

Dan Jones
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EBBANUS

A FRIENDLY REPORT ISSUED MONTHLY TO THE MEMBERS
OF THE EASTERN BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION

Members In
Florida, Georgia, South Carolina,
North Carolina, Virginia, Mary-
land, Delaware, District of Colum-
bia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey,
New York, and other States and
in Canada.

October, 1941

"LET US GET TOGETHER"

Vol. 4, No. 10

President: Dr. C. Brooke Worth, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pa.
Secretary: Horace Groskin, 210 Glenn Road, Ardmore, Pennsylvania.
Treasurer: Robert K. Ungemah, 10 Jackson Avenue, White Plains, N. Y.
Editor: Geoffrey Gill, 24 Overlook Drive, Huntington, L. I., N. Y.

EASTERN'S ACTIVITIES ARE GROWING

Just to prove that Dr. H. B. Wood of Harrisburg, Pa., has no monopoly on statistics, "Ye Ed." glanced over the recent copies of BIRD BANDING NOTES issued by the Survey and compared the number of banders reporting in the last three years. The comparisons are as follows and show a significant gain.

Banders reporting	1938	1939	1940
Over 5,000 birds banded	1	1	0
Over 1,000 birds banded	20	25	30
Between 800 and 1,000 birds banded	1	3	7
Between 500 and 800 birds banded	15	15	9
Between 300 and 500 birds banded	15	13	15
Between 200 and 300 birds banded	12	21	20
Between 100 and 200 birds banded	<u>23</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>28</u>
	87	97	109

Despite the fact that several thousand less birds were banded, according to the Survey, in 1940 than in 1939, the banders in the Eastern area are gaining. If reports already seen are any criterion, 1941 will again show substantial headway for our area, even though we have no big stations in our midst as the McIlheny station in the Inland area and Dr. Austen's station in the New England area. Every member should make it his or her aim to band at least 100 new birds a year.

OFF TO A GREAT START

Mrs. O. F. Jensen of Chapel Hill, N.C., received her banding permit in the middle of March this year and at once began to accomplish things. Late as it was in the season she was able to band 87 Purple Finches and believes that if her supply of bands had held out she could have banded at least 200 of this species. Mrs. Jensen has a place ideally situated for banding, on a hillside which drops back 120 ft. to a heavily wooded area. The hillside is partially covered with several kinds of Dogwood and she has started a nursery of berry-bearing shrubs which she plans to plant on this hillside to make it even more attractive. At her home she has a huge window equipped with a feeder where quantities of birds visit daily. One of the most commendable points about this station is that it is a general headquarters for young Audubon Club members and a popular place to be visited by neighboring bird clubs. One can easily realize the value of such a station as a perpetual public font for bird banding education.

FLASH!

Inter-banding stations at a distance apart are still so rare as to be news. A Junco banded by Dr. William Pepper in a suburb of Philadelphia was captured later by Verdi Burtch at Branchport, N. Y.

HOW A BANDING STATION GROWS

Sometime in 1921, R. J. Middleton of Norristown, Pa., started banding with a single trap. For 7 years he carried on with just this one trap. In 1928 he increased his equipment to 20 traps and gradually added a few more now and then. Beginning 1941, 20 years later, Mr. Middleton has 60 traps, counting all compartments. During this period he has banded 21,016 birds and has had 774 returns, 190 recoveries and 21,743 repeats.

MORE ABOUT APPLYING COLORED BANDS

When cementing colored celluloid bands use acetone or any solvent which druggists sell to remove fingernail polish. Do not buy it in a bottle with a screw cap, as it evaporizes rapidly through this type cap. Insist on getting an ordinary cork stopper.

