

# EBBA NEWS



REACHING  
OVER  
**375**  
BANDERS  
EVERY MONTH

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

August, 1944

"LET US BAND TOGETHER"

Vol. 7, No. 8

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## SEX RATIOS OF MIGRATING JUNCOS IN SULLIVAN CO., N. Y.

Raymond T. Fuller of Winterton, N. Y. has recently tabulated a catch of 372 Slate-colored Juncos banded between Nov. 4, 1942 and May 13, 1944. While banding these birds Mr. Fuller did his best to note the sex of each bird handled. The results of this sex-identity check are most interesting and appear to bear out a belief long held by many ornithologists, i.e. that the male of many species migrates northward in the spring of the year separately from the females, <sup>and</sup> sooner than the females. Mr. Fuller's records seem to prove that each sex may take different northward routes in the spring while in the fall of the year, the sexes are more equal in appearance at the banding station. This ~~fact~~ may be explained as due to the fact that the summer family unit has not completely broken up when the trip south is started and consists of one parent, probably the female and her youngsters. Such family units may join with other nearby families and constitute the small flocks that come down from the north and visit our banding stations.

The following tabulation is broken up into two periods. One period embraces the fall migrants and wintering birds. Note that in these figures the sexes are fairly even with males slightly in the majority in one year with the females being in the majority in the second year to form a balance. The second period includes Juncos on the northward flight in the spring of the year and shows a ratio of two males to every female.

### Fall Migrants and Wintering Birds

Period when banded:	M	F	?	Birds under 1 Year Old			
				M	F	?	Totals
Nov. 4, '42 to Mar. 6, '43	16	12	1	1	0	6	36
Oct. 10, '43 to Feb. 14, '44	38	40	4	7	19	16*	124

### Spring Arrivals Going North

Mar. 20, '43 to May 2, '43	11	5	0	0	0	0	16
Mar. 16, '44 to May 13, '44	104**	52	8	10	20	2***	<u>196</u> 372

\* All 16 taken before Oct. 20, '43

\*\* On Mar. 20, '44 out of 22 banded, 20 were adult males, 1 female and 1 ?

\*\*\* Only after Mar. 16, '44 were efforts at identity establishing based wholly or practically so, on the white of the second rectrix feather.

## MORE OLD AGE RECORDS OF BIRDS

Interesting records received this month raise the grand total of species for which EBBA has listed out-standing age-records to 53. There is plenty of room for more records so banders should keep them coming in. So far, there are no changes this month in the standing record but here are two new records to be bested:

### Old Age Records

<u>Species &amp; Place</u>	<u>Bander</u>	<u>Banded</u>	<u>Returned</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Age</u>
COMMON TERN Barnegat Bay, N. J.	Henry P. Baily	7/13/36	6/11/44	Same, F. D.	8 yrs.
BALTIMORE ORIOLE Winterton, N. Y.	(Ad. M.) Raymond T. Fuller	6/6/40	6/21/44	Same	5 yrs.

### NEWS FOR THE BANDERS

Our compliments and best wishes go to Paul Jensen, now a Corporal in weather service of the U. S. Air Force. He is now stationed overseas some where and would appreciate mail from any fellow bander. His address is as follows: Cpl. Paul Jensen, ASN 33366707, 18th Weather Sq., Det. 345, A. P. O. 639, c/o P. M., New York, N. Y.

W. M. Davidson of Takoma Park, Md. recently received a report from Washington on a Blue Jay banded in 1937. The bird was found dead 6 miles away at Riverdale, Md. on July 8, '44, at least 7 years old. Mr. Davidson promises us his Song Sparrow records for an early issue to compare with those of Dr. Wood published last month. EBBA appreciates and wishes to encourage the summary of banding records at all times. Members should not worry about style or form of their reports, just as long as they contain the records and a short discussion of the most interesting points they will be welcome.

Harry T. Davis of the N. C. State Museum, Raleigh, N. C. writes that the museum has just issued a booklet, "Poisonous Snakes of the Eastern United States". It is a concise and clear statement of information the layman has long needed. If you desire a copy, write Prof. Davis and enclose 10¢.

Raymond T. Fuller of Winterton, N. Y. is interested in learning how other banders catch Mourning Doves. When - What type traps and with what bait. Can any member help him?

Hoping that more dead birds wearing a band would be reported, "Ye Ed" has "harped" on the subject of inspecting dead birds on the highways. Possibly "Ye Ed" has been barking up the wrong tree. Two recent trips of 120 miles each opened his eyes. Each of these trips ran for 60 miles on Long Island and 60 miles up-state and in Connecticut. The weather, date and general character of the roads were much the same, yet it was only on Long Island that the bodies of numerous small animals and birds were noted dead on the roads. While up-state and in Connecticut not a single such tragedy was noted. Motor traffic seemed about the same in both areas. Why should there be so many birds killed by autos on Long Island?

