

Map 1.
Purple Grackle Recoveries in Pennsylvania and Near-by New Jersey.

RECOVERIES OF PURPLE GRACKLES BANDED AT PAOLI, PENNSYLVANIA, 1923-1931

By HORACE D. McCANN

PAOLI is situated on the south rim of Chester Valley, a broad limestone valley about two miles wide, running from northeast to southwest across Chester County, Pennsylvania. Diagonally across the valley is historic Valley Forge, and beyond in the same direction about ten miles lives my nearest bird-banding neighbor, R. J. Middleton. For a considerable distance to the north and south of the Chester Valley the country is rolling, well-watered with many small streams, and the Purple Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*) is generally distributed over this area in the nesting season.

The Grackles generally arrive from their winter quarters during the last week of February, the average date of arrival over a period of thirty-three years being February 27th.¹ In early March their "kerlinking" is a cheerful and outstanding spring note. They soon spread over the country, and nest-building is promptly started. A tall Norway spruce is a favorite location, but as these are scarce, most of the Grackles have to be satisfied with less choice situations. The past

¹"The Ornithology of Chester County, Pennsylvania" by Franklin Lorenzo Burns, 1919, p. 172.

season several nests were made in a row of comparatively young, slender Lombardy poplars.

In 1927 the first adult was banded March 9th, six being banded between that date and April 16th. On May 24th the first immature bird (young of the year) was trapped and the next one on June 11th. On June 27th they began coming to the traps in numbers, and in the last four days of the month fourteen young and one adult were banded. During July ninety-three young were banded; a particularly large group of fifty-four were banded from July 13th to 18th. Further reference to this group will be made below. During August and the first ten days of September nineteen immature and one adult were banded, bringing the season to a close. Of the entire one hundred and thirty-eight banded in 1927, only one repeated, that on the day following the banding.

Of the above group of fifty-four, banded during a period of six days in 1927, it is interesting to note that we had five recoveries the same year, and three in 1928; these appear on the accompanying maps and tabulations. The recovery at Ellerson, Virginia, November 24th, is unusual as all other recoveries from Virginia and North Carolina have been considerably later in the season.

A total of forty-nine were banded during the season of 1928. Only one of the forty-nine repeated, an immature which was trapped on the day following the banding. Recoveries were not so numerous or interesting as those of Grackles banded last year.

In 1929 only one adult was among the sixty-three Purple Grackles banded during the season, and none repeated.

In 1930 fifty-two Grackles were banded, of which five only were adults. This season there were several repeats, the most on record during the eight years of banding. Two repeated once each; one repeated once, five days after banding; and one repeated a single time eight days after banding. These were all juveniles. One, however, had the trap habit, a juvenile, banded July 10th; this bird repeated nineteen times from July 10th to 19th, being taken as often as six times in one day.

Out of three hundred and five banded Grackles, we have had but four returns (See *Bird-Banding* for July, 1931, p. 129). There have been twenty-four near-by recoveries, birds which have been shot or found dead within a dozen miles of our station from one to three years after banding. Several of the recoveries have been Grackles that were shot in the late summer or early autumn of the season in which they were