JUNCO DATA IS ARRIVING - SEND YOURS IN TODAY

In our August issue, members were requested to send to Dr. Worth, our president, (address on front page) whatever data they had on Juncos. Some very interesting material has been received from 9 members covering a total of 2,798 birds. This data is to be worked into a cooperative paper for our official quarterly, "BIRD BANDING". Won't you send in your notes and help with the study. Here are banding totals so far received:

Contributor	No. years covered	Birds banded
Charles A. Stratton	3	158
Dr. William Pepper	18	772
Albert E. Clattenburgh	1	27
Geoffrey Gill	13	582
Dr. Harold B. Wood	12	92
Howard P. Mahnken	1	14
William Davidson	9	670
R. K. Ungemah	2	112
C. Brooke Worth	12	371

ELKIN, NORTH CAROLINA DEFINITELY ON MAP

Robert E. Ware of Clemson, S.C. writes: "Re: paragraph in EBBA NUS (Sept.), I am glad to furnish the following information. Elkin, N.C. is located in Surrey County, 21 miles northeast of Wilkesboro. From Scarsdale, N.Y. to Elkin is a long distance for a Blue Jay to travel. I have had good luck banding Blue Jays but have no recoveries that will match this." The above refers to a young Blue Jay banded by George Dock, Jr. of Scarsdale, N.Y., recovered the following winter at Elkin, N.C., which couldn't be found on any map available.

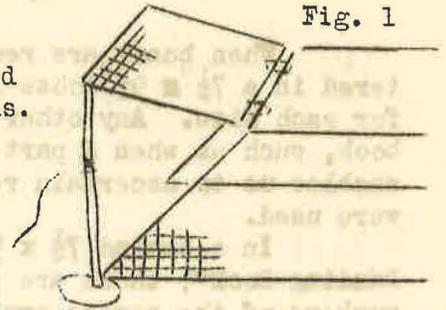
A SPLENDID PIECE OF EQUIPMENT

Through the cooperation of two of our members, Edwin A. Mason of the Wharton Banding Station at Groton, Mass. and Leroy Wilcox of Speonk, L.I., N.Y., who visited him this summer, we now have a working model of a detachable bird box front which automatically traps birds entering the box. This invention is so simple and perfect that one wonders why it was never thought of before. It is an invention of Leonard J. Brewer of Orleans, Mass., and he certainly deserves the congratulations of all banders. The working model now in "Ye Editor's" possession will be loaned to any member on request. A simple gadget to make - every bander should have one.

Harry S. Bristow, of Cedars, Del. recently trapped an albino Purple Grackle with its entire upper and under parts of its body a dirty white. It stayed around three days, was trapped 5 times and was photographed. A stork also arrived at the Bristow residence on August 19 and Mr. and Mrs. Bristow are receiving congratulations on the arrival of a baby daughter.

MODERN IMPROVEMENT

A beginner's pull-string trap is still a good old standby among the trap equipment at many banding stations. Justly popular it is, because there seems to be some species of birds that can only be caught in such a trap. However, the pull-string of today is a long stride forward from such traps of the twenties.

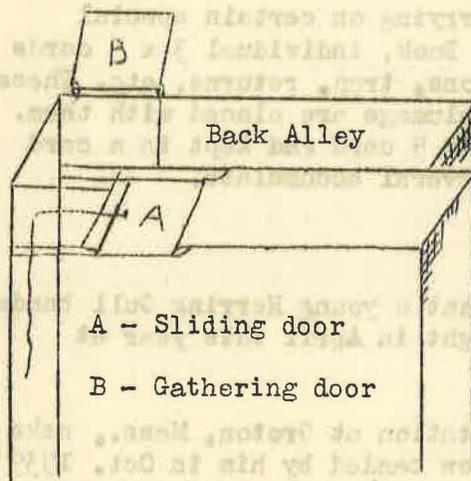


Many of today's models have a ground entrance as shown in Fig. 1. You will note that the sides of the trap have a much longer base than has the top, so that pull-string door falls in a 90 degree arc rather than in an arc of 120 degrees as in the old style. This quickens the closing action and also assures the bander that gravity will keep the door in a closed position, once the trap is sprung. A bail lock, easily made of coat-hanger wire, for this falling door also helps, just as it helps to have a flat pebble beneath the pull-string stick.

It should be mentioned that in the construction of a pull-string trap or in most any type of trap where a frame is necessary, wire should be used rather than wood. Wire of about No. 9 gauge has so many advantages over thin strips of wood that it is hard to enumerate them all. Wire withstands weather longer, does away with sharp corners, is easily worked and is less visible.

