



EBBA NUS

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

D. B. Stone
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REACHING OVER 375 BANDERS EVERY MONTH
--

September, 1942

"LET US BAND TOGETHER"

Vol. 5, No. 9

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THE CALL TO SERVICE

We pay tribute to those offering their services and themselves in this war-- a battle for the prolongation of personal liberty and a government for the people by the people. Under Lincoln, Americans decided forever, the question of slavery, a condition which will surely come if this war is lost by us. As we always honor the American way of life, we must uphold these principles and work united until our freedom is no longer endangered.

Many of our members have joined the Colors. More will follow. May they soon return to "their home territory" and tell us of their experiences. May their activities offer some time for ornithological observations.

To those of us who are unable to contribute actively in combat, fall increased responsibilities in this war. Some of this activity should result in expanding the growth of the Eastern Bird Banding Association. Although we are each called upon for many added duties, we must not let our particular line of science lag.

At the moment, the greatest needs of EBBA include a larger membership among those banders who are not affiliated with any of the banding associations; an increased publicity, through talks, print and demonstrations, to instruct others why birds are so recorded, and what should be done with birds found with a band; and a general mutual helpfulness among all ornithologists to make their work more interesting and productive. The results of valuable investigations should not lie dormant, but be brought to light in print so that others may profit by them.

Finally I would commend affiliation with and membership in the American Ornithologist's Union and attendance at their coming annual meeting in the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, October 12 - 17, 1942.

Harold B. Wood, Vice President,
President, Pro Tem

BANDERS - PLEASE NOTE

The greater part of the Fish & Wildlife Service moved to new quarters in Chicago on August 15th. However the Section on Distribution and Migration of Birds is located at the government laboratories at the Patuxent Research Refuge, Bowie, Md., 20 miles northeast of Washington. All mail pertaining to banding should continue to be addressed to Washington, D. C. in the usual manner.

BUY U. S. WAR STAMPS

BUY U. S. WAR BONDS

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE A.O.U IN PHILADELPHIA

All banders, whether they are members of the A.O.U. or not are cordially invited to attend their annual meeting to be held in the Academy of Natural Sciences, in Philadelphia, on October 12 - 17. Monday (12th) is given over to business meeting and elections, open only to Members and Fellows. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday (13th, 14th, 15th) are devoted to regular program sessions with, as far as is known at this early date, an Open House arranged at the Museum for Tuesday evening and the banquet, Wednesday evening with Thursday evening open.

There are many uncertainties about field trips, but it is probably safe to mention that aid will be given in arranging informal trips to Cape May, Hawk Mountain or other localities of especial interest on Oct. 16th and 17th.

It is suggested by our acting president, Dr. Wood, that EBBA could hold a meeting in the Academy at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 15th, followed by a supper and an evening of moving pictures or banding kodachromes. Before making any definite plans, we would like to know how many members would attend. What banders could present papers, films or slides. If you can attend such a gathering please send a postal to our Secretary, Mr. Horace Groskin, at once. What we would particularly like to see is a large attendance!

WHERE AND OH WHERE DO MY BANDED BIRDS GO ? ?

It has always been and always will be of great interest to banders to learn where banded birds go. When it is remembered that each year a great number of new birds are hatched and that year in and year out the avian population remains much the same, it must follow that each year a great number of birds must die. Many of these birds must wear bands, even though we have banded only a small part of the total population. Many of these birds undoubtedly die an accidental death. What happens to them? A bird dying a natural death or where death follows slowly, will hide, a protective instinct, among the leaves or in a tangle of undergrowth, so that it is hard to find the body. However, many birds are killed instantly and have no chance to hide. These accidental deaths are usually in some way connected with man or man's works. Naturally, when thinking of accidents, one turns their thoughts immediately to the automobile. It is the belief of Ebba, that in some populated areas, automobiles cause the deaths of more birds than all other causes combined.

With the thought in mind of checking the number of birds killed by cars, your editor, while walking to work, during May, June and July, kept an account of the birds killed on one mile of concrete highway. A total of 24 birds were found in the three months with the highest number being found in July. The same mile was patrolled on an average of 3 times a day, 5 days a week and once on the 6th day. Birds found so killed were as follows: Robin 10, Catbird 5, English Sparrow 3, Purple Grackle 2, Song Sparrow 2, Wood Thrush 1, and Starling 1. In one instance it is known that the parents of a brood were both killed, which caused the death of 4 young Robins in the nest. Another brood, dead under the nest in a roadside tree, was thought to have suffered the same fate. Of all the birds inspected only one wore a band. A Catbird banded as an immature in the previous year and which had not appeared in the traps since it was banded. Ebba again asks all banders to spare a glance to that silent bundle of feathers on the highway - it may have been a banded bird. It is thought that the end of the road for many of your banded birds is the road you too are traveling.

