

Ebba Nus



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

REACHING
OVER
375
BANDERS
EVERY MONTH

November, 1943

"LET US BAND TOGETHER"

Vol. 6, No. 11

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A NEW WAY TO TRAP ADULT GULLS

A. L. Baily, III of Westtown, Pa. spent this past summer at Vinalhaven, Me., on Penobscot Bay. As he worked most of the time he had little time for banding but was able to band about 60 young Herring Gulls on a ledge nearby.

Vinalhaven is a fishing town and has a tremendous number of gulls around the wharves and fish houses. All summer Mr. Baily wondered how they could be caught for banding as they seemed very bold when fish were brought in. With four days of his stay remaining he found his solution when he saw a worker at a fish-packing plant dump out a 50 gallon barrel. Imagine his surprise when he saw 5 adult Herring Gulls tumble out of the barrel and fly away.

Upon investigation, Mr. Baily found that the worker had caught them for his own amusement in a very simple way. The method consisted of the 50 gallon barrel placed at the end of the fish-wharf with a stick of wood about 3" wide across the top. To this stick a piece of light rope was fastened, the other end of it being taken behind a door of the fish-packing plant. Dead herring were then piled on the stick and the situation left to the gulls. Soon the gulls spotted the dead herring and circle nearer until one lights on the stick and begins to "gobble" the fish. The minute it folds its wings a quick hard jerk is given on the rope and fish and gull drops into the barrel, out of which it is impossible for the gull to get. Sometimes two are caught at once, the worker claimed. Mr. Baily tried the method and caught 3 adult gulls in 20 minutes, before he had to leave.

Mr. Baily writes that he doesn't know how this method would work with the gulls not used to fish wharves or human activities. Gulls are apt to be shy when not hungry, but when there are a lot of fish entrails and barrels on a fish wharf, Gulls are readily caught in this manner. He hopes that other banders will take full advantage of this trapping hint and more adult gulls will be banded. "Yo Ed" wonders whether this method wouldn't work around garbage dumps or other places where Gulls "gang up" especially in the winter months.

BANDS FOR MOURNING DOVES

Mrs. Marie Dumont of Pequannock, N. J. writes that size No. 3 bands for Mourning Doves are too small. She says that she always cuts No. 4 down a trifle and uses them. She banded 18 this summer, all caught after they had left the nest.

Mrs. Caroline Reed von Heesyk of Germantown, Phila., Pa. writes: "I have found that #3 bands are too small for Mourning Doves. I now use #4. The #3 bands ate into the flesh of the leg and I had to remove 2 bands, (1 banded in 1940 and 1 in 1942) and reband them this year. Birds were healthy but the bones of the leg could be seen when the bands were removed."

BANDING AT BOWIE, MD. or HOW DO THEY DO IT?

Chandler S. Robbins of the Patuxent Research Refuge, Bowie, Md. gave EBBA a little post-card shower and we quote from the collection of cards:

"Thanks to EBBA MUS for the tip about rag wicks for water traps! For some time we had been using a glass and rubber syphon, but accidents will happen and glass breaks all too easily. Furthermore, metal laboratory clamps are hard to get these days. All in all, the rag wicks have proved satisfactory. As for the drip, we find that the more water we carry, the more birds we catch; a one-per-second or a two-per-second drip has not proved as successful as a very fine trickle. This "driple" usually slows up to a fast drip within a short time, and produces a more audible sound, as well as keeping the water agitated."

"We have had excellent luck with both Fabian and Cohasset entrances. Fabians have taken Cape Mays, Bay-breasted, Black-throated Blues, Prairie, Palm, Conn. and many other warblers and work even with water in the tunnel, (tho we have been trying in vain to catch Mergansers in them.) Birds are easily removed from the Cohasset by lying flat on the ground and thrusting the arm and shoulder through a large hole in the side of the trap; a raincoat reduces laundry damage to a minimum."

"We are now running 30 traps full time, (most of them are Fr. Fabian's,) and have banded 1,150 birds of 68 species so far this fiscal year. Will soon reset the warbler traps for Sparrows and try to give you some friendly competition on White-throats."