Another drawback to the old fashioned pull-string was the system of getting captive birds out of the trap. The old method made it necessary to carry out a small gathering cage and then work oneself into a frenzy chasing the bird through a small exit door into a little gathering cage. Such assaults on the bander's patience when the mercury is dallying in the depths can easily become a memory, if the bander will build his gathering cage or compartment right in the back of the trap. This little wrinkle could be called a back alley or a rear hallway. It is just that and consists of a partition of hardware cloth fastened into the trap about 8 inches parallel with the back of the trap forming a narrow runway. A doorway fitted with a sliding door leads into this area and is controlled by a short string ending in a wooden button at the front of the trap.

The bander standing at the front of the trap will find that the captive bird always seeks to get as far away from the bander as possible. It will dash through the door and go down the hall. Before the bird can return, the bander pulls the string and the sliding door closes. The bird is now confined in the hallway. This hallway should be fitted with a top door, preferably at the same end as the sliding door. The bander reaches through the top door, takes out the captive without any fuss or loss of feathers, we hope. It is very important that the hallway should not be any longer than the bander can comfortably reach with his arm, which presupposes that the bander has considered his reach when building his pull-string.



Some banders have suggested a glass enclosed pull-string trap. For those that like such construction, arguing that it is safer for the birds, we have no quarrel. However, birds caught in a pull-string should be taken out of the trap at once before they have a chance to harm themselves. It will be found that glass is hard to keep clean, helps seeds germinate and is less workable than wire.

BANDING RECORDS SYSTEM

By Daniel Smiley Jr., Mohonk Lake, N. Y.

When bands are received from the Survey the quantity and numbers are entered in a $7\frac{1}{2}$ x $9\frac{1}{2}$ loose-leaf notebook, called the "Receiving Book", having a page for each size. Any other information about distribution of bands is noted in this book, such as when a part of a series is sent to our Haverford, Pa. station. This enables us to ascertain readily what bands have been issued to us and where they were used.

In a second $7\frac{1}{2}$ x $9\frac{1}{2}$ in. loose-leaf notebook, called the "Chronological Banding Book", there are sections for each band size. When bands are received, the numbers of the series are written in, in numerical order under each size. Thus as the bands are used this order becomes the chronological for each size of band.

A third $7\frac{1}{2}$ x $9\frac{1}{2}$ loose-leaf notebook is known as the "By Species Banding Book". As the name indicates it is divided into sections for each species. Its use will be described later.

Our fourth book is a pocket sized non-loose-leaf 3 x 5 inch notebook called the "Banding Book". There is a section for each band size, where the numbers are written down whenever a group of 5 or 10 bands are transferred from the original wire to the "stringer wires" which we carry with us to the traps. A new one of these books is started whenever it gets crowded or the season changes so that repeats of recently banded birds cease. Usually four are used each year.

When a bird is banded, the date, substation, trap, time, species, age or sex if known, and any other available notes, are written down immediately in the "Banding Book". Repeats and returns are also noted here as taken. At the close of each day the species of birds banded and date are entered opposite the proper band number in the Chronological Banding Book. If any returns have been taken during the day, the government return cards are made out. At the same time the return is indicated in our two sets of personal records, the Chronological, and By Species Books, by encircling the band number in red ink, and also in the pocket Banding Book in use when the bird was banded. In the By Species Book the trap, substation, etc. of returns are recorded in red ink also. Therefore, by the above system, a duplicate of all records except repeats is made out daily and only one day's information necessary for the government reports would be lost if the pocket sized book were mislaid.

At the end of each season, the government schedules are made out from the records in the pocket banding book, and at the same time a duplicate record is made in the By Species Banding Book. In the latter however, in addition to the data sent in to the survey, repeats are noted as well as the substation and trap for each capture. As stated above, all return records are to be found in the book in red ink, so that they may be easily picked out. When these records have been completed, an ink check mark is put opposite each return in the above book when it has been duly recorded. The schedules are sent in twice a year or at the end of the season or periods of occurrence of the species.

