

Douglass Jones  
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# EBBA NUS

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.

April, 1942

"LET US BAND TOGETHER"

Vol. 5, No. 4

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Secretary: Horace Groskin, 210 Glenn Road, Ardmore, Pennsylvania.  
Treasurer: Robert K. Ungemah, 10 Jackson Avenue, White Plains, N. Y.  
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## OH -- FOR THE GULL'S SAKE

Through the courtesy of our president, Dr. C. Brooke Worth, who expects to return to Swarthmore around May 1st, Ebba has just received a clipping via air-mail from The Ranch of the Flowers, Panuco River, Vera Cruz. The clipping is taken from #El Mundo" a morning paper published in Tampico, Mexico and is dated St. Patrick's Day, 1942. Translated, the news item reads as follows:

### "A SEA GULL WEARING A RING IS CAUGHT"

"A Sea Gull wearing on one of its legs a metal ring similar to the ring commonly put on carrier pigeons and bearing an inscription, was captured day before yesterday afternoon by Mr. Platon Arellano, agent of the Safety Commission of this port.

"It is worthwhile to explain that the capture of this Sea Gull, effected by Agent Arellano, was a mere accident. He went fishing, at which sport he is very proficient, and the Sea Gull, most tired of carrying this ring so long on its leg and of having born it on a long trip - from Washington - chose to rest on Arellano's boat and let itself be captured as if it were a domestic bird.

"Arellano collected the afore-mentioned ring which bore the following inscription in English: "Notify F. and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C.--667426". We report further, that the captor took good care of the small animal and personally fed it with biscuits, broken-up and soaked in milk, explaining that these ministrations take origin in the hope of Arellano that the famous "F. and Wildlife Service" of Washington, D.C., to which he has already sent notice of the capture of the Sea Gull, may answer him with a check in dollars and a request that he return the animal in a cage."

For the sake of the poor gull, remember our Good Neighbor Policy. Will the bander of 667426 send ransom before the poor gull is stewed.

### WHO KILLS COCK ROBIN?

The answer, according to Mrs. Leslie A. Stauber, who is making a special study of bird malaria at her banding station at Port Norris, N.J. would be that it probably was the malaria mosquito. In her 1941 report she records the banding of 15 species. Outstanding in this tabulation is the fact that half of the Robins banded suffered from malaria infection. Of 58 Catbirds banded only one had malaria germs. Of 24 White-throats, again only one was infected, but of 7 Robins 3 were infected. As Mrs. Stauber is primarily interested in this study she is anxious to learn how to trap more Robins. If any bander can send her suggestions she will be very grateful. Address P. O. Box 303, Port Norris, N. Y.

## "WHITE BLACKBIRDS"

Speaking of birds one has met, "Did you ever see a white blackbird?" will be a question tossed into such a discussion, sooner or later, oft-times implying a jest. "White blackbirds", usually a partial albino grackle, are not as rare or scarce as most laymen and some ornithologists assume. Recently "Ye Ed" had the privilege of reading an article in which a learned ornithologist used this albino trait as evidence of the movement of a group of Purple Grackles, or showing a connection between one group in a certain season to another group about 25 miles distant in seasons hence, through such a hereditary trait. The ability to recognize a partial albino or its siblings in the field without a detailed description of its markings is very doubtful in the opinion of this writer. "Any such resemblances is purely coincidental".

As Mr. Daniel Smiley, Jr. of Mohonk Lake, N.Y. aptly states, "...few of us can adequately realize or visualize the great number of birds there are." In any group of 1,000 grackles there will be some "white blackbirds". Horace D. McCann of Paoli, Pa. in an article in 1931, reports one in 300 banded grackles. "Ye Ed" has banded 4 partial albinos in 1120 Purple Grackles. Others have been seen but not caught. This tendency to partial albinism is not confined to any one species of birds, but because of their dark appearance is more noticeable. Grackles, Robins, Bluebirds and House Sparrows, all have albino individuals, probably in the order named and probably due to the fact that more of these species are noted. Partial albinism in most cases is confined to the dorsal parts of the bird, usually appearing on the head, neck or shoulders, occasionally in the tail feathers and but seldom on the ventral part of a bird. If you have banded a number of grackles, what has been your experience? Won't you drop us a line about it?

