

tail in the pan of water and then as he fed it froze to the tray. When he flew away two tail feathers were left on the tray.

We are hoping that the bird will either remain here or return next winter.—LUCY STROCK CHAPIN, Hartford, Conn.

White-throats in Cohasset, Mass.*—Except near the coast-line the White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) is a very uncommon winter resident in Massachusetts, at least in the latitude of Cohasset, approximately 42° 15' north, and even in Cohasset the number of birds wintering is variable, never large and often they are practically absent. The winter season of 1925-26 is one of great scarcity of this species. Whether or not White-throats winter in Cohasset appears to depend on the shuffle and deal of the various factors collectively called weather affecting their southward migration. In migration periods, however, many of this species are observed. Unavoidable weather conditions during the fall migration, such as heavy and early snows, are believed to be the main reason why this species is fairly common during some winters. Conversely, a warm and stormless fall appears to make for few White-throats in Cohasset the following winter, and such, as we have just said, is the present winter season.

A study of our banding records during four winter seasons, beginning with the season of 1922-23, shows thus far no evidence that certain birds or groups of birds of this species regularly travel either north or south *via* this locality, and the same is found to be true at other Cohasset stations. We have had, however, two White-throat returns, or to be more exact, one return and one return² out of a total of 59 birds banded prior to the present winter season. White-throat No. 66584, banded February 20, 1923, returned January 8, 1924; and No. 37603, banded November 11, 1923, returned January 25, 1925, and again January 1, 1926. No. 37603 appears to have wintered during the three seasons that the bird has visited Cohasset.

The inconstancy of wintering birds of this species in Cohasset no doubt accounts in large part for the small number of returns secured. Were the station situated within their regular wintering range, more birds and more returns would be probable, and in this connection attention is called to S. Prentiss Baldwin's observations at Thomasville, Georgia, where a wintering group of White-throats occupied a particular clump of shrubbery for several successive seasons. Here a Sparrow banded in 1916 returned in '17, '20, and '21 (see *The Auk*, Vol. XXXIX, p. 216). Four Sparrows out of six banded in 1916 returned in 1917, or 66.66 per cent (see *The Auk*, Vol. XXXVIII, p. 236). —MR. AND MRS. RICHARD B. HARDING, Brookline, Mass.

Sight Repeats.—At my station in Cohasset, Massachusetts, colored enameled bands have been placed on Purple Finches, Goldfinches, Juncos, Tree Sparrows, Downy Woodpeckers, Siskins, etc. Most of these birds were banded during last fall and winter seasons.

Birds at this station are fed and trapped at an average distance of less than twenty feet from the house. A feeding-shelf beside the window, mounting a small, non-automatic trap, is much frequented by birds, and a large percentage of those banded at this station were taken in the shelf trap. Thus by concentrating the trapping and feeding places in a near-by

* This note has been somewhat elaborated by the Editor.

area of small size, opportunity is readily afforded to identify the colored bands worn by the birds.

The number of sight repeats recorded during February, 1926, has varied from three or four up to forty-seven per day, the days when careful observation was carried on the most hours naturally yielding the highest number. These figures do not include the numerous cases where a bird was identified at the station more than once a day. Were such repeat records included, the sight repeats on some days would have numbered well over one hundred. There are few moments during the feeding periods of each day when at least one bird wearing a colored band could not be seen, and often nearly my entire group of wintering Tree Sparrows, numbering thirteen birds, each having an identifying band-color, could be seen together.

Handling of repeats here at this writing is not a prominent part of banding work, and such birds are not trapped as a rule excepting when they are taken incidentally with new birds.

The chance that birds wearing colored bands placed by other banders visited my station and were mistaken for my own during the period covered by this note, *i.e.* February, is too improbable to warrant much consideration, for the reasons, (1) that no other banders in Cohasset use colored bands, and (2) that, excluding the Finches, the local bird population is not augmented to any extent by new arrivals during this month. To mistake another's bird for my own it would be necessary that the color or colors (for single bands are often enameled both red and blue, red and yellow, etc.), the species, often the sex, and the tarsus on which the band is placed (right or left) should accord. In addition to these factors of safety, a gradual checking up of the birds wearing colored bands, frequenting the station, goes on by the normal process of repeating.