(3 days later) "Our White-throat score from Sept. 22 to Oct. 8, is now 47. 10 of these were taken in water traps; the remainder on whole wheat which is the only seed which happens to be available."

In regard to friendly competition with White-throats this fall, many banders have written in to say that they are banding more than ever this year. "Dick" Fisher of Flushing reported "nailing" 56 new ones by Oct 11th, but the postal that takes "Ye Ed's" breath away comes from Blue Island, Illinois. It reads:

"I banded 600 White-throats from Oct. 2 to 15th. Would have had 1,000 if it did not rain two days. I used 65 traps or 90 cells. 750 birds banded in this period counting all species. I catch White-throats by making brush piles out of pulled up bushes. I have 26 traps or 34 cells in a built-up brush pile that is 15 ft. wide and 30 ft. long. Some times when I come near the pile as many as 100 or 150 of all kinds of sparrows fly out. I ship all banded birds 2 miles south of station in order to band a lot of new ones, but even then some come back in a day or two." --- Karl E. Bartel, Blue Island, Ill.

Yes, we're speechless too.

HISTORY OF BIRD BANDING

Who knows any dates, with other information of bird banding being done any where, before 1900: Please send all information, including dates, name of person placing marker on bird, species, place of banding, and especially the reference or authority from whom the information is obtained. Send this to Dr. Harold B. Wood, (address on front page)

Earliest dates so far learned are 1669, 1710, 1773, 1803, 1889. After all data are received a paper on the subject will be prepared, but without any claim that it is complete.

ADDITIONAL WHITE-THROATED SPARROW DATA

Records of White-throat banding still continue to arrive. The response to our request for this data has exceeded anything in our experience and "Ye Ed" wishes to thank every member that furnished us with material. It was our plan to use a page in this issue for little items we couldn't squeeze into the October issue and so share the many interesting comments sent us. Well, we are going to take four pages and then we will be only able to skim over the most interesting points. Richard B. Fisher of Flushing, N. Y. has consented to take all this material and give it a thorough study. Several months hence it is hoped that the data will form the basis for a cooperative paper to be published in a formal quarterly and hope that "Bird Banding" will accept it.

While data appearing in the October issue points to a flight between Nova Scotia - Newfoundland and North and South Carolina, passing through most of the states in our region in October and again in April and May, lack of space prevented any comment on the speed of flight. It is thought that many factors, such as weather, wind, food supply, the individuality of the bird, itself, etc., would influence any conclusions. From the data so far studied it is possible to supply suggestions.

119373 - Banded Oct. 15, '23 by R. J. Middleton at Norristown, Pa. recovered by H. D. McCann, Paoli, Pa. on Oct. 26, '23 - 12 miles southwest in 11 days.

40-187590 - Banded by K. Garland, Oct. 26, '41 at Demarest, N. J. trapped and released Nov. 11, '41 at Bowie, Md. - About 200 miles south in 18 days.

38-119166 - Banded Oct. 5, '37 at 6:30 P. M. at Waukegan, Ill. by Wm. I. Lyon, traveled 60 miles direct south and was caught by Karl E. Bartel of Blue Island, Ill. in his trap at 7:30 A. M. on Oct. 6, '37.

The above three records serve as a sample of the puzzle such a question presents. Other illustrations can be found, but a solution is still far away.

Mention of the banding station at Waukegan, Ill. in the above record brings up a very encouraging letter from F. C. Lincoln of Washington, D. C., which expresses interest in the White-throated Sparrow program of the E.B.B.A. Lincoln writes in part:

"I am satisfied that there are ample data to demonstrate the homing ability of White-throated Sparrows to their winter quarters. There may be some that will show the same thing for the breeding season. I suspect, however, that regularity of passage over the same route of migration will not be so readily shown. I have in mind the statements made several years ago to me by William I. Lyon, who operated at Waukegan, Ill., one of our largest small bird stations. He was located right on the bluffs bordering the western shore of Lake Michigan, so that it would seem all small birds passing north and south along the lake shore stood an excellent chance of being intercepted by his traps. He banded White-throats by the hundreds. Actually his captures of this species ran into many thousands, and while he had a few returns (recoveries) from points farther south he told me that never in a subsequent season did he retrap one of his own birds."

