



# EBBA NUS

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

*Douglas Stover*  
8/21/42

REACHING OVER <b>375</b> BANDERS EVERY MONTH
--

August, 1942

"LET US BAND TOGETHER"

No. 8, Vol. 8

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.

## AND NOW WE ARE IN THE NEWS REELS

Universal News Reel is releasing one of their shorts, shown under the heading, "Stranger Than Fiction", a banding picture which is a part of a reel entitled "The Woman at the Plow" and following that on the same reel, is "The Banding of Wild Birds". These pictures are taken at the banding station of our Secretary, Horace Groskin, at Ardmore, Pa.

Mr. Groskin was informed that this movie short would be released throughout the nation about July 20th and is expected to reach the Philadelphia area in the first week of August.

Ask your favorite movie manager whether he proposes to show it. The number of the reel is 6383, known as "The Woman at the Plow". It will be decidedly worthwhile seeing and will probably help all banders a great deal.

## HOW TO CATCH BLUEBIRDS

W. M. Davidson of Takoma Park, Md. writes that in summer and fall, when Bluebirds travel in small flocks, he uses the berries of *Viburnum dentatum* for bait. These berries are placed in top-opening traps, set a few feet off the ground on poles in an open field. He writes, "I have been placing cut heads of these berries in small glass bottles of water and in this way the berries remain attractive for two or three days. Berries of other *Viburnum* species failed to attract, but dogwood berries in the fall attract the birds."

## ANOTHER JUNIOR BANDING CLUB REPORTS

Sister Mary Esther of St. Francis Convent, Clearfield, Pa., has sent in a fine report of the Junior Banding Club she sponsors. This report covers the period between July 1, 1941 to June 1, 1942 and includes the banding of 121 birds of 17 species. The list of species is headed by 40 Song Sparrows and followed by 13 Fox, 11 White Throat and 10 Chipping Sparrows. 6 birds banded in the previous summer returned the following Spring.

The Club has 22 members and operates 10 traps with the Potter and False-bottom traps considered the best. They would be interested in learning of a dependable trap to catch Robins. While this species can be trapped, equipment that will catch them in all seasons is non-existent in the belief of EBBA. EBBA doesn't believe that this is the fault of any traps, but is due to "The nature of the beast" to be trapped.

The Pennsylvania State Game Commission recently took colored motion pictures of Dr. Harold B. Wood of Harrisburg banding an Indigo Bunting.

## SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM A NORTH CAROLINA REPORT

Mrs. Ove F. Jensen of Chapel Hill, N.C. has thoughtfully sent EBBA a copy of a report submitted to Washington. While the report contains a wealth of interesting information, lack of space forces us to give our members a selection of the most interesting points in this issue. Mrs. Jensen has banded 471 birds between Jan. 1st and June 16th, 1942, the date of the report, and has banded a total of 550 in a little less than a year.

The most amazing data of the year is the fact that of 4 Wood Thrushes banded, all four returned the following season. These birds were banded in June 1941 and 2 returned in April and 2 in June of this year. 4 Summer Tanagers were banded in '41. One banded as an immature male returned as a brilliant male and a banded female which avoids the trap this year, which points to a return percentage of 50%. Six of these tanagers have been banded this year, 1 adult male, 4 changing males and only 1 female. Females seem to be much more wary of traps. The first young tanager was seen on June 15.

Mrs. H. D. Crockford has a banding station also in Chapel Hill situated a little over a mile from the Jensen banding station. The land in between is mostly covered by woodland. Three Purple Finches banded at each station have appeared at the opposite banding site. Mrs. Jensen banded 276 of this species while Mrs. Crockford banded 81.

Two Myrtle Warblers out of 10 banded returned. Both banded in March '41, one returned Dec. 26, '41 and the other Jan. 7, '42. Out of 16 Chipping Sparrows, 4 returned.

Under the heading of Food for the Birds, EBBA will quote directly from the report:

"It might be of interest to others to know how I have baited my traps to capture particularly the Summer Tanager and the Wood Thrush. Recently Mrs. Edge of the Hawk Mt. Sanctuary was here and she was amazed to see the Wood Thrushes running in and out of the traps. She said that she had never seen them at feeding stations before.

