

WITH THE BIRD BANDERS

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

One Gambel Sparrow.—On October 17, 1924, a Gambel Sparrow (*Zonotrichia l. gambeli*) was given band no. 138743 at my home near Buena Park, California. It wore the immature plumage when banded and remained about the station, repeating on twenty-three different days. During February and March, 1925, it often repeated two or three times a day, and was last retaken on March 31.

On October 14, 1925, this bird, then in fresh adult plumage, returned from its summer in the north. It was again in the trap on October 17 and was then carried to John McB. Robertson's banding station, $\frac{3}{8}$ of a mile from my station, and turned loose at 2:30 P. M. The following morning, October 18, at 8:30 A. M., the bird had returned and was again caught by me at my banding station.—JAMES A. CALDER, *Buena Park, California, October 30, 1925.*

NOTE.—We would like to hear the result when a hundred of Calder's birds had been liberated at Robertson's, and a hundred of Robertson's liberated at Calder's. The experiment should be repeated at different seasons, and duplicated in subsequent seasons.—J. E. L.

A Warbler Trap.—The accompanying illustrations show a warbler trap and some of its catches. The trap is a 12 inch cube made of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch hardware cloth with the top entirely open except when it is closed by a sliding cover. The rails on which the cover slides are made of stiff wire and are fastened to the top corners.

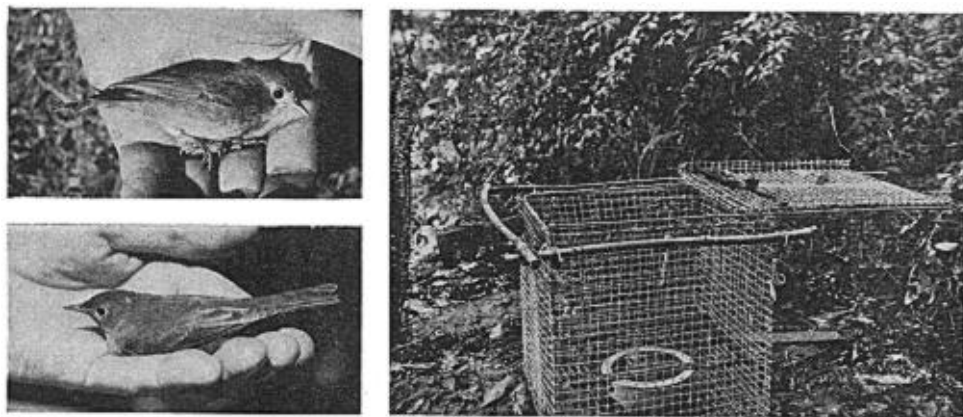


Fig. 20. WARBLER TRAP AND TWO OF ITS CATCHES. UPPER LEFT, A CALAVERAS WARBLER; LOWER LEFT, A YELLOW WARBLER.

The rectangle of sticks inside the trap close above the water basin is the treadle which is hinged to the right side of the trap as seen in the picture. The flat stick outside the trap is a partial counterbalance for the treadle and is handy in setting the trigger. From the point where this counterweight touches the treadle a stiff wire extends to the top of the trap where it engages one of the cross wires of the cover. A weight (an old monkey wrench in this case) is attached to the cover by a string which extends across the top of the trap. The weight of a bird, when it alights on the treadle, pulls the stiff wire downward and disengages the cover. The weight then drops, pulling the cover across the top of the trap. The sticks around the top are merely for perches.

The trap was first tried with a gallon can of water suspended three or four feet above the trap so that the water dropped into the water basin. This did not attract the birds very much. In two or three weeks three birds were caught in it.

Then a sprinkler was made by drilling a small hole in a plugged hose coupling. This is shown on the end of a hose on the ground at the left side of the trap. Two or three turns of wire act as baffles to direct the spray into the trap. During the first twenty-seven days that this trap was operating (September 8 to October 5, 1925) forty-eight birds were caught in it, two of which had been previously caught in other traps and one in this trap. The following is the list of those forty-eight birds: Twenty-one Pileolated Warblers and one repeat, eleven *Vermivora celata* (subsp.), one Calaveras Warbler, one Yellow Warbler, one Tennessee Warbler, two Western Warbling Vireos, two Western Tanagers, two Orioles, one Black-headed Grosbeak, one Song Sparrow, one House Finch, one Mockingbird, one Plain Titmouse (a repeat), and one Lazuli Bunting (a repeat).

Identification of the *Vermivora* group was assisted by specimens borrowed from the Los Angeles Museum. Some of the *Vermivora celata* appeared to have coloring identical with the Lutescent specimens, others appeared to have coloring identical with the Dusky specimens, and still others seemed to have coloring about midway between the two. Possibly Lutescent Warbler would be an appropriate vernacular name for this group, in autumn, at least!

The record of the Tennessee Warbler (*Vermivora peregrina*), no doubt, will excite some skepticism. After identification by use of the classification keys, a careful description was written and a sketch in colors was made. Then a skin was borrowed and the description and sketch compared with it. The agreement seemed to be perfect and ornithologists (Bishop, Law and Tavener) who have seen the evidence as described have expressed themselves as believing that the bird in question was a Tennessee Warbler. It was captured at 9 A. M., September 28, 1925. The above is given in detail so that the record will receive whatever credence it deserves.—HAROLD MICHENER, Pasadena, California, November 23, 1925.

Say Phoebe Banded at Night.—During the winter of 1924-1925 two individuals, at least, of Say Phoebe (*Sayornis sayus*) remained in the vicinity of my home. One regularly roosted on a ledge in an unoccupied hen house. On November 15, 1924, about 7:30 P. M., with the assistance of Mrs. Calder, who held a flashlight, this bird was gently lifted from the ledge, given band no. A3124, and replaced on the ledge. It was held there for a while, then gradually and cautiously released and, to our delight, remained there while we withdrew. Later observations indicated that it continued to roost on the same ledge on succeeding nights.

A third Say Phoebe appeared on March 25, 1925. On April 8 a nest composed of fine weed stems, sack twine and cobwebs, and lined with white horse hair and chicken feathers, was found in another unoccupied hen house. An unbanded parent, however, was found dead under the nest after two eggs had been laid. No bird was seen after April 10, 1925.

Although nests of this species have been found by me in the Coyote Hills some three miles away, this is the first nest I have found in the flat alluvial plain.

The first Say Phoebe for the autumn of 1925 appeared here September 22.—JAMES A. CALDER, Buena Park, California, October 10, 1925.

Mystery Band Number 3: Season 1925.—Each year during the shooting season the Biological Survey receives, in addition to many reports of registered racing pigeons, a few records of the capture of banded ducks, the bands being of unknown origin. As it is the practise of game breeders to mark their stock, it is believed that some of these cases represent full-winged birds raised in domestication, while others probably originate at shooting clubs where tame ducks are kept for use as decoys.

There is always the possibility, however, that if full data were available, the record might be applied with advantage to problems of migration. Accordingly, it is desirable that each finding be brought to the attention of ornithologists and sportsmen, through the medium of the sporting and ornithological journals. Three cases of this nature already have been reported during the present season, one of which may be directly traceable to some person residing in the territory of the Western Bird Banding Association.