These comments bring up the line of flight phase again. Most banders appear to believe the general pathway is the same year after year, but that the stop-over places are different. White-throats appear in quantities at some stations only in the spring of the year and at others they are most numerous in the fall. Is it possible that there are separate flyways north and south. Could age affect the length of flight between stop-overs, with a bird in its prime making longer flights between stops? Inasmuch as the majority of migrants banded in the fall are immature, in their second year, they would be better equipped to discard a number of way-stations on their way south.

ADDITIONAL WHITE-THROATED SPARROW DATA

Additional records on the banding of White-throats received too late to be included in the October issue are given below. We now have word from banders who have banded a grand total of over 22,000 of this species with return records amounting to 230 or about one return to every thousand birds.

| Bander | Place | Seasons | Number Banded | Individuals Returning |
|--|------------------------|---------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Howard H. Krug | Chesley, Ontario | 10 | 51 - J | 0 |
| Mrs. Effie Anthony | Bar Harbor, Maine | | 225 | 0 |
| S. D. Robbins | Belmont, Mass. | 7 | 118 - K | 0 |
| Verdi Burtch | Branchport, N. Y. | 19 | 787 | 0 |
| Selah Lester | E. Hampton, L.I., N.Y. | 3 | 6 | 0 |
| LeRoy Wilcox | Speonk, L.I., N.Y. | 16 | 447 | 7 - L |
| Geoffrey Gill | Huntington, L.I., N.Y. | 17 | 300 | 15 - M |
| R. B. Fischer | Flushing, L.I., N.Y. | 4 | 590 | 3 |
| R & G Ralston | L.I. City, L.I., N.Y. | 6 | 333 | 2 |
| Howard Mahnken | Brooklyn, L.I., N.Y. | - | 65 | 0 |
| Mrs. M. Dumont | Pequannock, N. J. | 1 | 124 - N | 1 |
| Patrick K. Garland | Demarest, N. J. | 9 | 953 | 4 - Q |
| R. E. Wetzel | Boiling Springs, Pa. | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| Several Banders | Bowie, Md. | 5 | 103 - R | 0 |
| Lt. L. D. Cool, Jr. | Church Falls, Va. | 3 | 52 | 0 |
| Rev. J. W. Baechle | Collegeville, Ind. | 2 | 157 - P | 0 |
| Brought forward from the October issue | | | <u>17,314</u> | <u>197</u> |
| | | | 22,128 | 230 |

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- J - Only 6 banded in the Spring and 45 in Fall migrations in 10 years.
 - K - During same period caught 510 Juncos and 1750 Purple Finches.
 - L - All wintering birds that returned. Two other sight-returns observed.
 - M - 12 of these returns were wintering birds proven by repeat records.
 - N - One years banding not included in previous tabulation.
 - P - 445 more were banded this spring and another 156 in the first 20 days of October.
 - Q - 4 others reported as returns but not included as they may have wintered nearby.
 - R - 453 banded in first 28 days of October and 2 returns of wintering birds of last year.
-

RECOVERIES

| Bander | Place | Date | Recovered at | Date |
|-----------------|-------------------|----------|--------------------------|----------|
| Verdi Burtch | Branchport, N.Y. | 4/30/40 | Trimmonsville, S.C. | 12/25/4 |
| R & G Ralston | L. I. City, N. Y. | 2/6/36 | Belle Cote, N. Scotia | Fall '37 |
| P. K. Garland | Demarest, N. J. | 2/3/34 | Closter, N. J. (2 miles) | 3/15/34 |
| L. D. Cool, Jr. | Church Falls, Va. | 10/26/41 | Kinston, N. C. | 3/6/42 |
| " " " " | " " " " | 10/31/41 | Grifton, N. C. | 4/21/42 |

CORRECTION

In the tabulation of recoveries in the October issue, the last one on the list is in error. This bird banded by Dr. Brenckle at Northville, S. D. was banded on 10/6/30 and found injured (later died) 4/-/31 at Portage la Prairie, Manitoba. It was listed as being found dead in 1938 which would make it a very old bird. The age record is about 7 years at present.

