MERRY CHRISTMAS

Your Editor wishes to take this opportunity to wish all members of BBBA a Merry Christmas and a busy bunting New Year. He also wishes to take this occasion to thank all of those members who have helped by contributing to our several symposia and by sending in other news items of interest. Incidentally, it's not too late to present your friends with BBBA memberships as Christmas gifts.

ANNUAL MEETING

The next annual meeting will be held on Saturday, March 29, 1952, at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Mr. Charles E. Nichols has kindly consented to make arrangements for this meeting. Although our plans are not yet definite there will probably be a dinner in the evening and a field trip on the following day. Now is the time to begin work on your paper for this meeting. Please advise Mr. Groeskin or the Secretary of the title, presentation time, and whether movies or slides are included, of your paper. Let's all plan to attend.

WORK OF TRAPS

In a recent issue Karl Bartal asked about elevator traps, Seth Low sent in two sheets of advertising describing one such trap in some detail and commenting that they have plenty of copies in the Fish and Wildlife Service office at Patuxent Research Refuge, Laurel, Maryland, to be had for the asking. It looks like a pretty good trap.

Mrs. Robert A. Arny of 147 Watchung Ave., Upper Montclair, N. J., has written a very interesting letter which reads as follows:

"I have been much interested in your trap discussions and would like to put in my twopenny. Perhaps our station is typical but it may have something to offer. We have three children of our own and the child traffic here is terrific. We also are plagued with squirls, cats and dogs. These disturbance factors have to be overcome without violence if peace is to be maintained.

Automatic traps are out of the picture. Everything but birds set them off. Also I can not be sure of making regular rounds and I am anxious to keep injuries to a minimum. This I have done, with only one injury in two years; that was a day which caught its bill in 1/4" mesh, but it has returned twice and this was not fatal. Also time is a real factor for me as I can never be sure of five consecutive uninterrupted minutes.

I have a house trap, which I have modified, and an L shaped Fabian type trap, and a Wabler trap which I have also shifted about and a canary cage trap which differs a little from Mr. Gill's. I enclose drawings. (We will try to show them in a future issue.) Of course my banding is on a small scale but I take about ten birds a day on an average, which piles up a fairly representative cross section of the birds in this area and represents also a possible
proposition for the small station. I realise that the big banders
take thousands of birds, but I suspect that there are many like
myself who can not devote all their time to this grand hobby.

I think baits are a real problem. I try to collect all of
the wild fruits and seeds I can over the fall and summer and find
them a help. Peanut hearts are terribly expensive and I do not
find that they increase the take. Bread fried up in bacon
drippings seems to be the best of all. I think that the birds can
see it from a distance better than anything else. Next in order
is sunflower seed, then regular wild bird mixtures, then berry
bearing shrubs and constantly dripping water, then raisins which
are very good in the spring. Rinklets seem to like boiled rice,
but nothing else takes it. Robins sometimes like escarole, Thrushes
like apples but so do possums. Plum pits saved from the table are
also good for Thrushes.

On good flight days we take as many as thirty or forty birds
in this small station. I would also like to hear from other banders
about the time element. I suspect that the early bird does not
catch the worm. My time records show ten to eleven AM and three
thirty to five thirty as the most productive times. I am at a loss
to explain this. I have often started banding at five in the
morning, but have stopped doing this. It does not pay. Has anyone
else any notes on this? It seems herehy to say that birds are not
creatures of the dawn, but they are not in our garden.

I would like to know what a Ven-hell trap is and what a
Modesto trap is. I know that I have a wealth of ignorance, but
perhaps I can reduce it by asking better informed people.

I might add a word here, it is always a temptation when you
see several birds near one of these traps and only one in them to
see if you can increase the haul by waiting for another bird to go
in. By and large this does not pay. Though the early bird does
not catch the worms a bird in the hand is still worth several in
the bushes. Probably there is nothing here that everybody doesn't
know, but I know what a job it is to get anybody to contribute their

ideas, so please take the spirit, even if not the facts."

