

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor of the Bulletin:

In the April, 1929, number, Mr. Wendell P. Smith in his article, "A Preliminary List of Migratory Species which Return to the Same Wintering Area," lists four return Hermit Thrushes having been reported by W. P. Wharton, Summerville, South Carolina. In making this statement Mr. Smith is in error. During my four years of banding at Summerville, but one return Hermit Thrush has ever been taken; this was a bird banded in 1926, and retaken in 1927. Mention is made of this bird in my article in the January, 1928, number, near the bottom of page sixteen.

In the same number, in his article entitled "A Four Month Campaign Banding Purple Finches," Frederick A. Saunders gives an account on pages 61 and 62 of "two cases of apparent injury, which might perhaps be classified as temporary paralysis due to excitement." I have experienced a number of similar cases, and have written to several well-known banders regarding them; but these men stated that they had never observed a similar trouble in their experience, and they were at a loss to account for it. In my observation, the birds seem to lose their power of flight permanently; at least I have never known them to recover it although I have frequently taken such birds for several days running after the trouble developed. My impression is that the injury results from the bird getting one or both of its wings free while being held in the hand. On a few occasions I have sensed a slight snap while the bird was struggling; in other cases, however, I have not been aware that anything unusual happened, except that the bird had got its wing free for a brief moment. I am now extremely careful to hold the bird in such a way that the wings have the least possible opportunity to leave the sides of the body, and when this object has been successfully accomplished I have never known the injury mentioned to occur. For the further information of banders who may have had similar experiences or who might be interested, I will say that the birds affected with this trouble do not trail either wing; on the contrary my impression is that one wing—probably the injured one—is held slightly higher than the other when the bird is running on the ground. I hope we may have some further light on this question from other banders.

WILLIAM P. WHARTON.

Fiveoaks Farm, Groton, Massachusetts, June 10, 1929.