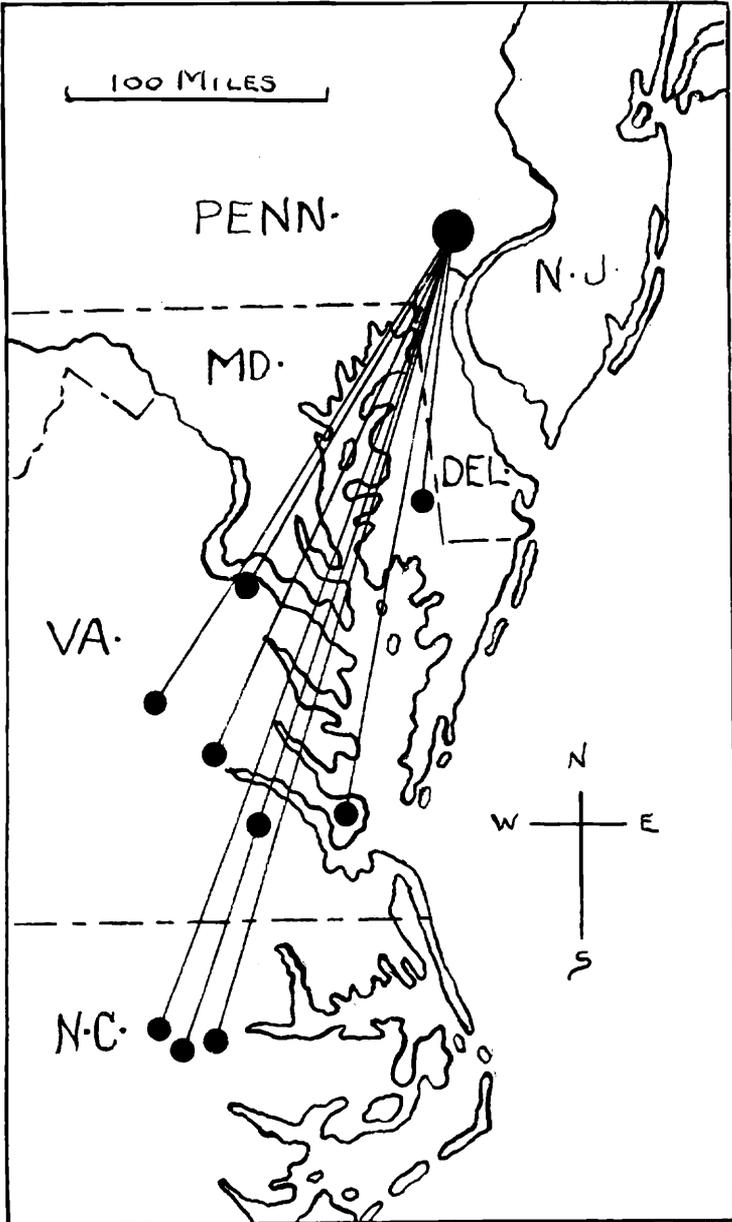
banded. These were all east from Paoli early in the season, and southward later in the season, indicating a drift of the Grackles eastward to the Delaware River Valley near Philadelphia, then turning southward following the course of the river (see Table 1). Eight recoveries have come from an area probably not over one hundred miles across in the southeastern corner of Virginia and northeastern North Carolina, where the birds were apparently wintering. These movements are indicated in the two accompanying tables and maps.

RECOVERIES OF PURPLE GRACKLES NEAR PAOLI
(Table 1)

| <i>Band Number</i> | <i>Date Banded</i> | <i>Age</i> | <i>Recovery Date</i> | <i>Place of Recovery</i> | <i>Remarks</i> |
|--------------------|--------------------|------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 274346 | Aug. 19, 1923 | Ad. | Mar. 31, 1927 | Wayne, Pa. | Found dead by F. N. Platt |
| 316365 | July 12, 1924 | Juv. | Aug. 19, 1924 | Strafford, Pa. | Shot by unknown |
| 316374 | July 18, 1924 | Juv. | May 28, 1927 | West Chester, Pa. | Found dead by I. McFarland |
| 316385 | July 23, 1924 | Juv. | Aug. - 1927 | Adamstown, Pa. | Shot by W. Shabach |
| 316405 | Aug. 2, 1924 | Juv. | Aug. 15, 1924 | Berwyn, Pa. | Shot by unknown |
| 281352 | Mar. 18, 1925 | Juv. | Apr. 8, 1925 | Cedar Hollow, Pa. | Shot by unknown |
| 284502 | June 30, 1925 | Juv. | Apr. 1, 1927 | Media, Pa. | Found dead by Wm. L. Rowland |
| 284510 | July 6, 1925 | Juv. | Aug. 17, 1927 | Folsom, Pa. | Shot by unknown |
| 284523 | July 11, 1925 | Juv. | Oct. - 1925 | Berwyn, Pa. | Shot; reported by F. L. Burns |
| 359508 | July 21, 1925 | Juv. | Mar. 27, 1930 | Media, Pa. | Found dead by J. P. Hutchinson |
| 442655 | Sept. 6, 1926 | Juv. | Aug. 24, 1928 | Phoenixville, Pa. | Found dead by Miss A. Cornet |
| 441317 | July 5, 1927 | Juv. | Aug. 6, 1927 | Bridgeport, Pa. | Shot by Felix Piermani |
| 441345 | July 13, 1927 | Juv. | Oct. 1, 1927 | W. Philadelphia, Pa. | Shot by T. Parker |
| 441349 | July 14, 1927 | Juv. | Dec. 3, 1927 | Moore, Pa. | Shot by A. Tilgman |
| 441373 | July 16, 1927 | Juv. | Oct. 4, 1927 | Bechtelsville, Pa. | Shot by Arling S. Fox |
| 441378 | July 16, 1927 | Juv. | Dec. 26, 1927 | Hancock's Bridge, N.J. | Shot by Oliver Ayars |
| 441383 | July 16, 1927 | Juv. | Feb. 1, 1928 | Newport, N.J. | Found dead by Addie Lore |
| 441385 | July 17, 1927 | Juv. | Nov. 5, 1928 | Philadelphia, Pa. | Shot by J. Smith |
| 441391 | July 18, 1927 | Juv. | Nov. 30, 1927 | Berwyn, Pa. | Shot by Wm. Doyle, Jr. |
| 525036 | Aug. 30, 1927 | Juv. | Mar. 13, 1929 | Westtown, Pa. | Shot by W. G. Hayward |
| 525064 | June 28, 1928 | Juv. | July 11, 1929 | Strafford, Pa. | Shot by unknown |
| A342714 | July 28, 1929 | Juv. | Feb. 7, 1930 | Eldora, N. J. | Found dead by K. S. Hand |
| A342743 | Aug. 7, 1929 | Juv. | May 17, 1930 | Collingswood, N. J. | Found dead in bird-bath by Mrs. B. S. Dorset |
| A525076 | July 6, 1928 | Juv. | July 31, 1929 | Lansdowne, Pa. | Found dead by Hazel C. Bander |