Mrs. Marie Dumont, Pequannock, N. J., writes as follows:

"We, at this station, use Government Sparrow, Potter, House,
Flat, Tunnel and Brenckle water drip type traps and find them
all good. However, find that the Brenckle water drip and House
trap take the largest number of birds and species over the year.
Potter ranks next. Naturally the Brenckle being the top opening
type takes at least 90% of the Marbler family, also all Rinkles
and Huhatches taken at this station. We find the latter equally
attractive to such birds as Blue Jays, Robins, Grackles and Cat-
birds. The reason we like the House trap is because it takes
most every kind of bird, including some Marlbers, the latter
fact being due perhaps because of a basin of water being kept
on the ground inside it.

We operate several 2 and 4 division water drip traps in
trees and bushes, from four to ten feet above ground that do
very well. Of course these are stationary as we, as well as
other banders, find that moving traps do not attract birds.

Bait used includes chopped mast, raisins, chopped nuts,
any native berries that may be available, sunflower seeds, a
mixture of comocermal wild bird seed, bread and cake crumbs.

To go back to the traps, the Government Sparrow trap is
a must for ground birds, especially during migration of Sparrows,
as we have taken as many as 20 birds in one trap at one time.
The Flat trap we use has a rather large top opening door as well
as a large front opening, both being held open and closed by
means of hand operated string arrangement. The Tunnel trap is
L shape, sets flat on ground, tunnel formed by merely hollowing
cut the ground at L juncture. Both have their merits but need
a good deal of attention. At times the traps are shifted to
different positions."
The following information, supplied by Mr. C. Russell Mason, should be of interest to our members:

"Since taking over the handling of colored aluminum bands on recommendation of the Fish and Wildlife Service, we have had steadily increasing calls for additional colors and for sizes which we did not handle at first. On recommendation of the Fish and Wildlife Service, we originally put in only five colors since we have to get large quantities and we did not want to invest too much money. Now, however, with calls for the larger sizes and for size 0 in particular, we are putting in practically a full line of sizes — 0, 1, 1A, 1B, 2, 3, 3A, 4, 5, 6, 7A, 7B, and 8, in the following colors — red, blue, green, yellow, black, white, and silver. We will probably not get out another circular until we get some trap prices brought up to date, so we wonder whether you would insert a notice to the effect that we have all these available in the next issue of EBSA News. The prices for all sizes 0 through 4 will be $1.50 per C; for sizes 5 and 6 $2.00 per C; 7 A and 7B $2.25 per C; size 8 $2.50 per C. These will be postpaid within the United States. No orders for less than 100 can be handled but such an order may include four colors of twenty-five each."

These bands can be obtained by writing to the Massachusetts Audubon Society, 355 Newbury St., Boston 16, Mass.

CASUALTIES

Beecher S. Bodish of Demarest, N. J., passes along the following information on a subject which has puzzled many of us at various times:

"Doubtless other banders have had the experience of a bird quietly 'passing out' during a banding operation, though the handling is gentle and experienced."

In answer to a query as to cause of such deaths, sent to Dr. Leonard J. Goss, Veterinarian for the New York Zoological Society, accompanied by the body of a robin which had died in this manner,

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Dr. Goss writes:

"Your query regarding why birds occasionally suddenly die in one's hands is difficult to answer. All of us that handle birds have had it happen, so much so that when about to pick up a privately owned bird we always cautions the owner that the results may be disastrous. The term "shock" covers a multitude of sins and embodies complex physiological changes. However, in these cases, I feel it is the proper word to use. Very recently we had a pigeon die while we were examining it. This is the first time we have ever had such an experience with a pigeon. I would not normally expect it to occur with a pigeon but it did. Apparently, certain birds are of a nervous temperament that will not permit them to withstand handling."

It has always been my hope that some time examination of a bird which has died under such circumstances will disclose physical reactions showing what constitutes the "shock."

NEW MEMBERS

Mr. Jay Schnell
332 W. Waverly Rd., Glenoak, Penna.

Mr. Irving Feist
Sycamore Ave., Manassas Co., Shrewsbury, N. J.

Mrs. Jos. E. Lester
R.D. # 1, Box 418, Allequippa, Penna.

Mrs. Martha Wirt
Box 73, Blooming Grove, New York

Mr. H. Everest Clements
49 Skaneateles Rd., Rocherster 10, N.Y.

Mrs. Louis C. Owens Jr.
The Wabe, RFD 2, Mount Kisco, N.Y.

1952 is the year for you to start taking BIRD-BANDING. Send $4.00 to Mr. Richard M. Hinchman, 79 Fairbanks Rd., Milton 86, Mass.