## SOUTHERN NEW YORK BANDERS TO GET TOGETHER

On Saturday afternoon, April 25th, banders of Southern New York State and nearby areas are invited to meet at the banding station of Robert K. Ungemah in White Plains, N.Y. Rallying at this point at 2:30 P.M., they will then visit the banding station of Miss Grace C. Meleney, also in White Plains. From this spot they will go to Katonah where they will view the collection of live hawks and owls maintained by Bander Stanley Grierson and visit the banding stations of Mrs. Fielder and Prof. Rudolph Fried. From Katonah they will return to Scarsdale where they will visit the banding station of George Dock, Jr. For the convenience of all banders from Long Island, New Jersey and the Metropolitan area, there are at least 9 trains (N.Y. Central) leaving after 12:07 that will arrive in White Plains in time to join this trip. Railroad fare amounting to \$1.05 round trip to White Plains will be paid by each individual bander. All banders are invited to join this outing.

## TRAPPING TIPS

The number of birds caught in an ordinary government-type sparrow trap can almost be doubled by building into it another entrance to the first chamber. The easiest way to do this is to build the added entrance as a separate unit and when completed, attach to the trap by snipping out the needed space in the side of the first compartment. A few more birds will find their way out, but in the long run, more birds will be taken. It overcomes the objection of some individual bird sitting in the single entrance and blocking the entire trap.

EBRA believes that ground entrance traps are best to catch Robins and the old reliable flat pull-string is supreme for this species. During the Robin nest building season, a nice attractive mud-hole of reasonable proportions is the best bait, especially in dry weather. What can you suggest?

## OUR PREXY IS IN MEXICO

Our postman cautiously poked a penciled postal under our door the other day and solved another mystery. Our president, Dr. C. Brooke Worth is in Mexico. At least he was there on March 7th, the date on the postal. The text of the "Presidential Message", written from Tampico, is as follows: "Our trip was sidetracked to this destination, but we are getting in some good ornithology anyway. I have seen nothing with a band on it.----" Possibly the censor cut the rest of this terse message or it was obliterated by the grimy hands of a native runner. However, the pictorial side of the card is nice. Possibly the subtle doctor had reasons for its choice. It depicts three gentlemen cows contemplating a sunset while standing in a mammoth mud-puddle. It's nice to know that they, too, have contented cows in Mexico.

## A RECORD FOR LANCASTER COUNTY, PA.

Barton L. Sharp of Lititz, Pa. writes, "On February 23, I found 8 Evening Grosbeaks in Lititz Springs Park. Only one such record has been made in Lancaster County before. (Dr. H. H. Beck observed several at the same spot in 1922.)"

"On the following day, I secured several pictures both in color and in black and white. Using sunflower seed for bait, I set 3 government sparrow traps and a 4 cell potter but after 4 hours I had trapped 14 gray squirrels and no Grosbeaks. On the 25th I tried again, using 2 pull-string traps and banded 2 of the Grosbeaks."

"Bird lovers from Lancaster, Harrisburg, Reading, Fleetwood, Wilmington and many others, visit the park to see these rare birds. Nearly every group was able to see them. They were very tame and at times could be approached to within five or six feet before flushing."

## DOWN THE CHIMNEY

Recently Albert L. Baily, III, of West Chester, Pa. sent in his annual report for 1941. On this report it was noted that he had banded 8 Chimney Swifts. As 8 Swifts seemed to be more than a bander would catch accidentally, and yet hardly enough if a special effort had been made to trap this species, "Ye Ed" wrote and asked Mr. Baily, "How come?"