PURPLE GRACKLES RECOVERED IN THE SOUTH
(Table 2)

| <i>Band Number</i> | <i>Date Banded</i> | <i>Age</i> | <i>Recovery Date</i> | <i>Place of Recovery</i> | <i>Remarks</i> |
|--------------------|--------------------|------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 316349 | July 2, 1924 | Im. | Dec. 4, 1924 | Charles City, Va. | |
| 293519 | July 11, 1924 | Ad. | Feb. 13, 1926 | Terra Ceia, N.C. | Shot by Delma Fetterton |
| 316381 | July 22, 1924 | Im. | Feb. 15, 1926 | Elberon, Va. | |
| 281390 | June 15, 1925 | Im. | Mar. 12, 1926 | Williamstown, N. C. | |
| 284868 | Aug. 11, 1925 | Im. | Jan. 2, 1926 | Hobgood, N. C. | Shot by J. L. Swain |
| 288849 | June 26, 1926 | Im. | Jan. 2, 1927 | Hampton, Va. | D. L. Miller (presumably shot) |
| 439386 | July 10, 1926 | Im. | Mar. 30, 1931 | Hooes, King George County, Va. | Captured by S. Jones |
| 442649 | Aug. 30, 1926 | Im. | Dec. 17, 1928 | Preston, Md. | Shot by W. Wheelleton |
| 441390 | July 18, 1927 | Im. | Nov. 24, 1928 | Ellerson, Va. | Shot by J. W. Hollins |



Map 2.
Purple Grackle Recoveries in the South.

The traps used were of several types, all of which have been described in the "Bird-Bander's Manual" of the Biological Survey: the Government sparrow-trap, Gillespie "round-house" trap, clover-leaf, top-tilting, and Chardonneret traps. By far the greatest number have been taken in the last two traps; the top-tilting trap was placed on a box about three feet above ground level, and the Chardonneret in a small tree about five feet from the ground. The other traps were all on the ground. A few birds were trapped in the Chardonneret trap when placed on the ground. Crumbled bread or soda crackers made satisfactory bait.

SOME NOTES ON THE BREEDING OF THE VESPER SPARROW¹

By LINCOLN BRYANT, JR.

DURING the summer of 1931, while a member of the staff of the Austin Ornithological Research Station, I gathered some data on the nesting-habits of the Vesper Sparrow, *Poæetes g. gramineus* (Gmelin). That part of it is presented which permits a comparison of the location and construction of the three nests found, details their histories, and gives the results from banding the only successful brood.

The first nest was found June 26th on a sandy hillside near the station. It was sunk into a depression in the ground about an inch deep under the edge of a tuft of grass, from which its entrance faced northwest. The foundation was of coarse grasses interwoven with rootlets, and the lining was of finer grasses interspersed with a few horsehairs. When discovered it contained two eggs. When visited the next day a third egg had been laid, completing the clutch. Incubation continued until July 2d, when the nest was found torn from its hollow, and its contents missing.

The second nest was found June 30th in a field two hundred yards from the station. Its construction differed from that of the first in that its lining was entirely of horsehair. It measured three inches in diameter, eight inches in circumference, and one inch in depth. It also was sunk into the ground under a sheltering tussock, but differed in that it faced out from the southwest side. When discovered it contained two eggs, and, when revisited on July 3d, it contained three. Subsequently

¹Contribution Number 3 from the Austin Ornithological Research Station.