

Poocetes gramineus confinis. Western Vesper Sparrow. The only place I saw vesper sparrows was at El Oro. A very few were seen there, the first week of February, 1924, when three were secured, one on the 2nd and two on the 4th. These proved to be *P. g. confinis* rather than *P. g. affinis*, which latter was recorded by Brewster.

Piranga rubra cooperi. Cooper Tanager. A single immature male was seen and taken at San Jose del Cabo February 23, 1923.

Hylocichla ustulata swainsoni. Olive-backed Thrush. Thrushes were fairly common in the fall at Todos Santos, but at La Paz none was seen with the exception of one of this species taken on October 11, 1924.

Hylocichla guttata slevini. Monterey Hermit Thrush. Quite common in the fall and spring in various parts. Several taken.—CHESTER C. LAMB, *Los Angeles, California, March 7, 1925.*

WITH THE BIRD BANDERS

Under the Direction of J. Eugene Law, Altadena, California

A Banding Outfit and Some Traps.—As well as the banding outfit, two traps are given here which bird banders may find worth experimenting with. I say experimenting with, because, however well a trap may suit the person who made it, or the species of bird for which it was intended, it may still prove worthless to some other bander using it under different conditions.

It is my belief that position of the trap plus camouflage and the habits of the birds

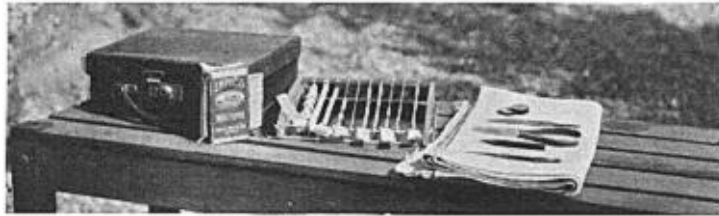


Fig. 33. BANDING OUTFIT. A NOTE BOOK SHOULD BE ADDED.

it is desired to catch, are really the first points to be considered, after which the most suitable trap for the purpose might be selected from the many types described from time to time in the various banding papers. I live in the woods, and although my land runs down to the sea, birds are not overly plentiful; and they are extremely shy, so that when I tried cage traps and some others that might be called city traps, they failed me with most species.

After experimenting with a good many, I found them, as traps, for the most part, ideal, but few suited the conditions prevailing here. I then started to alter them or discard them entirely, and after watching the birds as they approached them, and when in them, I was finally able to get what appeared to suit the birds best, or frightened them least.

Those given here have been well tried. A third, a funnel trap, has already been referred to in these columns.

The Banding Outfit.—For convenience I made up the outfit here shown in figure 33. When packing the box, the larger band-holder is made to fit snugly in the bottom, where it should remain even when in use. Over this lies a folded piece of canvas, about two feet square, useful for covering traps or collecting boxes when birds are wild. Many other uses are found for it, especially in wet weather. It also keeps the bands from rattling when the box is being carried. Above these again lies a paste-board box in which are kept the tools: pliers, knife, three-cornered file, pocket lens, note-book, etc.

Alongside this box lies a tin box band-holder, one or more as required, for large adjustable bands. If going far from home, there is still just enough room for Ridgway's Color Standards to fit nicely on the top. The whole weighs about 5 pounds and measures 9" x 10" x 3½".

The band-holders themselves are easily made at home. The larger is roughly eight inches square. The band wires are hinged by a single turn over a stouter wire. The stouter wire is passed through the ends of two short pieces of lath, which make the sides of the holder, and each end of this wire is given a turn down to hold it in place. The other ends of the laths are screwed to a piece of hardwood with saw-cuts in it, to receive the free ends of the smaller wires that hold the bands. The tin box-holder for the largest size bands is a pepper tin. It will be noticed that a portion of the tin that has been cut out to admit the bands, is turned down at the bottom of the box, and the same is done in the lid, but turned up. Over these projections, and on either side of the box go elastic bands, to keep the lid on.

The Curtain Trap.—This I call my no. 1, as it was the first trap I made in an endeavor to ease the shock of the common drop trap.

As may be seen in figure 34, it is really a common drop trap held up in a set position, with sides filled in, one with wood, one with wire, and a drop curtain of light canvas which falls silently at the pull of a string. I found that covering one side with

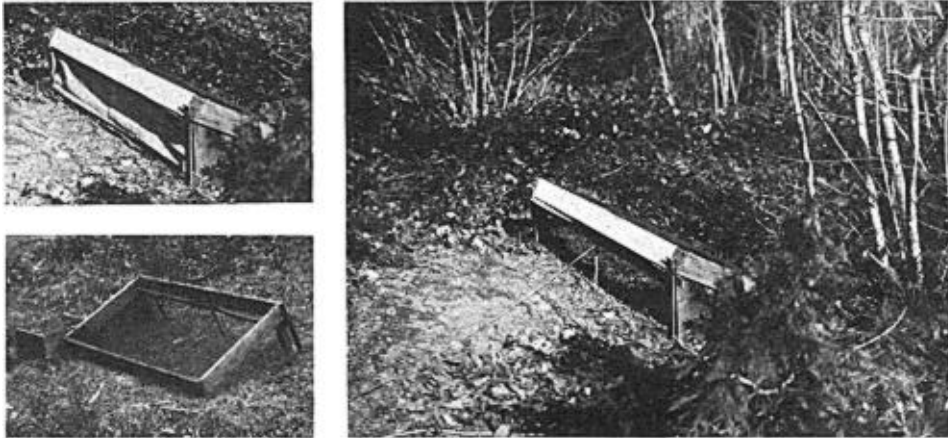


Fig. 34. THE CURTAIN TRAP WITH CURTAIN DOWN, AND TWO OTHER VIEWS SHOWING CURTAIN RAISED. IN ONE THE COLLECTING BOX IS IN POSITION.

wood showed up the entrance to the collecting box, always in position, into which the birds entered at once, saving much fluttering. The wire screen used is what is generally placed around meat-safes to keep out flies. I use this wire on all traps and collecting boxes, excepting the funnel trap mentioned above, and hope to try it on that soon. The curtain is not rolled up but is folded up, when setting the trap, and is held in this position by the stick. A roll curtain is not quick enough. The dimensions of the trap overall are 4' x 2' and 16" high in front, the curtain being 19" wide overall, but 2" are around the lath which slides, and 4" are tacked to the top, making the actual opening covered by the curtain when down about 3'8" x 14".

The Box Trap.—This trap was suggested by the trap of my younger days; three bricks and a roof slate. The photo, figure 35, shows my Jay size, made from a coal oil box sawn in half lengthwise, giving me two traps. I have made them down to Junco size, some six inches square, when a shingle serves as a lid. These latter have the front of wire, but have one bad fault; if long-tailed birds try too small a trap they are likely to lose their tails. On account of this I am giving up the small ones and intend to stick to the Jay size only. These will work just as well with the smaller birds, only on account of the necessary extra depth are not so popular.

The great advantage of this trap is, that if away from home and a trap is wanted, a box may be obtained from the nearest grocer, and a pocket knife will put the trap in working order. Almost any sort of box will do.