INTER-STATE WHITE-THROATED SPARROW RECOVERIES

(Excluding those published in EBBA NUS; Vol. 6, No. 10)
 Compiled by Chandler S. Robbins, courtesy of Frederick C. Lincoln

| <u>Bander</u> | <u>Place Banded</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Recovered</u> | <u>Date</u> |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------|
| J. P. Wetherill, Jr. | Winter Harbor, Maine | 9/6/35 | Louis, S. C. | 2/ /36 |
| Effie A. Anthony | Bar Harbor, Maine | 4/25/33 | Millburn, N.J. | c.5/2/34 |
| Alice C. Wolfe | So. Waterford, Maine | 8/18/26 | Pitt Co., N.C. | c.3/5/27 |
| W. Rodman Peabody | Northeast Harbor, Me. | 8/25/36 | Black Creek, N.C. | 12/13/36 |
| B. W. McPheters | Bar Harbor, Maine | 8/15/32 | Reynolds, Ga. | 12/15/32 |
| Fr. E. Goeliner | Manchester, N. H. | 10/21/32 | South Boston, Va. | 3/20/34 |
| " | " | 10/10/37 | Seminary, Miss. | 4/30/38 |
| " | " | 11/9/32 | Sarah, Va. | 12/26/32 |
| R. R. Marsden | Hanover, N. H. | 4/30/29 | Tabor, N. C. | 12/24/29 |
| H. C. Fortner | Burlington, Vt. | 5/3/29 | Newton Grove, N.C. | 11/12/29 |
| Leslie Crane | Rutland, Vermont | 5/2/32 | Sayabec, Quebec | c.8/13/32 |
| Arthur Morley | Swampscott, Mass. | 10/16/32 | Nichols, S. C. | 11/19/32 |
| " | " | 10/20/32 | Bridgeton, N.J. | 10/29/32T |
| " | " | 10/16/31 | Atlantic City, N.J. | 12/9/31 |
| " | " | 10/18/31 | Cambridge, Md. | 2/28/34 |
| Robert Allison | Athol, Mass. | 10/5/35 | Nichols, S. C. | 1/31/36 |
| " | " | 10/20/32 | Rae ford, N. C. | c.3/28/33 |
| " | " | 10/18/32 | Gastonia, N. C. | 11/22/32T |
| E. M. Davis | Shirley, Mass. | 10/21/38 | Capron, Va. | c.1/29/40 |
| " | " | 10/22/38 | Wilmington, N.C. | 1/2/39 |
| " | " | 10/16/38 | Tennille, Ga. | 12/27/38 |
| William P. Wharton | Groton, Mass. | 10/8/33 | Little BartibogueNB | c.9/16/31 |
| " | " | 10/11/28 | Cordele, Georgia | 11/29/28 |
| O. L. Austin | N. Eastham, Mass. | 10/15/36 | Elmhurst, L.I., N.Y. | 12/16/36 |
| R. Rodman Peabody | Milton, Mass. | 10/13/30 | N. Charleston, S.C. | 1/27/31 |
| S. M. Pell | Lenox, Mass. | 10/9/33 | Pine Tops, N. C. | 12/30/38 |
| M. L. Shields | Andover, Mass. | 10/7/35 | Pink Hill, N. C. | 12/9/35 |
| Hildegarde Thorp | Amherst, Mass. | 10/11/31 | Lowell, N. C. | c.4/26/32 |
| Mrs. F. D. Hubbard | New Haven, Conn. | 11/11/32 | Enfield, N. C. | 12/29/32 |
| Mrs. M. V. Beals | Elmhurst, L.I., N.Y. | 10/12/38 | Whiteville, N.C. | 1/16/39 |
| " | " | 10/7/38 | Berlin, Md. | 2/6/39 |
| " | " | 11/11/36 | Maplewood, N.J. | c.11/12/39 |
| " | " | 9/29/38 | Graniteville, S.C. | 11/4/38 |
| A. K. Smiley, Jr. | Mohonk Lake, N.Y. | 10/3/30 | Rockingham, N.C. | 4/7/31 |
| " | " | 10/4/31 | Mocksville, N.C. | 11/11/31 |
| " | " | 9/26/32 | Fair Bluff, N.C. | 12/3/32 |
| C. H. Sanderson | Sherrill, N. Y. | 10/8/32 | McGee, Ark. | 12/29/32 |
| H. S. Southerland | Hall, N. Y. | 5/5/24 | Boxley, Ga. | 1/15/30 |
| William Vogt | Wantagh, N. Y. | 10/9/32 | Haw River, N.C. | 4/2/34 |

