and PLANT SUCCESSION and less time on flight paths and weather. The basic tenets have been 'ignored', since a quality habitat or the creation of an adequate habitat provides the food and shelter necessary for an abundant birdlife in the nesting and migration patterns.

Unquestionably, the visibility of the bird community along with banding is an ideal way of demonstrating "Field Techniques in Wildlife Management." It never fails to call attention to the WEB OF LIFE, the critical inter-relationship that exists between Soil and Water, Succession, Plant Food and Wildlife, and especially BIRDS. Once we have a few birds in the hand we become aware of the CARRYING CAPACITY of any given 'acre' of land, that is, the amount of wildlife a given acre of land will support in winter over to the next breeding season!And don't ignore the fact that in a "day", as well as "night", wildlife community forages and thrives or competes for survival on the same 'acre' of habitat.

This preamble is my way of introducing to some of you, and enlisting others of you in an EBBA effort, which will involve more of you in the environmental programs of the public schools and various Boy Scout Camps. Those of us who give our time to these organizations are urgently in need of your help. Each season at BSA National Camping School, I am approached by Ecology-Conservation Directors for the names of EBBA members who might be contacted to demonstrate banding at local Boy Scout Reservations.

I would be most pleased to hear from those of you who are involved in using Banding as an instructional media. I am also anxious to hear from you if you would be willing to try your hand at working in these programs.

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ATLANTIC FLYWAY REVIEW - Region V

Edited by Chandler S. Robbins

Banders in Region V collaborated in several studies during the autumnal migration of 1973. These included: (1) pooling data on age ratios to see whether banders at inland stations can detect differences in reproductive success from year to year; (2) validity of wing covert streaking as an indicator of age in thrushes; and (3) shape of the 6th primary in Gray-cheeked and Swainson's Thrushes.

The first four stations in Table 1 are in or near the Potomac Valley, the next four plus Woodend are along the Fall Line, Aberdeen and Round Bay are on the west shore of the Chesapeake Bay, and the last four stations are along the east shore of the Chesapeake. The species most commonly banded in 1973 show remarkably little similarity among stations or even between years at the same station. Even by grouping species into families, only a few generalities could be drawn. In September, warblers were the commonest birds captured at all except the Round Bay, Woodend, and Valley Lane stations; thrushes rated especially high at Round Bay and Valley Lane, and mimids were most common at Woodend. In October, fringillids dominated all stations except Woodend; thrushes led all other families in October at Woodend and were a close second to fringillids at the Fall Line and Round Bay stations; on the Eastern Shore, warblers and kinglets outnumbered thrushes. It became clear that habitat in the immediate vicinity of each banding station had a greater influence on the relative abundance of species and families banded than did the geographic location.

Age ratios proved to be fairly consistent among stations, except for the predominance of immature (HY) birds at sites near the coast (Irish Grove and Kiptopeke). This gives some hope that ratios from many inland stations may be pooled to give an annual index for each of the common species. The figures for this autumn, expressed as the percentage of HY birds, are given in Table 2. In computing the percentages, we used only those banded samples that included no (or very few) birds of unknown age. A dash in Table 2 indicates that either fewer than 10 birds of the species were banded at that station or that too many birds of unknown age were in their sample. Percentages computed from samples of only 11 to 20 birds are given in parentheses. When one or more unaged birds were included in the sample, a range of percentages indicating the amount of uncertainty is given rather than a single figure.

Age ratios ranged from a low in the mid-1950's for the Brown Creeper and Indigo Bunting to a high near 90% for the Cedar