Mr. Baily enlightens us as follows: "This is about the only bird that I have made no effort to catch. They come to me rather than I go after them. I live in a big house in the country, built many years ago, when big fire-places to cook over were the fashion. We have two chimneys, 8 x 4½ ft. besides six other small chimneys which lead into three main ones. With all these perpendicular passages and corners, Swifts are likely to come out of the wrong end. I have captured 7 that came out of fire-places and were found "battering" around in our rooms. The eighth bird banded was caught in a slightly different way.

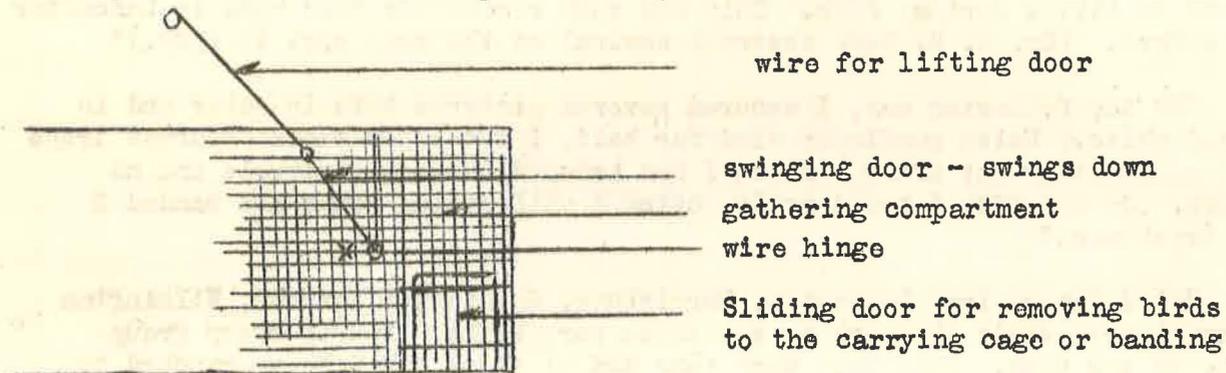
"At the bottom of the hill on which our farm is built, there is a small house which we have remodeled and now rent to transients, such as couples on their honeymoon. This house is equipped with an oil-burner which is turned on by hand. It has a stove pipe 4 inches in diameter that connects with a small chimney after many sharp turns. One day a new tenant went to turn on the burner when he heard something banging inside the burning compartment. I went down right away with a screw driver and removed some plates covering the compartment. After fishing around inside I brought out a very dirty swift that in some way had gotten into the burning compartment. Many times I have wondered if that bird ever realized how nearly it had been completely soot."

A "FABIAN" TRAP GATHERING COMPARTMENT IMPROVEMENT  
and A STEP-TRIP TRAP

by  
Leon D. Cool, Jr., Falls Church, Va.