"Early in the season I mixed lard and flour to a rich consistency, often adding peanut butter to give it variety. Now with fats so precious, I take old bacon drippings, mix it with water and heat so that salt and impurities sink to the bottom. Chill, skim fat and mix with flour. Even the birds don't mind their wartime diet.

"Although this seems like a vitamin deficient diet, the Wood Thrushes, Brown Thrashers and Summer Tanagers have carried away pounds of this, apparently to their young -- their beaks opened wide looking for all the world as though they were carrying away a piece of cotton as large as they could manage.

"The species of birds banded by reason of this bait are: Wood Thrush, Summer Tanager, Red Bellied Woodpecker, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Ruby Crowned Kinglet, Myrtle Warbler, Brown Thrasher and Pine Warbler.

"This spring when the Duke University Bird Club met at my sanctuary I told them about this bird diet. Recently Dr. Johnson, head of the Zoology Dept. told me that his family in a little over a month had used over 18 lbs. of flour and that they had never had so many birds."

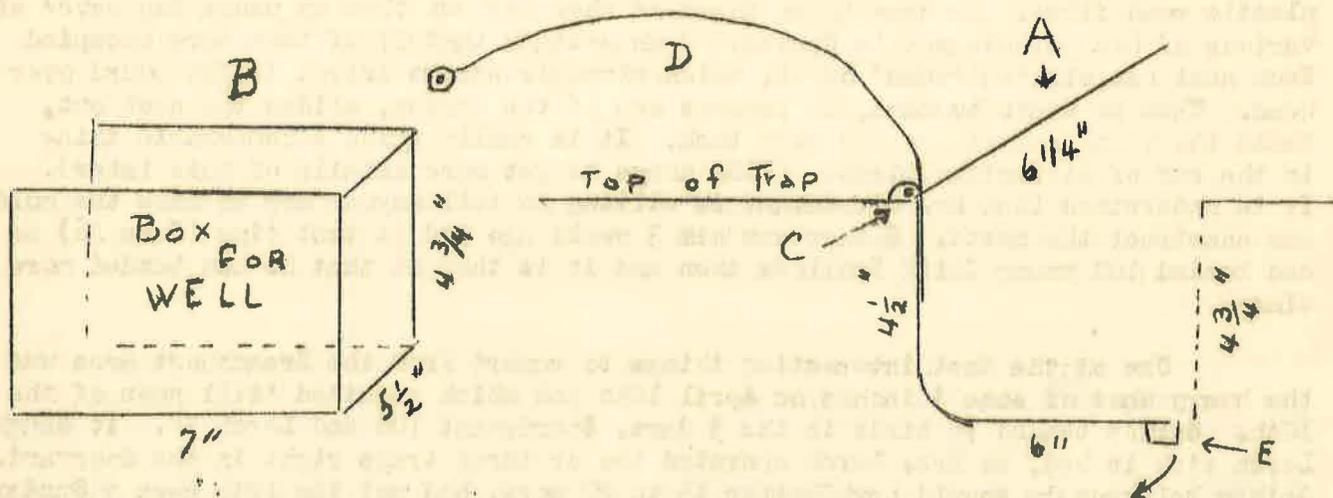
On June 28th Mrs. H. D. Crockford banded 17 new birds, 8 Chipping Sparrows, 4 Titmice, 2 Cardinals, 1 Catbird, 1 Carolina Chickadee and a Summer Tanager. In our next issue EBBA hopes to tell you of Mrs. Crockford's success with Pine Warblers in an electrically operated trap.

SELF-SETTING TRAP - by Henry P. Baily, Overbrook, Philadelphia, Pa.

I built a trap of wire cloth, about 1 ft., 10 in. long by 1 ft. 4 in. wide by 1 ft. high. In the middle of the top I cut a hole (A) about  $6 \times \frac{1}{2}$  inch.

Into this hole I set a box  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7$  inches and  $4\frac{3}{4}$  inches deep made of  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch wire cloth with sides and only one end with no top or bottom (Drawing B).

(C) I then built the top, bottom and end to fit in the box above. Size about  $4\frac{1}{2} \times 6$  and  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches. I wanted the top  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches to overlap and the bottom to fit in the well.



To this well I attached a piece of bent wire (D) as shown and on the end placed small weights, made of iron washers. Enough weight to balance the box and keep it level. This well must hang on a piece of wire  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch wider than the well. I use pieces of zinc with holes in them attached to the top of the trap on each side of the hole cut in the middle of the trap (A) as bearings.

