

EBBA NEWS



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

REACHING
OVER
375
BANDERS
EVERY MONTH

March, 1944

"LET US BAND TOGETHER"

Vol. 7 No. 3

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BANDING NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE

All editors are considered slightly "whacky" and true to form, "ye Ed" is probably no exception. The first page is always prepared last, making it the last page to be written. Here we are with only this page left and a "million" interesting items to squeeze into this issue. Possibly it would be best to start from Maine and sweep right down to Florida, touching on some of the highlights of the many interesting letters received and so produce a hodge-podge of comments, a good old fashioned "banding stew" which may be mentally appetizing on a cold March day. Here we go.

Mrs. Effie Anthony, Bar Harbor, Me. writes in February, "A Fox Sparrow is still feeding around my station and has been here daily since the middle of December. --- have never heard of one here before through the winter, seems a little small, but very bright plumage and in good condition."

Skipping over to New York State, Mr. and Mrs. Lerch of Penn Yan, report a Field Sparrow wintering for the first time at their station. -- As an aftermath of the wholesale pigeon poisoning in New York City, a Duck Hawk dropped dead in Jersey City at the feet of a traffic cop, with a half-eaten pigeon in January. Yes, it wore a band and had been banded as a juvenile on June 11, 1939 by W. R. Spofford at Nyack, N. Y. -- Jesse V. Miller of New Hyde Park, L. I., N. Y. was the author of a fine banding article in "The American Biology Teacher". In this paper, EBBA gets a boost as does the INLAND association. Harold C. Burdick writing the banding article for our sister association.

Back to New Jersey, Beecher Bowdish of Demarest, N. J. is overwhelmed by "repeats", getting about 60 birds to each new bird banded. Attempting to band Evening Grosbeaks and take a kodachrome of a Cardinal in the snow on his own birthday and birthdays of other famous men in February, he wasn't successful. Evening Grosbeaks were reported at Bound Brook and Dick Fischer of Flushing heard about it. Although still recovering from the effects from a bad bump on his "noggin" suffered while skating, he wrestled his way with a big breckle trap through subways, trains and busses to Bound Brook. His first sortie netted him 3 of these birds. Determined to get more, he made another trip on the next week end and got 15 more.

Ralph Wetzel of Boiling Springs, Pa., writes that he has caught 30 Cardinals in a drop trap and 21 were males. Cardinals seem exceedingly trap-shy and none repeated more than once. Fischer learned the same thing while at Bound Brook. Mr. Wetzel also reports that every time he gives a little talk on banding at his school, a few days later some one brings him a Screech Owl to band. In the third such instance, his friend drove 10 miles out of his way, with gas rationing, so that the bird would be banded. Rev. Edward Stoehr of Pittsburgh, Pa. also reports the capture of a Screech Owl with bare hands and in his first two weeks of operation, 50 birds banded including 15 Cardinals and 3 Downy Woodpeckers. Further south, Amelia R. Lasky of Nashville, Tenn. reports the banding of 533 White-throats from 1932 to 1942 with 17 individuals returning, 1 almost 6 years old, but no recoveries!

OLDEST AGE RECORDS OF BIRDS - Second List

"The more we study birds, the more we find that there is still more to know." "Ye Ed" doesn't know who first expressed this thought, but he is ready to second the motion. The old age records that members have been sending in prove the truth of this saying. The records we thought would be knocked down, stand up and others that we thought were hard to beat have been beaten. Judging the ages is still a problem and we have about decided that we should figure an adult banded after the breeding season was hatched the previous June. Of course, it may have been May or July or even early August, depending on the place or the species, but to make it easier, we settle for June. Then we have decided to give the months as well as the years, as some records are very close to each other.

Before we "consult the records" we want to thank the members for sending in the postals and hope that they will keep them coming. There is lots of room for more records and especially among the warbler and uncommon sparrows for records of 3 and 4 years. But to the records, -- We give the changes from the previous list in the February issue and then some new birds to battle over. Where records are close we enter both and might add that all Downy Woodpeckers reported before were males. Has anyone got a record of an old lady Downy?