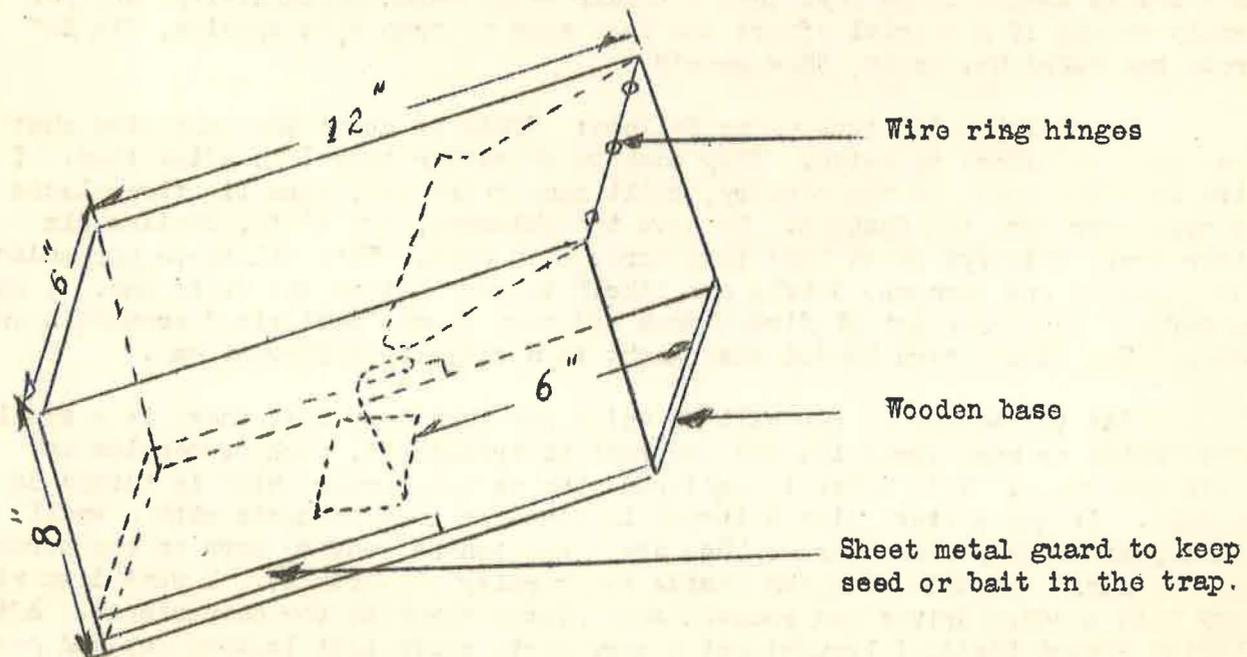
"I have 3 Fabian traps. My first 2 were built according to the sketch in EBBA and as yet I have not had the time to change them. The last one has a newly designed gathering compartment which I think is an improvement. I have had trouble in getting the birds to enter the old type compartment. The birds would fly above the swinging door on the narrow type door and I couldn't get them to go underneath. I think the better way is to hinge both parts of this partition at the "X" (on sketch below) and have both moveable, but the bottom piece consisting of more than half of the partition so when it is pulled up, it will meet the top of the trap and force the captured birds toward the floor."

The original sketch of the Fabian had a door in the top of the gathering compartment to allow a bander to reach right in and get the bird in his or her hand. The improvement shown may be preferred by some banders.



A STEP-TRIP TRAP

From a model seen in the office of the Fish & Wildlife Service



The trip-step should be made almost as wide as the trap and the falling door should be  $8\frac{1}{2}$ " tall. The bird is taken out from the front with the aid of a cloth. These work well when set in groups.

## NEWS FOR THE BANDERS

Carleton A. Sturdevant of Prattsburgh, N. Y. plans to add a Brenckle and a Fabian trap to his equipment this spring. He got his permit last November and has already banded 62 birds of 10 species despite frequent heavy snows. Outstanding in his list of captures are 5 Snow Buntings and a Horned Lark caught on Feb. 12. Horned Larks were plentiful early in March and he reports seeing flocks of 50 or more frequently.

Annual banding reports for 1941 have been received from the following banders recently. It is hoped that other members will send in their data to add to this very interesting material. If we can get enough such reports we will be proud to get out some sort of a special edition.

| Bander                 | Address                              | No. banded '41 | Returns |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|---------|
| Forrest A. Dilling     | Bowmanville, Ont.                    | 150            | 4       |
| Charles J. Spiker      | Branchport, N.Y.                     | 825            | 76      |
| Howard P. Mahnken      | Brooklyn, N. Y.                      | 175            | 18      |
| Albert L. Baily III    | West Chester, Pa.                    | 374            | 6       |
|                        | Small Point, Me.                     | 61             | 0       |
| Thomas P. McElroy, Jr. | 3 stations in Pa.,<br>and 1 in N. J. | 79             | 0       |

Each of these reports are worthy of detailed comment, but lack of space forbids it at present. In passing, we can't resist mentioning that Mr. Spiker's report includes 306 swallows 5 species and 5 Cooper's Hawks. The swallows, except a few Barn Swallows, were caught by means of a boat, net and flashlight in a cattail marsh. He also reports a Black Capped Chickee return at least 8 years old.