GOIN' NORTH

A Slate colored Junco, banded by Beecher S. Bowdish on Nov. 21, 1941 was trapped and released at Dublin, N. H. by A. R. Tobey on March 30, 1942.

A TALE OF TWO TAIL-FEATHERS

This is rather a "fresh" heading for a discovery of note. "Ye Ed" views the incident with a mixture of envy and admiration. This is because in 1941, he visited the place with Roy Wilcox and while the adults were present the young could not be found...but let Roy Wilcox of Speonk, L.I., N.Y. tell the story.

"I have finally found what I have been looking for during the past three breeding seasons, a definite breeding record of the Black-backed Gull, the first for New York State. Two years ago when I first saw the pair of adults on Cartwright Isle (eastern end of Long Island) I felt rather certain that they must be nesting there from their actions. I felt the same way in '41 although we failed to find any young that seemed different from the young Herring Gulls.

"On July 10th, Dave (his son) and I and a minister from Riverhead, made the trip to Cartwright and Gardiner's Isles to band Ospreys. I took a few gull bands along, but expected to concentrate on the young Fish Hawks. As soon as we landed on Cartwright, we noticed the pair of Black-backed Gulls again in the same locality as in '40 and '41. After banding all the young Ospreys (31 out of 13 nests) I decided to band a few gulls. The thirty-first gull that I found, (in the locality where the adult Black-backs were seen) proved to be so different from the other young gulls that I felt pretty certain it must be a Black-backed Gull. It was much lighter colored than other young and the head, bill and body much larger than other gulls of the same age. It was nearly full grown and would probably be flying in about a week.

"I left both cameras in my car for fear that the Coast Guard might confiscate them. I did not feel like collecting the bird although I knew how important the skin might be if I had no other means of identification. I held the bird while I closely compared it with a number of young Herring Gulls and decided that the tail feathers ought to identify the bird. I pulled out one outer and the central tail feather and released the young after banding it. The feathers were sent to Ludlow Griscom at the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard and he wrote back: 'They are positively and definitely the tail-feathers of the Black-backed Gull and should consequently be carefully preserved as proof of a definite breeding record'.

"For further proof I sent them to Robert Cushman Murphy of the American Museum of Natural History, who wrote, 'There is no shadow of doubt that your fledgling was a young Black-backed Gull. I have compared it with specimens of similar age and I should say that these tail feathers are as diagnostic as a whole skin. I am glad that you did not collect the specimen because it may have been the only survivor of the first brood hatched on Cartwright.'

"I am glad that the bird was identified by the two tail feathers and that the first known young Black-backed Gull to be hatched and reared in New York State now wears band No. 41-673757."

Leroy Wilcox, Speonk, L.I., N.Y.

WANTED

Any member who has any old issue of EBBA NUS that they no longer wish to keep will be doing a great favor to our association by returning them. During the last several months five museums have requested a complete file, while many individuals desire back numbers of the older volumes to complete a set. We regret that our supplies are completely exhausted. It would be a feather in our association's cap to have complete volumes of EBBA NUS at some of the museums and colleges but we can no longer supply them. Any bander who has duplicates would be helping the association by returning them. Issue No. 2 of Vol. 3 is in great demand.

Mrs. G. A. Dumont, of Pequannock, N.J. gives us an idea of how she overcomes the rubber-band shortage and what she uses as springs on her traps. "Being a woman and not so mechanically inclined", she writes, "I have hit on another way which serves quite as well for my top-opening traps. I simply fasten a weight of some kind, an old useless bolt, heavy nut or even a square stone to the top of the door and set the door at a slight angle. Naturally the pressure acts in the same manner as a spring or rubber band. Furthermore it leaves the opening clear and prevents the trapped bird from opening the door and escaping."

Regarding the current scarcity of certain birds, Mrs. Dumont writes: "I haven't seen or heard a Woodcock; there are no Meadowlarks although they have nested in the field across from the banding station for the past 20 years; Crested or Least Flycatchers, Maryland Yellow-throats, Yellow Warblers, (in fact all warblers during the Spring migration were very scarce) are entirely absent here. We generally have a Yellow Warbler or two, and Maryland Yellow-throats, Chestnut-sided and Blue-wing Warblers nesting nearby, but aside from one each of the first two species, I haven't seen any of the warbler family. Baltimore Orioles have also been missing. However, we have been fortunate in having a Mourning Dove raise two broods on the Station grounds and also a Black-billed Cuckoo reared one young here. An Orchard Oriole raised a family in our old apple tree and we had the more usual nests."

Mrs. Dumont also writes that she banded a goodly number of Towhees this season. We expect more data on this. She states the proportion of males as against females was great.

BLUEBIRDS IN GEORGIA

Raymond J. Fleetwood of Round Oak, Ga. certainly has banded Bluebirds this summer. He writes that he banded 220 adults and fledglings in about 50 nest boxes. Most of the boxes had 2 broods, but some broods escaped his banding activities. His most unusual record is the banding of an entire family of 7 Brown Headed Nuthatches that used one of the boxes. Mr. Fleetwood plans to band a large number of Swifts this month and we wish him "Happy Bandin".