Attention has already been called to the probability that colored bands will prove a fruitful method in the hands of bird-banders in studying bird matings, families, and groups in general.—C. L. WHITTLE, Cohasset, Mass., March 15, 1926.

Willis H. Ropes of Danvers, Massachusetts, is one of three banders in that town, the other two being S. Gilbert Emilio and Charles H. Preston, whose stations are situated in a rough triangle having sides about two miles in length. Since banding operations began there in 1923, over two thousand birds have been banded. Of these, one-fourth to one-third were nesting birds or their young, and the remainder migrants passing through or wintering.

The fact that during this period of over three years, only one bird (a Tree Sparrow, No. A51633, banded by C. H. Preston, January 16, 1926, and recovered February 15, 1926, by Willis H. Ropes) was recovered at the station of either of the other two banders, is of considerable significance in that it shows statistically the limited areas satisfactory to the wintering residents. It will be said that banding stations offer artificial food-supplies and that the conditions they bring about have no parallel in nature, but, a survey of the wintering grounds, say of Sparrows in general, reveals the fact that many weedy tracts of very small area, in our Southern States in particular, furnish food for many birds throughout the wintering season, and doubtless birds are quite as content with the bounty provided by nature as with that provided by man, and probably more so, since the variety furnished is far greater. That there are no successive takings of the same migrant passing through Danvers only adds another instance to the common experience and emphasizes the necessity of having many more

stations if the requisite details of migration are to be learned by banding methods.—C. L. W.

Nesting Records of song Sparrows 25935 and 39235.—The following known history of two Song Sparrows (*Melospiza m. melodia*) will add another example of the sort described by Mrs. L. C. Harrill in the last number of our "Bulletin," namely, a case where a mated pair of this species raised two broods for two years in succession—1924 and 1925—at my station in Rock (Middleboro), Massachusetts. Song Sparrow 25935 was banded May 22, 1923, and fathered or mothered two broods during that year. On March 23, 1924, I banded its mate, No. 39235. These I called my pair of "35's." The latter bird pretty surely passed the winter season of 1923-24 with me, but 25935 migrated in the fall of '23 and returned April 1, 1924.

During the nesting season of '24 this pair raised two broods and in the fall both parent birds migrated.

On April 1, 1925, 25935 appeared as a return², returning on the same date as in 1924, 39235 appearing May 15th. As was the case in 1924, they raised two broods, and in the fall they again migrated.

This pair of birds would come singly or together to the station for food for their young, and were frequently taken as repeats. They were the only pair of this species nesting near by during the two seasons. Of their young I banded four in 1924 and five in 1925. All nine were trapped in company with their repeating parents.

For two years prior to 1923, before I had taken up banding work, there was a single pair of Song Sparrows nesting about the premises, and, while my intimate acquaintance with their habits during this period leads me to believe that they were the same birds, later known as my pair of '35's, I will not enumerate the reasons for the faith that is in me. A. W. HIGGINS, Rock, Mass., February, 1926.

A Junco Return.*—When a bird returns three times the record means that it is over three years old. This bird's history, as appears from my Cohasset records, is as follows: It was banded January 25, 1923. It was a return February 4, 1924, a return² January 20, 1925, and a return³ March 25, 1926, and the record shows that the bird must have been at least three years and nine months old on March 25, 1926. I hope that other banders will send the editor all records of this sort relating to any bird, for one of the things bird-banding is going to prove is the average age of uncaged birds.—L. B. FLETCHER.

Juncos with Diseased Feet.—Out of ten or fifteen Juncos (*Junco p. hyemalis*) at our station between December 11, 1925, and February 22 1926, four were found with diseased toes. In detail the records of the four birds thus afflicted follow:

No. A34083, banded December 11, had a whitish lump at base of the claw on the middle toe. A puncture by a sterilized needle showed that

* The word "return" as used here is that defined in "The Auk," Vol. XLII, 1924, p. 329 (footnote).