C. - date is approximate

T - trapped at banding station

| <u>Bander</u> | <u>Place Banded</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Recovered</u> | <u>Date</u> |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|
| B. S. Bowdish | Demarest, N. J. | 10/3/35 | Monck's Corner, S. C. | c. 1/1/38 |
| " | " | 10/11/38 | Williamston, N. C. | 2/ /39 |
| " | " | 10/5/33 | Clarendon, N. C. | 3/2/34 |
| " | " | 4/27/30 | Maxton, N. C. | 2/1/32 |
| Dumont Banding Sta. | Pequanock, N. J. | 9/23/38 | Fayetteville, N. C. | 12/27/38 |
| " | " | 10/16/37 | Lenoir, N. C. | 10/13/38 |
| B. K. Matlack | Bridgeton, N. J. | 10/29/33 | Littleton, N. C. | 2/9/36 |
| Mrs. Arthur N. Pack | Princeton, N. J. | 9/30/32 | Walstonburg, N. C. | 12/22/32 |
| Henry P. Bailly | Overbrook, Pa. | 10/12/33 | White Stone, Va. | c. 3/1/34 |
| " | " | 10/15/39 | Russellville, Ala. | 3/8/40 |
| R. J. Middleton | Norristown, Pa. | 10/12/38 | Waderboro, N. C. | 2/1/40 |
| William Pepper, Jr. | Wyncote, Pa. | 11/5/32 | Essex, N. C. | 1/2/33 |
| H. D. McCann | Paoli, Pa. | 10/30/32 | Wetumpka, Ala. | 3/13/33 |
| J. A. Gillespie | Glenolden, Pa. | 10/30/32 | Vaucluse, S. C. | 11/9/34 |
| Alfred O. Ramsay | McDonough, Maryland | 11/3/33 | Effingham, S. C. | 11/15/34 |
| Fr. Edward Stoehr | Washington, D. C. | 11/9/38 | Galivants Ferry, S. C. | 2/2/39 |
| M. T. Rogers | Milledgeville, Ga. | 3/5/39 | Meadows of Dan, Va. | 5/9/39 |
| Clarence Bretsch | Gary, Indiana | 10/20/32 | Silver Spring, Md. | 4/30/34 F |
| Clarence Bretsch | Gary, Indiana | 4/30/38 | Harlem, Georgia | 2/10/32 |
| Henry E. Wagner | Detroit, Michigan | 5/16/30 | Tabor, N. C. | 3/12/32 |

Recoveries from mid-western states (including those listed above as well as the ones published in EBBA NUS, Vol. 6, No. 10) are as follows:

| | |
|--------------|---|
| ONTARIO | to Ala. 1. |
| MANITOBA | to Minn. 2; La. 2; Ark. 1; Texas 1. |
| NORTH DAKOTA | to Minn. 2; La. 2; Ark. 1; Texas 2; Okla. 1; Man. 1; Sask. 1. |
| SOUTH DAKOTA | to La. 1; Texas 2; Okla. 1; Man. 1 N. Dak. 1. |
| MINNESOTA | to Sask. 1. |
| WISCONSIN | to Ala. 2; La. 1; Ark. 3; Texas 1; Ill. 2; Man. 1 Ont. 1. |
| MICHIGAN | to Ala. 2; La. 1; Ark. 1; Texas 1; Miss. 2; Ohio 1; Tenn. 2; Wis 1; NC 1. |
| OHIO | to Ala. 2; Miss. 1; Tenn. 1; P. Q. 1. |
| INDIANA | to Minn. 1; Mo. 1; Ga. 1; Md. 1. |
| IOWA | to La. 1; Tenn. 1. |
| ILLINOIS | to Minn. 3; La. 17; Ark. 2; Texas 1; Miss. 9; Mo. 1; Tenn. 7; Mich. 2; |
| | Ala. 2; Wis. 3; S. C. 1. |
| ARKANSAS | to Mich. 1. |