At (E) I fastened a small wire cup 1 x 2 inches made of copper fly screen cloth, filled with fine grain (Millet) to attract the first bird. After one bird gets into the trap, others will follow.

NEWS FOR THE BANDERS

A recent addition to the collection of live hawks and owls maintained by Stanley Grierson of Katonah, N.Y. is a live Audubon's Caracara or Mexican Eagle. This rare bird is a gift from the State Naturalist of Florida. The collection is now on display at the Trailside Museum of Bear Mt. Park, N.Y. Mr. Grierson welcomes visitors and is there every day except Mondays and Fridays.

Dorothy Caldwell of Mt. McGregor, N.Y. has a splendid banding article as the lead story in the June-July issue of "Feathers", the publication of the Schenectady Bird Club. The paper is based on the returns of Purple Finches.

Ben Coffey, Jr., of Memphis, Tenn., writes that an American Egret banded by him has been reported as recovered at Canton, N.J. on Jan. 1, 1942. This recovery seems very strange and follow-up letters bring no response. If any bander knows this part of southern N.J. Mr. Coffey would like to hear from him and learn whether this recovery is probable.

On the next rainy Sunday afternoon, check your banding records and write a short note for Bird Banding from your data.

## BANDING AROUND BRANCHPORT, N.Y.

On the evening of July 12th, Malcolm Lerch, of Penn Yan, and Charles Spiker of Branchport, were out in the Branchport marsh of our first trip of the year for swallows. The lake is high, however, and the majority of the birds were back in the cat-tails and inaccessible. We got 5 Barn Swallows, however and 2 Banks. One of the Barns was banded. It was neither Lerch's nor Spiker's and Lerch hasn't checked the number at the time of writing.

Last year Lerch and Spiker went over to Prattsburg, (the home of bander Carleton Sturdevant) to band Cliff Swallows. We banded a number but the difficulty was to keep the funnels at the entrance to the nest from breaking off. Last winter Sturdevant conceived the idea of making artificial nests out of some sort of plastic wood fibre. He made three dozen of them and put them up under the eaves of various of his buildings this Spring. I understand that 27 of them were occupied. Each nest has slotted "ears" on it, which straddle screws driven in the board overhead. When he wants to band, he loosens one of the screws, slides the nest out, bands the young and slides the nest back. It is really quite a remarkable thing in the way of attracting birds. (EBBA hopes to get more details of this later). It is understood that Mr. Sturdevant is willing to tell anyone how to make the mold and construct the nests. Spiker saw him 3 weeks ago and at that time (June 26) he had banded 108 young Cliff Swallows then and it is thought that he has banded more since.

One of the most interesting things to report from the Branchport area was the heavy snow of some 3 inches on April 10th and which remained 'till noon of the 12th. Spiker banded 75 birds in the 3 days, Sturdevant 106 and Lerch 34. It caught Lerch sick in bed, so Mrs. Lerch operated two or three traps right in the dooryard. Spiker believes he should have gotten 15 to 20 more, had not the 12th been a Sunday and since he is organist in both Branchport churches, playing at one church at 9:00 and another at 11:00, he had to be away from the traps all that morning. Most of the birds caught by all three banders were Song, Vesper Sparrows and Cowbirds with a scattering of Fox, Field and Savannah Sparrows.

## TWO DAY BANDING BLITZ AT BEAVER KILL, N.Y.

Dick Fischer of Flushing, N.Y. usually spends the summer at Beaver Kill, N.Y. but this year he is spending his vacation from studies at Columbia, working in a defense factory on the midnight to morning shift. Every 7 working days, he gets 1 day off. On July 11th his schedule called for him to report back on the 14th, so he made a flying trip to Beaver Kill, arriving there at 2:00 p.m. Within an hour he had seen a Barn Swallow with a band on its leg and traced it down to a nest in a barn. At midnight with an 11 year-old helper, Billy, they "...sneaked thru the black night and silently entered the barn. Net in hand, light in t'other... Tho you couldn't see a thing, I knew just where the nest was and knew from experience that the pair should be roosting on it. I snapped on the light. Zip! Nailed them both with one stroke of the net. The female was unbanded but the male...he was the same bird I captured on that very same nest in '40 and '41. N.B., The female is now banded, too."