In the case of Juncos, about which we are carrying on certain special studies, instead of recording them in the By Species Book, individual 3 x 5 cards are made out with date of banding, repeats, substations, trap, returns, etc. These are kept in a card file, and cards bearing notes on plumage are placed with them. A copy of each government return card is made on a 3 x 5 card and kept in a card file. The government cards are sent in as soon as several accumulate.

NEWS ITEMS

Leroy Wilcox of Speonk, L.I., N.Y. reports that a young Herring Gull banded by him on Cartwright Island on July 18, 1940 was caught in April this year at Murdock Landing, Texas.

Edwin A. Mason of the Wharton Bird Banding Station at Groton, Mass., asks us to correct an error in our last issue. The sparrow banded by him in Oct. 1939 at Groton and found dead at Mt. Home, Texas on Jan. 28, 1940 was a White Crowned Sparrow and not a White-throat as stated.

NEWS FOR THE BIRD BANDERS

Mr. and Mrs. Everett Griscom of Roslyn, Pa., are developing new methods to attract and protect birds at their feeding stations. Electric wires extend to the traps and when a gray squirrel gets too near, they simply push a button and the squirrel scampers away. In their Briar Bush Bird Sanctuary of nine acres they have recorded 150 species in 36 years; 42 in one hour of fall migration; 31 and 32 on alternate days in June, and yet they are not located on any known migration route. Mrs. Griscom is a most entertaining lecturer on birds, with slides showing feeding experiences. Mr. Griscom splints broken wings of birds and keeps them in cages until ready to release. For small birds he thoroughly wraps them in adhesive plaster, without cutting or removing any feathers. For large birds he bends a piece of sheet copper around as a splint and binds it on. He has had good results. When visited he had a Robin with a broken wing nearly recovered.

Lawrence R. Corn of Camden, N. J. bands young hawks. On June 5, 1938, he banded five young Sparrow Hawks. The following February one was found dead in Philadelphia and another in Baily, N.C. With the help of Boy Scouts he maintains a window display in a hardware store; showing traps and mounted birds; a card of different sizes of bands, saying what size fits each bird, some Audubon Ass'n. bird pictures; other pictures of certain birds and remarkable flights, distance and time the birds made. Does not state what should be done when a banded bird is found, which is an important item which should be never omitted from exhibits.

Mrs. Ada C. Govan of Lexington, Mass., author of that charming book, "Wings at My Window", is as charming as her writings. She has many interesting photographs of birds at her windowsill. She once counted 300 Cedar Waxwings in a mountain ash at one time. Mrs. Govan and Mrs. Griscom are two excellent reasons for banders to visit others while on their travels.

Howard H. Krug of Chesley, Ontario, writes that in his neighborhood he found the nesting season for Gulls to be considerably earlier than in previous years. "Usually", he writes, "I can count on still banding some Gulls during the first week in July, but this year I visited several colonies on July 1st and had very poor luck. Many of the young Gulls were already flying. I had hoped to bring my total Gulls for this year up to around 2,000, but had to be content with a little over 1,500." To EBBA's way of thinking, 1,500 Gulls is nothing to sneeze at.

Dr. Harold B. Wood of Harrisburg, Pa. reports that he is catching Cowbirds a dozen at a time in his famous fifty-cent house-trap. (This trap was illustrated in the May, 1940 issue of the NUS. Our file of this issue is completely exhausted.)

George Dock, Jr. of Scarsdale, N.Y. now has four Fabian traps in operation and is getting dandy results with them. He states that it is simple to change an ordinary drop-trap into a Fabian and that Fabians catch all kinds of birds.

"Ye Editor" now has one of the Pedersen traps in operation (August NUS) baited with dogwood berries and a pan of water and is catching most everything in it but the neighbor's collie.

Jesse V. Miller has gotten his Junior Bird Banding Club off to an early start this Fall at Manhasset, L.I., N.Y. and reports that during the recent dry spell they made some splendid hauls.

Uncle Sam is looking for live Duck Hawks or other falcons useful in falconry. Probably you have already received an inquiry. If any are sent they should be banded.