---CHANGES IN OLD AGE RECORDS---

<u>Place of Banding</u>	<u>Bander</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Return or Recovery</u>	<u>Age</u>
BL. C. CHICKADEE Branchport, N. Y.	C.J.Spiker	4/13/35	10/3/42 same	8 yrs. 4 mos.
TREE SPARROW Grand Rapids, Mich.	Mrs.F.L.DuMond	2/7/36	2/12/44 "	3 yrs. 8 mos.
Demarest, N. J.	B.S.Bowdish	2/15/33	1/26/41 "	8 yrs. 7 mos.
SL. C. JUNCO Olivera, N. Y.	Mrs.F.K.Daley	10/21/26	7/28/35 "	9 yrs. 1 mo.
RED W. BLACKBIRD Branchport, N. Y.	Verdi Burtch	10/20/35	5/8/43 Prattsburg	8 yrs. 11 mos.
" " "	" "	6/30/25	6/20/33 same	8 yrs.

-----NEW AGE RECORDS-----

SCREECH OWL Staten Island, N.Y.	H.K.Decker	10/27/15	7/11/23 same	8 yrs. 1 mo.
DOUBLE CRESTED COMORANT Antigonish, N.S.	H.S.Peters	6/8/37	9/20/43 Digby Co. N.S.	6 yrs. 3 mos.
WHITE-THROAT SP. Nashville, Tenn.	Amelia R. Laskey	12/31/34	2/3/40 same	5 yrs. 8 mos.
SWAMP SPARROW Pequanock, N.J.	Mrs.M.Dumont	4/26/38	5/2/41 "	3 yrs. 11 mos.
COWBIRD Grand Rapids, Mich.	Mrs.F.L.DuMond	4/26/38	4/20/42 "	4 yrs. 10 mos.
MARYLAND Y. THROAT Olivera, N.Y.	Mrs.F.K.Daley	5/15/29	5/7/32 "	3 yrs. 11 mos.
Huntington, L.I.	G. Gill	5/23/30	5/12/33 Hoopers, Md.	3 yrs. 11 mos.
CHIPPING SPARROW Beltsville, Md.	W.M.Davidson	4/25/35	5/10/41 same	6 yrs. 11 mos.
FIELD SPARROW Beltsville, Md.	W.M.Davidson	9/12/38	4/23/43 "	4 yrs. 10 mos.
BL.C.NIGHT HERON Speonk, L.I., N.Y.	Leroy Wilcox	5/28/28	1/--/38 Center Moriches, N.Y.	9 yrs. 8 mos.
TUFTED TITMOUSE Ardmore, Pa.	Horace Groskin	5/25/37	7/7/40 same	4 yrs. 1 mo.

COMMENTS ON THE WEST-CENTRAL NEW YORK BANDING

The tabulations shown on the following pages are featured this month for several reasons. All stations are very active and are located within a few miles of each other, as shown on the small map on the last page. Roughly they form a line in the lake district of New York, running in a southwesterly or northeasterly direction, parallel to the line of migratory flight along the Atlantic Coast, as we know it. Burtch and Spiker are a little over 2 miles from each other and during 20 years of banding, a Song or a Tree Sparrow, banded at one station, occasionally appears at the other. Spiker is a half mile from Lake Keukua, Sturdevant 5 miles, and the greatest distance between all four stations is only about 20 miles. Lerch has caught no birds banded by the others and only 2 of his birds have appeared at the other stations. An immature male Red-wing Blackbird banded by Burtch in '35, appeared at Sturdevant's station in '42 and again in '43, (See old age records, this issue). Considering the large total of birds banded, the "rescues" at other stations are surprisingly small. A partial explanation for this will be offered later.

Due to war conditions, the years shown here are not truly comparative. All banders have less time to devote to banding and this is reflected progressively in '42 and '43. Mr. and Mrs. Lerch, former teachers, manage a farm as does Mr. Sturdevant. It is not necessary to explain the shortage of farm labor. Mr. Spiker has given up his farm and is working every night in a war plant, sleeping days. Mr. Burtch has a store in Branchport and the problem of help is also acute. Their banding has suffered not from a lack of interest, which is very keen in all cases, but from a lack of spare time.

All stations, particularly the 3 on Page 5, show a large number of swallows banded. Many of these swallows were banded by flashlight during visits to the nearby marshes, particularly in '41. Two or three banders worked together during evenings and banded large numbers. Note the variety of swallows banded in that year. With gasoline restrictions in the last 2 years, such outings have ceased and swallow banding fell off, depending for the most part on the banding of Barn Swallow fledglings, with the exception of Sturdevant, who has found a remarkable way of making homes for Cliff Swallows (See EBBA NUS for March, '43) and has banded nearly all of this species appearing in the tabulation.

