

8/14/57

E B B A N E W S

Eastern Bird-Banding Association News Letter

AUGUST 1951

Published Monthly by

THE EASTERN BIRD-BANDING ASSOCIATION

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THE EASTERN BIRD-BANDING ASSOCIATION

"Let Us Band Together"

\$2.00 per year

Vol. 14

AUGUST 1951

No. 8

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August 1951

EBBA NEWS

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SYMPOSIA

Mr. Daniel Smiley, Jr. contributes the following anent the Junco Symposium:

"I have used small cards with four feather outlines drawn on them. While the bird is in hand, I sketch the actual location of the white and gray of feathers from each side of the tail. At the same time various plumage notes are recorded by a simple code.

"The following are some of my tentative conclusions about Juncos which may be modified by further study of the data:

1. The amount of gray or brown at the tip of the bill varies with the season for individuals and between individuals, and is not an indication of age or sex.

2. The amount of white in the outer four feathers on each side of the tail varies between Juncos. In some cases the records from returns over a period of years showed an increase in amount of white after successive molts of an individual. In other cases the amount of white remained constant over a period of years. My present information makes me doubt if the white in tail feathers is a reliable indication of age or sex. This needs study, as it is not in agreement with the findings of other banders.

3. By accident I stumbled on an observation which may prove to be significant in age determination of Juncos or other birds - particularly seed eaters. While handling several returns, all at least three or four years old, I noted that the upper mandible seemed to project further beyond the tip of the lower than on most of the unbanded birds I was trapping. I found that the difference in length of the two mandibles could be measured with some degree of accuracy by means of a garage mechanic's "feeler Gauge." The range of variation was between 15 and 31 one thousandths of an inch.

4. During the winter of 1929-30 I was banding at Haverford, Pa. The winter resident Juncos there seemed to have definitely more brown in their body plumage than the Mohonk winter residents

which I handled during vacations and the following winter. I have no concrete evidence on this, just an impression.

"Some of my comments are not in agreement with observations reported by other banders. I do not want to start an argument, but I do urge caution when one starts generalizing about Juncos."

These comments represent a challenge to all members banding Juncos to secure sufficient data to solve the problems involved. It should be relatively easy!

Comments from NEBBA and WBBA on the symposia proposal have been received. As expected, there are various points to be ironed out before the proposal would be acceptable to both Associations. No word yet from Inland.

Unless there is a great deal of additional material received before August 20 it will be necessary to postpone or abandon the Trap Symposium. Several members, notably Karl Bartel and Beecher Bowdish have submitted information but much more is needed. What has happened to those who discussed this subject so enthusiastically at the Annual Meeting? So far not one of them has sent anything in.

STATION REPORTS

Mr. Frank Frazier sends the following report on his 1950 year's banding:

Recoveries

- #48-281220 AOU 493 Starling 6-9-50 Reported "Found", band sent in by "unknown" person from Hudson Co., N. J. 9-25-50
- #49-17459 AOU 517 Eastern Purple Finch Adult Male 3-5-50 Trapped and released by Jas. F. Nields, Jr., Greenwich Rd., Hardwick, Worcester Co., Mass. on 4-22-50
- #49-108816 AOU 587 Red-eyed Towhee Adult Male 4-25-49 found dead at Halethorpe, Baltimore Co., Md., by Mr. Harvey Brackbill of Baltimore on 5-2-50.
- #49-108883 AOU 704 Catbird 5-10-50 Found dead at Irvington, N.J.

by John L. Wolff of Newark.