THE BEST TIME TO TRAP CERTAIN SPECIES

Prof. O. A. Stevens of Fargo, N.D., and secretary of the Inland Association writes that he considers the best time to trap immature Robins is in the forenoons. Probably many banders have found certain times of day are better times for catching certain species than at other times. Just as the tide effects some sorts of coastal fishing, it is thought that the time of day may effect trapping. EBBA believes that late afternoons when shrubbery casts long shadows in the summer time, is the best time to catch Wood Thrush. In the winter, this same time has been found best for White Throated Sparrows which are late feeders. Grackles, after their young have left their nest, seem to be most easily caught very early in the morning, as they disperse from the roost, making it necessary to prepare the traps for them the night before. Some birds can be caught at all times, but it is thought that some banders will have noted when the trapping of a certain species is best. For the aid of all banders, won't you send in your comments to this small beginning of such a list.

NEWS OF THE BANDERS

Uncle Sam has called upon the services of another of our members. Keahon Garland of Demarest, N.J. was called to camp on August 17th. He has closed his station and stored his traps for the duration, filed all his reports until the world is again safe to live in.

PINE WARBLER BANDING AT CHAPEL HILL, N.C.

Pine Warblers seem to favor the banding station of Mrs. H. D. Crockford at Chapel Hill, N.C. Of a total of 321 birds banded between Jan. 10th and June 16th, 44 of these have been of this species. "These birds, except for two", Mrs. Crockford writes, "were all caught in a trap about 15 x 15 x 10 with a vertically sliding door, controlled by a dry cell outfit with a push button in the house. The trap rests on a tripod about 4 ft. high. It is baited with Wild Bird Seed prepared by Wm. G. Scarlett & Co., Baltimore, Md., and raw pie dough in which peanut butter has been mixed."

"I noticed the first Pine Warbler here Aug. 31st, 1941. From then on they were constant visitors at my feeding station. On Jan. 10, the first day I started banding, I banded 12 of the 44 which I have banded. Twenty-three have repeated one or more times, some as many as five times. Birds banded the first day repeated as late as March 22. However, in spite of the fact that I saw my last one for this season on the first of May, Pine Warblers are supposed to be permanent residents."

Mrs. Ove F. Jensen, who also operates a banding station in Chapel Hill, a little over a mile from the station of Mrs. Crockford, has only caught 10 Pine Warblers, but has caught over 100 Myrtle Warblers. On the other hand Mrs. Crockford has only banded a few Myrtles.

With such a difference in the catches of Warblers at two stations so close together, it is of interest to describe their locations. Mrs. Crockford's station is on level land on an old farm site with an orchard and woods nearby, fairly open territory. Mrs. Jensen's station is on a knoll, 120 ft. high and her station is the hillside, covered with pine, oak, hickory, huckleberries, wild azaleas, a wild and natural spot dropping down to a brook.

Purple Finches banded at one station appear at the other station but, Mrs. Crockford writes that it seems to take them considerably more time to make the trip from Mrs. Jensen's to her than it does for them to go from her station to Mrs. Jensen's. Average time from Mrs. Jensen's 14 days, from Mrs. Crockford's station, 6 days; two made it in 1 day and a third took 17 days.

NEWS FOR THE BANDERS

Among the recent newspaper articles coming to Ebba's attention was one in the "Newark Call" featuring Beecher S. Bowdish of Demarest, N.J. and another in the "New York Times" about Stanley Grierson of Katonah, N.Y. and the Vultures at Bear Mt. Park.

Howard Mahnken of Brooklyn, N.Y. is either an officer in the Coast Guard or in the army now. We haven't heard which, but he was expecting to go on Aug. 19. Ben B. Coffey of Memphis, Tenn., another bander and editor of "The Migrant", official quarterly of the Tennessee Ornithological Society was also called to the colors in August.

Just before Keahon Garland of Demarest, N.J. left for the army he sent Ebba a note stating that a White Throated Sparrow banded by him Oct. 26, 1941 was trapped and released 18 days later by L. M. Llewellyn at Patuxent Research Refuge, Bowie, Maryland. This is almost in the miracle class.

Dick Fischer of Flushing, N.Y. made another whirlwind weekend trip to Beaver Kill, N.Y. and banded 86 new birds and got another return. His latest score is as follows: 59 young Cliff Swallows, 8 yg. and 4 adult Bluebirds, 4 yg. and 3 adult Swifts, 4 adult House Wrens at nest boxes, plus some new Barn Swallows, despite one rainy day.

Albany, New York
New York State Museum
Prof. Dayton C. Miller



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

Ebba Nils
24 Overlook Dr.
HUNTINGTON, I. I. - N.Y.



Sec. 562 P. L. & R.

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

FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

"BUY DEFENSE BONDS"