This information, taken from return cards at the bird banding office of the Fish and Wildlife Service, is believed to be practically complete through fiscal year 1940.

NEWS FOR THE BIRD BANDERS

The New York Zoological Society has recently produced a new film entitled, "Birds on the Wing", a Columbia Picture, which should improve the public's interest in birds. It is a 9 minute filler and you might ask your local movie manager to book it in your town when he can.

Howard Mahnken, one of our Brooklyn, N. Y. members is now teaching Science in the High School at Lambertville, N. J. He plans to band weekends at his home station and during the week at Lambertville, N. J. where he is enlisting the aid of some of his students. His prospects look very bright for some very interesting captures with a Boy Scout troop helping him and a game preserve where they trap hawks near by.

Banding activities in London, Ontario, district received another setback this summer when Prof. Hitchcock of the University of Western Ontario left to take a position with Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vt. While Dr. Hitchcock specialized more in bats, he also banded quite a number of birds, particularly Chimney Swifts. William Morris, another active bander at London, joined the R.C.A.F. last spring which will cut off his banding for the duration. However, Howard H. Krug at Chesley Ontario is still busy banding all birds he can get his hands on and releasing them southward in the hopes we can trap some of his birds.

Richard B. Fischer of Flushing, L. I., N. Y. wrote a fine piece of banding publicity and had it published in the Roscoe-Rockland Times (N.Y.) in the later part of August. Mr. Fischer has banded over 1,100 birds up in that locality.

So, Blue Jays are avian tramps and don't migrate! Mr. W. M. Davidson of Takoma Park, Md. sends word of 3 recent recoveries reported to him. They are as follows: all banded at Beltsville, Md.

Banded Jan. 17, '42; found dead at East Orange, N. J. Apr. 16, '43

Banded Nov. 30, '42; found dead at Roslyn, Penn. on May 9th, '43

Banded Oct. 19, '40; found crippled at Rockville Centre, L. I., N. Y. on May 13, '43

This last recovery is a distance of more than 200 miles and could be hardly considered a day's outing, even for a Jay. It is also noticeable that all recoveries are in the spring of the year and all definitely north of the place of banding. "Ye Ed" can also add a recovery for this species although it is only distant by about 30 miles east. This bird Banded at Huntington, L. I., N. Y. as an immature Aug. 15, '41 was found dead at Selden, L. I., N. Y. on April 9, '43. Maybe this one was just a tramp?

Will O. Astle while on a vacation St. John, Canada this summer had a good banding season. He banded 93 White-throats; 98 Juncos; 56 Gulls, some thrushes and other birds including 3 hawks in a potter trap.

Speaking of strange and curious baits used to trap birds, Dr. William Pepper of Melrose Park, Pa. writes that the quecrest one he ever used was Hermit Crabs to catch Turnstones. Getting a few fairly good sized ones, Dr. Pepper carefully cracked the shell in which they lived and got them out alive. "When out of the water and out of the shell, all they could do was to squirm about. Using them as bait I caught 4 Turnstones."

Paul Weirich found a dead Starling on May 25, '43, 3 miles east of Harrisburg, Pa. Taken to Dr. Wood, our prexy, it was reported to Washington, D. C. The bird was banded by our member Ralph E. Wetzel of Boiling Springs, Pa. on Dec. 30, '42 and had traveled about 25 miles eastward.

Dr. Dayton Stone
State Geologist
New York State Museum
Albany
New York



HUNTINGTON N.Y.
Sec. 562 P. L. & R.