All stations have banded a large number of sparrows with Song and Tree Sparrows prominent. Song Sparrows undoubtedly breed thereabouts, but many must be birds of the year, caught in the fall while passing through, or spring migrants. The catch seems to be far beyond what the area around any one station could support as a breeding population. With Tree Sparrows it would appear that this area is a favorite wintering ground. All stations report a goodly number of returns each winter, evidence that the wintering ground for individual birds is even restricted in the general area. The fact that Sturdevant bands the bulk of the Chipping Sparrows is remarkable and he explains it as due to the fact that he is further from the lake than the others. Field Sparrows apparently take the place of the "Chippies" at Lerch and Spiker's station with a sprinkling of other related summer sparrows. With White-throat and White-crowned sparrows there seems to be a slight tendency for change in the relative status of each species. In '41 White-crowns seem more abundant, yet in '43 the White-throats appear to be slowly taking first place.

With the banding of Starlings, it is hard to write anything from the totals reported. The banding of this species depends to a great extent on the kind of winter. An open winter will see few of the rascals trapped while frequent snow will fill the traps. From the records it would seem that they are increasing slightly, but it is good to note that they haven't driven all the Flickers and woodpeckers away, although these species seem on the decline. Bluebirds, not shown in the tabulation are so few, appearing on Sturdevant's and Lerch's lists only and in declining numbers, that it would appear they have been driven elsewhere.

COMMENTS ON THE WEST-CENTRAL NEW YORK BANDING, (continued)

(Editor's Note: It is unfortunate that the limitations of the mimeograph would not allow all figures to appear on one page in parallel columns. This is impossible without crowding and confusion. The banding of Verdi Burtch, who has been banding for more than 20 years in Branchport, N. Y. appears for the 3 years to the right of this text. Species are not repeated again but are set down in the same order as on the following page. In no case is the complete banding of any station set forth. All banders have banded more birds than shown, as we list here only a selection of species common to all stations.)

BURTCH

 There seems to be a constant ratio between White-breasted Nuthatches and Chickadees caught, of 1 to 3 or 1 to 4 at all stations which is interesting and '41 apparently was a very good year for both these species. '42 seems to have been a good year for Baltimore Orioles while '43 was not. This is born out by reports from other banders as well as the data shown here. It is interesting to note the number of Goldfinch taken at the Burtch station in comparison with other stations. Spiker, only 2 miles away, caught only 3 in 3 years while Burtch got 150.

There are so many interesting points about these banding figures that it would be easy to use twice the amount of space we can spare to comment about them. However, it is EBBA'S purpose, aside from the general interest contained in the tabulation to point out a weakness common at ALL banding stations. These banders are all excellent workers and the spirit of friendly cooperation could not be better. They visit each other and band together, particularly in the marshes before the war made such trips impossible. (Burtch goes to Oneida Lake to band Terns and gets a lot of Rusty Blackbirds in the nearby marshes.) Yet with all this banding, their close proximity to each other, they occasionally show puzzlement over the lack of recoveries or "rescues" between stations. The answer, as EBBA sees it, is that they are all working independently and happily without any plan. Just as "Ye Ed" blissfully bands birds without any thought of trying to get what the nearest bander is catching, these members band birds. Species that they have banded in quantity are nearly all migrants passing through, except Tree Sparrows, and may never stop near them again.

Sturdevant probably has the key to a successful project with his Cliff Swallows. If some of his houses, especially since all banders are tied to their home grounds, could be places at each station, the overflow from Sturdevant's original colony might appear at the other stations and make interesting history. Probably the nearest bander who has worked extensively with swallows is Prof. Dayton Stoner of Albany, who has worked with Bank Swallows, sparsely represented on these lists. It is doubtful whether they would appear at Keukua Lake, so far from their home area. By all means band every bird we can, but "Let Us Band Together" the birds our neighboring bander is banding.