William Pepper, Jr. of Philadelphia, former Secretary and Treasurer of EBBA for 7 years, writes, calling himself a "voice from the past". He states that he has only banded one bird since the beginning of the war, but looks forward to the time when he can get back to his old banding stride in the near future.

## WHAT! NO ANTS IN THE HABERDASHERY?

While on a scouting trip for avian color film subjects in mid-June, B. S. Bowdish of Demarest, N. J., discovered a nest of the Hooded Warbler containing 4 well-developed young, about 18 inches above the ground in a blueberry bush. Papa Hooded would make a fine colored subject, not yet exploited, and here, contrary to rule, he had a home where sunlight could be let in.

Fate, which so often vetoes the aspirations of the bird photographer, overruled the venture. Just as the setup was completed, the young birds, one after the other, decided that H-hour of D-day had arrived and scrambled out of the nest for their debut in a troubled world.

Examination of the deserted home revealed, among other interesting items, that part of the paper from a cigarette package had been employed as building material, and there was a piece of Internal Revenue stamp, denoting, no doubt, government sanction.

The shoots supporting the nest were clipped with a view to preserving an interesting example of avian architecture. By the time the late home of the warblers had been brought into the open, it was discovered it was still inhabited, at least in part. From the "basement" portion a swarm of small ants poured forth to ascertain the nature of the intrusion. It required sun baking and later an application of moth flakes to evict this secondary family of tenants. The young warblers had shown no signs of having suffered by the presence of these squatters.

---- Newark Evening News, July 7, 1944.

## A PHOTO THAT MADE HISTORY

The Valley Daily News of Tarentum, Pa., carries a front-page <sup>story</sup> with a photograph taken by Hal H. Harrison, bird news columnist and lecturer, showing the second photograph ever taken of a Cowbird laying an egg in another bird's nest. The nest is that of a Song Sparrow and was taken at dawn, May 29th. Previous to this photo, Dr. Harry W. Hann of the University of Michigan was the only person to have pictorially record such a case of pariticism. The story printed with the picture is very well written and gives a very good account of how Cowbirds are raised.

## DR. WILLIAM PEPPER HONORED

A life-size 3/4 length oil portrait of Dr. William Pepper, Sr., former President of the EBBA, and Dean of the Medical School of the University of Pennsylvania, was recently unveiled in the Free Library of Philadelphia, where he is President of the Board of Trustees. Those who have seen this portrait say it is excellent. It shows Dr. Pepper sitting in a chair.

## SO NEAR, --- YET, SO FAR

Frank M. Carroll of Lake Shore, Miss., now a port inspector for the Louisiana Dept. of Conservation, is in a peculiar spot for a bander. He is about 7 miles from his former banding station, on a little island offshore. With glasses he can see birds swarming around his former place, but with only a small skiff and dangerous currents, the birds are out of reach. About 250 yds. from his island there is a high reef, about an acre and a half in extent. Birds use this as a resting place from 10 am. to 7 pm. daily. He has counted 27 species on this reef so far. All birds rest in perfect harmony and at times he is unable to see how another bird could find room to stand on the reef, yet still they arrive. He writes that he feels like a child standing in front of a candy store with only a penny in his hand. He found 27 nests of Barn Swallows beneath his quarters which are built 10 ft. above ground. However, he arrived just too late to band the youngsters.

BANDING ON EASTERN LONG ISLAND  
By LeRoy Wilcox, Speonk, L. I., N. Y.

I have found time from the duties of the farm, (Oceanic Duck Farm) to do some banding this summer. Found 41 Piping Plover's nests between Moriches Inlet and Southampton; trapped 53 new adults and got 22 returns for a total of 75 adults trapped on the next, (Missed 7). The best return was for a youngster banded at Moriches Inlet in 1936. (Only 1 Plover banded in 1936). This bird returned in 1940, - '41, - '42 and '44, which makes it 8 years old. Band found to be in poor condition so they were replaced.

With these birds the bands are usually worn thin after about 4 years. I am of the opinion that many bands are lost after 5 years service. The bands are worn especially thin on the bottom where the band rubs against the foot. It is probable that the action of the sand and water help to wear the bands down quicker than bands on land birds.\*\*\*

On July 3rd, I banded 2 young Clapper Rails at Shinnecock Bay, about 10 days old. Both adults were also seen. This is the first positive evidence I have of this species nesting in this area. I also trapped and banded an adult female Prairie Horned Lark on its nest at Westhampton Beach on May 18. This is the first positive evidence of this species nesting in Shinnecock or Moriches Bay area. Several other adults were seen in this same area.

