

BANDING GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULLS AT LAKE  
GEORGE, NOVA SCOTIA

BY R. W. TUFTS

At Lake George, Yarmouth County, Nova Scotia, there is a colony of Great Black-backed Gulls (*Larus marinus*) whose numbers are estimated in thousands.

On July 21, 1925, I visited Lake George, selecting the largest of the nesting islands for my operations. At that season of the year this island was literally alive with young gulls in various stages of development, many of them being too large and active to permit of easy capture. I succeeded in capturing and banding forty-six in the few hours at my disposal. The bands used were numbered 5485-5549 and 333001-333033.

On November 19, 1925, 333028 was taken at Wellfleet, Mass., reported by L. R. Gardinier. On December 3d of the same year 333023 was found dead on the shore of St. Mary's Bay, Digby County, Nova Scotia, approximately twenty-five miles from the place of banding.

On July 28 and 29, 1926, the colony was again visited by Assistant Migratory Bird Officer Colbran and the writer, on which occasion 187 gulls were banded, the following series being used:

Nos. 42177-6421850  
" 421331-421340  
" 418416-418425  
" 333034-333050  
" 421701-421775

During this visit, as well as on previous ones, considerable numbers of immature gulls were found dead on the island. Wounded and dying birds were also noted, all of which showed injuries on the top of the skull, presumably the work of ill-natured adults. Many of the dead showed similar wounds on the head.

During October, 1926, a number of duck-hunters visited this island and noticed among the dead birds a number wearing aluminum bands. Assuming that the return of these bands might entail remuneration, as is the case in recovering banded fish, they searched carefully over the entire island and found eighteen in all, which were in due course returned to me, all from this year's birds.

Another year it is my intention to visit all the nesting islands of this group and carry on banding operations on a much larger scale. Mr. H. H. Cleaves, formerly of New York, visited Lake George some years ago and secured some remarkable photographs of gull life. This colony of Great Black-backed Gulls is said to be one of the largest in North America.

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## THE INFLUENCE OF GROUPS OR CLANS AS AFFECTING THE PRESENCE OF BIRDS AT BANDING STATIONS

BY CHARLES L. WHITTLE

DURING my early banding work it seemed that the movements of birds at my station during the winter season were so unaccountably erratic that little could be learned by their study. Some birds like Juncos coming regularly in groups and feeding long, while others dropped in for a minute only, feeding nervously and soon flying away. Certain ones were seen daily; others were irregular attendants. Among these seemingly chaotic comings and goings, especially in the winter season, can we detect hidden causes which account for such contrasted behavior.

The presence of Goldfinches, Pine Siskins, and Purple Finches is in particular subject to great variations, the make-up of the flocks visiting the station varying every day, new birds appearing and old ones disappearing for a short time only or for the season in many instances. These three species are characteristically roamers, as shown by the fact that banded birds of all three are frequently taken at several different stations in Cohasset. On the other hand, Juncos and Tree Sparrows have rarely been known in this town to move about from one station to another.

Juncos and Tree Sparrows, in contrast to Purple Finches and Goldfinches, characteristically occur as small local groups or clans throughout the winter season, and such groups may remain during the daytime within narrow limits for months, their fixity being governed by the food-supply, other things being equal. We thus have here in Massachusetts, in winter at least, two well-marked types of birds having strongly contrasted habits—roaming species and sedentary species.