Sunday night, Bill and Dick staged our own little blitz. We worked several barns and silos from 9 p.m. to 3 a.m. "Phew! What a night that was. Got 9 returns, as follows: 3 adult Barn Swallows in the same barns in which they were banded last year as adults. A fourth adult, banded as an adult, found dead in the same barn where banded. Banded 7 Swifts, 5 of which were returns. Can't get over it. One bird has come back to same barn since being banded in '39, a return-3. Two others, one an adult and one an immature of this adult, came back to the same barn in which they were banded last year. Another returned to a silo in which it was banded in '40 but was absent in '41, the fifth returned to the same silo from last year. That makes 10 returns in 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  days." During this trip he also banded 4 young sharp-shins and a female Bluebird from a birdhouse he had erected last year.

## A COMPARISON OF TWO BANDING SITES IN NEW JERSEY

Carl A. A. Pedersen of Woodcliff Lake, N.J. has just completed a year's banding at his new location and has sent EBBA an informal report containing comparisons with his former station at Montvale, N.J. As his letter contains so much information of general interest, we give extracts from it herewith.

"At my place in Woodcliff Lake, I soon learned that I was surrounded on three sides by poultry farms and the bait put out by me is in direct opposition to the food spread around at the poultry farms. The birds have formed the habit of finding food at these places, so I suppose it will take a certain amount of time for them to find out that I will not only give them food, but will give them a nice new and shiny bracelet, guaranteed to fit."

"Even at that I managed to band 189 birds this year. I caught a Cardinal and three Cowbirds, both species being new ones for me."

"I have to band in the woods in back of the chicken-runs, which makes my banding grounds about 1000 ft. from the house. Last Spring I noticed a pair of Bluebirds along this route and so put up a bird-house on a post 10 ft. back from the path I had made in the brush. I didn't get any Bluebirds, but did get a pair of wrens who nested in the bird-house. I banded them both, getting the male in a Lurvey nest trap and his mate by holding a gathering cage over the entrance on one of the few occasions when I managed to sneak up before she flew out. After this, every time she heard me come down the path she would pop half-way out of the door and watch me until I passed. I was a little disappointed, I half expected to hear her cry "cuck-oo, cuck-oo!"

"I caught 23 Catbirds and noticed there were no lice on them, quite different from those caught at Montvale. Montvale Catbirds were so full of lice that before I could get them banded, the lice would have crawled up my arm to the elbow. I used to keep a salt shaker full of flowers of sulphur which I dusted onto them, rubbing well into the feathers. When you opened your hand to let them go, it seemed as if a bomb had exploded in your hand, sulphur would fly everywhere."

"The new station has brought me a lot more Song Sparrows than I trapped at Montvale. I have caught only 5 Blue Jays and at the old place I used to catch anywhere up to 60. Montvale seems to be over-run with jays this year as usual."

"I thought this place would be a good place for warblers. Everyone said that there were a lot around, but I caught just 20 of 6 species. At Montvale I caught 26 species and many more birds. Maybe this was an off year."

"Walking to business each morning I travel along a road that divides the lake into two parts, There are 2 Little Green Herons that sit along the shore and fly ahead a little distance as I approach. You can get quite close to them before they fly, 20 ft. or so. I like to watch them fish. They sit at the edge of the water and when the fish comes near enough, out goes their neck and goodbye goes the fish. It is funny when they miss. They act like an outfielder that has muffed a fly. Their heads turn in every direction to see where the fish went."

"Donald Wylie was inducted into the army this Spring. He came down to see me several times and when he knew he had to leave he asked me to take care of his traps until he returned. I use them with mine and afraid that someone might pick one up, I put linen baggage tags on them, reading, "Do not disturb this trap. United States Dept. of the Interior". These soon attracted attention thruout the neighborhood and everyone around was so interested that I have people come to see me make the rounds of the traps."

CRIPPLED CHILDREN

POSTAGE OF THE FACINGS SIDE IS NEW YORK

Albany, New York

New York State Museum

Prof. Dayton Stoner



"I am of interest to the Government and all banders because I wear a band and am now registered at Washington, D.C."

EBBA NBS  
24 Overlook Dr.  
HUNTINGTON, N.Y. 14870



Geo. F. P. I. & B.

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

FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

"BUY DEFENSE BONDS"