Banded 34 young Ospreys on Cartwright Island on July 4th. Also found 15 dead adult Herring Gulls in the grass of the nesting area on Cartwright. All had died recently and two wore bands. The Washington office informs me that one of these was banded (as young probably) July 4, 1937 at Penikese Island, Mass., by Mr. L. B. Fletcher and the other was banded July 18, 1939, by Mr. A. D. Cruickshank in Muscongus Bay, Maine. These two recoveries at least show where some of the Cartwright nesting Herring Gulls come from. I estimated that there were about 1200 Herring Gulls nesting there this year, which is an increase over former years.

I wrote Frederick C. Lincoln in regard to cutting down the large No. 8 bands for banding Ospreys. I have saved this salvaged metal, because of war conditions although I don't believe it would be worthwhile after the war. But for the safety of the birds I believe it is better to cut the bands down to fit the particular species to be banded. For Ospreys I cut off  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{5}{8}$  of an inch from each band so that the ends close together, rather than overlap the ends as some banders are now doing. The weight of this salvaged scrap per 100 species is about the same as the weight of 400 No. 3 bands.

In regard to cutting down these bands, Mr. Lincoln writes, "At the present time I am not sure how important it may be to save scrap aluminum. We do it as a matter of habit and I think that it is a desirable one. The practice you have been following of cutting down No. 8 bands to fit Ospreys is preferable to lapping them, chiefly for the safety of the birds themselves. It would do no harm to call the matter to the attention of other banders and refer to the desirability of a certain amount of salvage. When the quantity is sufficient (say 1 lb.) it could be sent to this office where it would be added to our own accumulation. This is turned over to the Procurement Division of the Treasury."

(Editor's Note:) It has also been noted that bands on some of the larger land birds, such as Grackles wear very thin after three or four years and often times one or more digits have disappeared. Since Grackles do frequent beaches, the cause maybe the same. It has been particularly noted that the '42 series of No. 3 bands, while of the right size, are much too thin for these birds and they mangle them tightly around their own leg within two weeks.

## LADIES ISSUE FOR SEPTEMBER

Few of us can deny, that occasionally we say to ourselves, "Getting in a rut, - must do something to get out of it." Unfortunately this holds true of all publications, including news-letters. We have noticed that many of our members pay their dues promptly year after year, but outside of that important duty to the association, we seldom hear from them. We would like to know what they are doing along the lines of our hobby. We also note, that month after month, a certain group of banders send in notes, comments and suggestions, from which the NEWS is compiled. The same names appear with startling regularity. This is very nice and we hope that they will continue to support the NEWS with their letters. However, as the fellow says, "Soup, Soup, all the time is not "so good!" Variety is the spice of life. "Ye Ed" requests all members to help out and send at least a postal giving the association a glimpse into the banding activities.

Plans for the September issue of the NEWS contemplate devoting the entire issue to the activities of the Lady Banders. We hope that every bander of the gentle sex will send us a post-card informing us of their banding projects, what they have done this summer and what they plan to do this fall and winter. Possibly this will be a hard task to outline on a postal; -- then we ask them to use two postals or if possible, a letter. We must point out, though, that 7 or 8 page letters, while very welcome, will be condensed. From time to time, these arrive and while we would like to publish them in their entirety, space forbids. A short letter or a postal, considering the number of our members and the small amount of room we have each month, is what "the doctor ordered."

To the ladies then, we will look for the material out of which the next issue can be prepared. We have no doubt that it will be one of the best issues we have ever mailed. "Ye Ed" knows that the success of many of our banders is due in no little part to the patience cooperation and help of their wives. We hope that we will hear from many of these "silent partners and also from many of the ladies, who are banders in their own right. Come on, ladies, let us hear from you before September 1st.

### BANDING AT WINTERTON, N. Y.

Raymond T. Fuller has recently sent a copy of his banding results for the Federal year ending June 30, '44, giving a list of his captures and returns. It is remarkable to note that out of a total of 537 new birds banded, all but 63 of them are members of the Sparrow group or close allies. The list is headed by Slate-colored Juncos with 313; White-throats 46, (spring migrants only) Song Sparrow 65, Chipping Sparrow 28 and others in smaller numbers. It is noted that he only banded 1 Grackle, which seems unusual to "Ye Ed" who takes them by the scores. Mr. Fuller banded 4 new Blue Jays and captured 3 returns; 15 Catbirds and 3 returns. 313 Juncos and 8 returns; 65 Song Sparrows and 5 returns.

A Blue Jay banded Jan. 14, '42 at Kent, Ct. by Mr. Fuller was captured at York Co., Pa. Dec. 9, '43. This bird was considered an immature when banded and a survey of previous issues of the NEWS will show records of other young Blue Jays spending the winter in the south or at least southward of their place of banding. It is not known how this bird was captured. One of our members, Charles L. Weiser, operates his banding station at York, Pa., but it is assumed that if he had caught the bird we would hear about it.

His report also lists 170 species of birds seen in his area and gives several highlights in regard to the local lists which are worth recording. The NEWS will publish such highlights in a forthcoming issue.

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