

A House Sparrow in close quarters in a trap or cage will methodically examine all openings and chances of possible escape while other species of birds will continue to bunt their heads. Often when one is taken from the gathering cage it will face about and watch closely for a chance to slip past the hand. An astonishing thing, however, is to see one diving into and swimming under water in its efforts to escape. My first six-cell water trap, made in 1931, is still in use, where this phenomenon is repeated every summer. This trap, made of hardware cloth, is circular, thirty inches in diameter and eight inches high. It is divided by vertical walls into six triangular compartments with apices meeting in the center. A water-pan seventeen inches in diameter and three and a half inches deep is so attached to the bottom of the trap that each cell has an equal segment of the water-surface. When the pan is full of water, the dividing walls extend three-quarters of an inch below the surface, and, to prevent birds from becoming submerged, a circular piece of hardware cloth (about 13 or 14 inches in diameter) is laced to the lower edges, thus making a sort of under water floor.

In this particular trap the floor is rather scant, and a considerable space (one and a half inches) around the rim of the pan has no floor. It is into this deep-water space that the Sparrow will dive and swim twelve to fourteen inches under water across the pan, to come up in another compartment. When five or six compartments have each captured a Sparrow, sometimes two, or even three, will be found in one cell, and when the trap is approached by visitors, the birds usually promptly dive and swim back again. While all Sparrows do not "take to water," I have seen both young and adults do it. So far no other species of small birds has attempted it.—J. F. BRENCLE, M.D., Northville, South Dakota.

Weekly Visits With the Black Tern in Wisconsin.—My usual procedure of Black Tern (*Chlidonias nigra surinamensis*) banding is to row a boat from one nest to the next and hunt the young that are hiding in the rushes near by. We know as we approach a nest, that a single alarm signal from the parent birds will induce the little ones to leave the nest and hide, and that they are usually very well hidden before one arrives at the nest. A continuous danger signal is given by the adult birds flying overhead while one remains in the vicinity, which increases and becomes a more rapid *kip-kip-kip* call, occasionally intermingled with a screech. The interpretation of the different calls employed by these birds, varying from very soft to loud, harsh or screechy, depending upon whether there are eggs, young, or immature flying birds, can only be acquired by careful study and observance of many individual families. The calls given by the adults are important in locating the young more readily. A call seldom heard is that of the mother bird, a soft, low cooing, calling her little ones out of hiding back to the nest, and assuring them of their safety.

In 1933 and 1934 a number of nests were marked with metal tags and a record of each was carefully kept. Many nests in the immediate vicinity were also carefully observed, and by following a marked route we avoided much useless rowing and saved the birds much disturbance. An experiment was carried out by the use of artificial eggs to determine the tenacity of the brooding parent in remaining to brood these eggs after her own were hatched. Artificial eggs were placed in fifteen nests. These eggs were turned out of hard maple wood and painted to represent a natural tern egg, for which service I am indebted to Mr. Clarence S. Jung, of Milwaukee, who kindly gave his time and the use of his machinery in their making. In some of the nests one artificial egg was placed, in others two, and the resulting behavior of the adults over a period of three weeks proved to be very interesting. It conclusively proved that you cannot fool a Black Tern into attempting to hatch wooden eggs. In the majority of nests the artificial eggs were pushed out, and usually lay about six inches away. Once a week the wooden eggs were replaced, but to no avail as each new visit found them out of the nest. Nest No. 11, which had two artificial eggs besides three of its own, was built higher than the average nest and large enough to accommodate the five eggs. This nest was basket-like, resembling that of a Gallinule or Coot, but, of course, much smaller. One of the

ests contained two eggs and one artificial egg. We found the artificial egg pushed deep into the bottom of the nest and a new floor of dead rushes laid over it. This egg was again placed in with the others, but it was out of the nest a week later.

In one of the nests, in which a piped egg lay, a pure white artificial egg was placed. After a few minutes a hovering bird came down, stood beside the white egg viewing it with one eye and then the other, and finally attempted to pick it up with her bill as if to carry it away in the manner of carrying eggshells. The egg would always slip or roll away, whereupon she began to peck at it as if to break it. Finally she gave up, sat down on the nest, and drew the white egg under her.

Many nests are very poor at the time of the laying of the first egg. When the second and third is laid, the nests are much improved, showing at least some effort in nest-building, for the best Black Tern nest, which is only a handful of decaying vegetable matter, is nothing to marvel at. They are usually kept in good condition until the young are about nine days old, when no more material is brought to the nest, and it appears to be deserted, as the young are probably brooded elsewhere. When not in use the nests soon deteriorate, and a few rains will soon wash them away so that they become unrecognizable.—PAUL WILLIAM HOFFMANN, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Eastern Warbling Vireo Returns and Repeats.—At my banding station in South Dakota I have banded forty-one Eastern Warbling Vireos (*Vireo g. gilvus*), all taken in a water trap. The following table gives the bandings by months for four years:

	May	June	Aug.	Sept.
1932.....	6	2	1	0
1933.....	2	4	2	0
1934.....	18	3	0	1
1935.....	1	1	0	0

The earliest date of banding was May 13, 1932; the latest date was September 15, 1934. Of these bandings there were four returns and eight repeats. The returns were F97319, banded June 11, 1932, recaptured in the same place August 4, 1933; F97305, banded May 30, 1932, recaptured in the same trap June 6, 1934, after a two-year interval. This bird also repeated June 12, 1934; L3694, banded May 17, 1933 recaptured in the same place May 20, 1934; H93914, banded August 20, 1933, recaptured May 21, 1934. The repeats came back in from one- to twelve-day intervals. One bird repeated twice at two-day intervals. It is interesting to note that three of the four returns came with the largest number of bandings in May and June of 1934.—J. F. BRECKLE, M.D., Northville, South Dakota.

Two Interesting Red-Eyed Towhee Returns-W.—In my article "Survival as Indicated by Returns to Summerville, South Carolina" in the October, 1935, number of *Bird-Banding*, pages 125 to 130, it was indicated that returns of Red-eyed Towhees did not point to a very long life-span. Therefore it is of interest to record the taking, during my sojourn in Summerville this winter, of two birds, each presumably at least six and one-half years old. These are A203980, ♂, banded January 4, 1930, and retaken on January 12, 1936, and A234731, ♀, banded February 2, 1930, and retaken this season on December 24, 1935. The latter bird had also been recorded in January, 1931; January, 1934; and January, 1935. The bands on both birds had worn so thin that it was thought best to change them, and they accordingly now carry the numbers 34-246189 and 34-246161, respectively.—WILLIAM P. WHARTON, Summerville, South Carolina.

Notes on the Wandering of Immature Catbirds.—For several years the writer has wanted to learn if the scores of immature Catbirds (*Dumetella carolinensis*) banded each season were the young of near-by-nesting summer residents. An opinion based on the inconsistency of single-seasonal matings in which the first nesting was successful has been in the negative.