	'41	'42	'43
	0	0	0
	0	0	0
	5	1	0
	30	9	2
	0	0	0
	0	0	0
	0	0	0
	0	0	0
	10	0	0
	0	0	0
	0	3	0
	48	18	7
	14	9	4
	0	0	0
	6	6	3
	12	2	3
	30	11	10
	0	0	0
	9	1	0
	0	0	0
	5	0	0
	12	1	2
	0	4	0
	36	2	22
	109	41	0
	0	0	0
	45	0	0
	0	0	0
	1	0	0
	0	56	0
	128	55	1
	6	0	1
	2	2	4
	1	0	7
	30	2	29
	1	0	11
	47	2	12
	129	97	77

A COMPARISON OF 3 BANDING STATIONS IN WEST-CENTRAL NEW YORK
FOR THREE YEARS

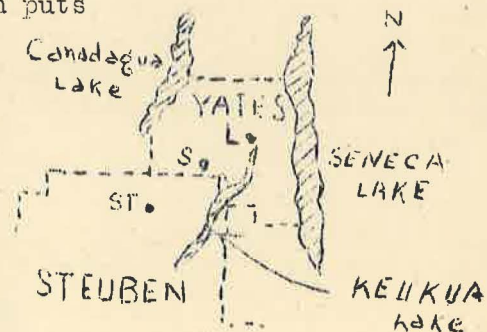
	LERCH			SPIKER			STURDEVANT		GRAND TOTAL
	'41	'42	'43	'41	'42	'43	'42	'43	
Chimney Swift	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	5	11
Flicker	3	1	13	3	0	1	0	0	21
Hairy Woodpecker	2	0	3	1	2	0	5	2	15
Downy	3	6	14	9	4	1	13	4	54
Phoebe	1	4	8	7	0	1	20	12	53
Praire Horned Lark	2	1	0	2	1	0	1	0	7
Bank Swallow	6	1	0	10	3	0	2	0	22
Rough-W. "	1	0	0	2	1	0	6	0	10
Barn "	212	94	64	284	106	20	387	361	1528
Cliff "	14	6	0	9	6	0	229	302	566
Blue Jay	2	2	3	1	1	1	3	2	15
Black C. Chickadee	29	10	42	28	14	12	17	10	162
White B. Nuthatch	6	4	5	6	5	3	6	3	38
Red B. "	1	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	6
House Wren	9	24	14	3	7	0	14	0	71
Catbird	30	20	37	12	4	2	0	0	105
Robin	16	15	62	3	0	1	36	19	152
Starling	79	298	272	1	5	6	7	15	683
Myrtle Warbler	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	6	9
N. Yellow Throat	5	3	9	3	20	3	1	0	44
Red W. Blackbird	5	7	30	1	0	1	8	1	53
Baltimore Oriole	7	0	11	9	1	0	46	12	86
Cowbird	5	17	7	0	7	4	38	19	97
Goldfinch	9	4	13	3	0	0	4	0	33
Towhee	0	1	9	12	6	2	1	0	31
Savannah Sparrow	3	3	0	2	7	6	1	0	22
Grasshopper "	0	0	1	6	5	15	0	1	28
Vesper "	0	1	1	25	26	4	21	6	84
Slate Colored Junco	20	85	42	39	84	14	51	33	368
Tree Sparrow	162	139	121	121	106	117	32	113	911
Chipping "	13	10	1	5	11	0	132	60	232
Field "	20	23	52	23	47	10	8	13	196
White Crown Sparrow	64	40	127	65	51	43	49	14	453
White-throat "	42	73	153	17	46	12	31	6	380
Lincoln's "	2	7	3	1	10	0	2	0	25
Swamp "	35	3	3	2	7	0	6	0	56
Song "	303	369	443	87	251	113	239	58	1863

This tabulation does not include all birds banded during the 3 years at all stations, but most of them that are comparable. The Grant Total for the above period at the 3 stations is 8,733. Mr. Sturdevant only began on November 9, 1941 and his '42 column includes the birds caught in the last 2 months of '41. He has a total of 2,638 for the 2 years and 2 months, which puts him well in the class with the older stations.

L - Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Lerch, Penn Yan, N. Y.

S - Charles J. Spiker, Branchport, N. Y.

ST - Carleton A. Sturdevant, Prattsburg, N. Y.



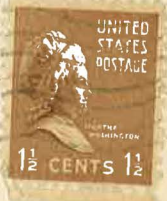
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