Two White Throats banded by Richard Fischer of Flushing, L.I., N.Y. in November, 1940, returned to his traps this past February. One of these birds puzzles him because it apparently is still in immature plumage.

A Purple Finch banded by Mrs. Irene D. Swart of Boonton, N. J. was captured recently by Mrs. Ove F. Jensen of Chapel Hill, N.C. Up to March 7th she had banded 68 new Finches this year. Mrs. Jensen also reports the return of a Pine Warbler and 2 Myrtle Warbler returns.

It is interesting to note that of the two active banding stations in Chapel Hill, N.C., Mrs. H. D. Crockford has banded 30 Pine Warblers and 1 Myrtle whereas Mrs. Jensen has banded 8 Pine Warblers and 55 Myrtles.

Mrs. Crockford has just built a Fabian trap and during its first day in operation it caught 2 Goldfinches, a Field Sparrow and a White-throat.

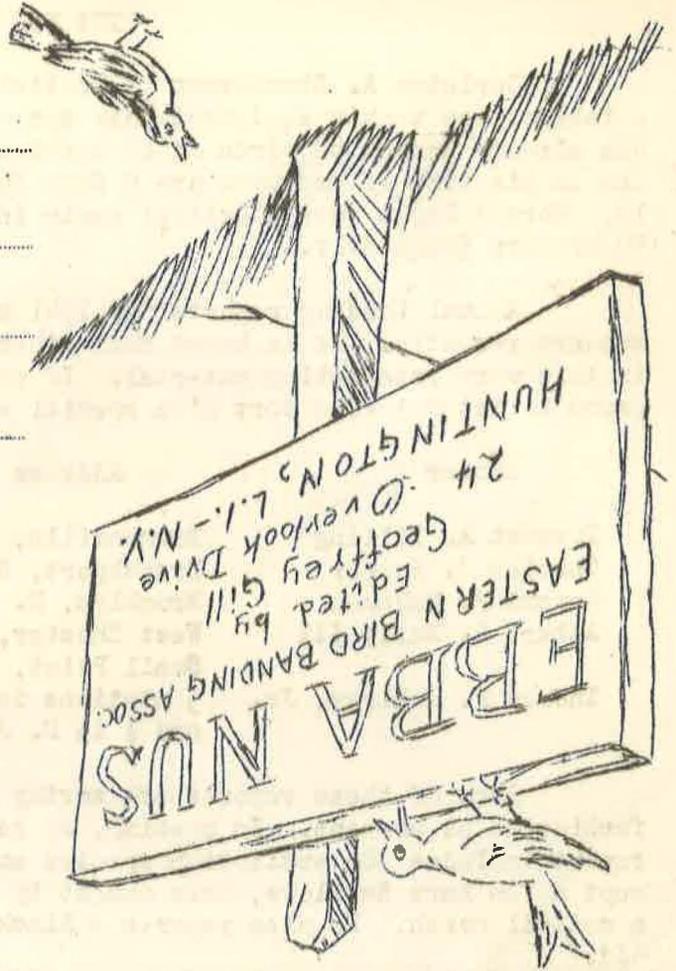
Mrs. Jensen's station has been bothered by "bossy" Myrtle Warblers that dominated and drove other birds away from her traps. One particular antagonistic individual was marked with a red band. Finally this chap was transported 2 miles from the station. Just to prove that was no way to treat a guest, the Myrtle returned within 2 hours, "taking on all comers even more diligently than before!"

Mrs. Jensen reports catching 2 Ruby Crown Kinglets with pure lard for bait.

Mr. Beecher S. Bowdish reports that a Wood Thrush banded Aug. 24, 1941 at Demarest, N.J. was found dead the following October at Carlisle, Pa.

It took 12 years for "Ye Ed" to band 17 Fox Sparrows. This winter he has amazed himself by bringing his total up to 30.

Prof. Dayton Stoner  
New York State Museum  
Albany, New York



Sec. 562 P. L. & R.

Report a dead bird wearing a band, when found, to

FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

"BUY DEFENSE BONDS"