Species	Banded	Repeats	Returns	Recoveries
Downy	10	6	2	-
Phoebe	1	-	-	-
Bluejay 5	81	53	14	-
Starling 8	36	1	-	1
Cowbird	13	4	-	-
Purple Finch	30	1	1	1
White Crowned Sp.	4	-	-	-
White Throated Sp. (2)	107	42	4	-
Tree Sp.	1	-	-	-
Chipping Sp.	12	1	-	-
Field Sp.	6	-	-	-
Junco 1	423	309	20	-
Song Sp. 3	91	161	9	-
Swamp Sp.	1	-	-	-
Fox Sp.	27	10	-	-
Towhee 4	84	65	4	1
Cardinal	6	1	1	-
Grosbeak	1	-	-	-
Blue-Winged W	1	-	-	-
B-th Blue W	1	-	-	-
Myrtle W	1	-	-	-
Pine W	1	-	-	-
Ovenbird	6	-	-	-
Yellow-throat	6	-	-	-
Catbird 6	74	51	8	1
Brown Thrasher 9	34	34	4	-
Wren	4	-	-	-
Nuthatch	8	20	7	-
Titmouse	5	5	-	-
Chickadee	8	12	7	-
Hud. "	1	-	-	-
Ruby Cr. Kinglet	1	-	-	-
Wood Thrush	20	7	4	-
Veery	4	-	-	-
Olive B. Thrush	2	-	-	-
Hermit Thrush 10	31	11	-	-
Robin 7	47	7	4	-
Total 37 species	1189	801	89	4

"My grand total of birds banded since I began January 13, 1949 to April 30, 1951 is 1849 - recoveries (4) and returns (111), total 115 or 6.22%.

"White-throated Sparrow - The April 1950 Spring migrants scarcely repeated at all.

"Juncos - Bulk of the Juncos departed on or before April 8 (only 19 were banded after that date, the last ones being two banded on May 1, 1951). Almost all the Song Sparrows and Fox Sparrows departed on or before April 8.

"Junco Returns - Of the 20 Junco returns, 8 were regular repeats from November and December through early April.

"Song Sparrow - Of the 15 Song Sparrows banded in August, 12 repeated 79 times. 49-85821 repeated 20 times, 49-85822 repeated 26 times.

"Blue Jays - These birds left Montclair, although I saw a few near by at odd times through the winter, on the day after the hurricane November 26 and did not return to Montclair until late in April. This is unusual, for many Jays usually spend the winter in Montclair.

"Many fewer Chickadees and Nuthatches visited my station during the winter. One Fox Sparrow and two White-throated visited the station almost daily all through the winter."

President Groskin reports as follows:

"During the two winter months, January and February 1951, I banded at Ardmore, Pa. 502 birds; 191 in January and 311 in February. All but 28 birds were Purple Finches.

"The birds banded during these two months were banded at weekends only, without assistance of any kind."

NORTH AMERICAN BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION

President Groskin has appointed Beecher Bowdish and Jeff Gill to be members of a committee which will discuss the problems, advantages and disadvantages, of the formation of a North American Bird Banding Association. EBBA is fortunate in having these two members to represent them in this matter.

NEW MEMBERS

Mrs. W. L. Taylor
Mr. A. J. Fletcher

168 Cortleigh Blvd., Toronto, Ontario
Denton, Maryland

HOMING IN THE EUROPEAN STARLING

Mr. LeRoy C. Stegeman of the College of Forestry, Syracuse, N. Y., contributes the following:

"On March 30, 1949 twelve starlings were captured in a church steeple in Westfield, N. Y. and brought to Syracuse, N. Y. where they were banded and released. Syracuse is about 180 miles from Westfield as the crow flies. These birds were placed in a burlap bag and carried in the closed trunk of an automobile so there was no possibility of their seeing any of the country through which they passed. On the seventeenth of July 1949 about 82 starlings were caught in the same church steeple from a flock estimated from 400 to 500 birds. One of the 82 was one of the twelve banded and released in Syracuse in March. There may well have been others of the twelve in the balance of the flock. Not all of the twelve returned to Westfield, however, since one of them was found dead in Syracuse on July 1, 1949.

"This is an example of the interesting information that may be gained through banding resident birds during the non-nesting season and releasing them at various distances from the banding station."

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