

Cowbirds sometimes attach themselves to other foster parents. The only case I can find of Robins raising Cowbirds was that of Friedmann's where he "put two very young Cowbirds in a Robin's nest which contained only eggs at the time. The Robins stopped incubating their own eggs and took care of and reared the young Cowbirds."

Here is an interesting field for experiment. Instead of destroying that next Cowbird egg, put it in a Robin's nest, or give it to an English Sparrow, House Wren or Starling, and watch what happens.

We often read of "the same pair of Robins" returning year after year to the same nest under the porch, but the identity of the birds is usually taken for granted. In 1929 a pair of color-banded Robins raised three broods between March 27 and July 12 on our neighbors' porch in Columbus, the first in a nest built by the female on the southwest corner, the others in a nest she built in the northeast corner. Neither of these birds was seen after that year. In 1930 an *unbanded pair* adopted the nest in the southwest corner.—MARGARET M. NICE, 5708 Kenwood Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

NOTES ON TECHNIQUE

Two basic bait mixtures are used at the Wharton Bird Banding Station. One is aimed at the seed-eating small bird group, mostly Fringillidae; the other at larger species, mainly *Icteridae*. Two separate trap models with two and four-inch entrances respectively, are used in conjunction with these mixtures. Thus by correlating the sizes of entrances and baits offered the two groups, it is possible to reduce to a minimum the association in the traps of larger birds with smaller ones, and the consequent possibility of injury to the small birds.

Millet, canary seed, hemp, sunflower. These in a 4-2-1-1 ratio by bulk make a mixture with a wide appeal to the whole finch family. It also attracts members of Paridae and others. Golden millet (German) is the millet generally used, but if an unfavorable price differential exists between this and other varieties, a proportion of the millet in the mixture can be other than golden. Japanese, and both large yellow and red millets (the last two are both Proso millets), have been used, but it was rather definitely proven that the red is less readily taken than the others. Because of its tendency to spoil, chick feed is not added to the mixture as it used to be. The naturally polished surface of the seeds give good protection against spoiling by mildews and moisture. They will sprout, of course.

A grain mixture of cracked corn, unhulled rice, oats, and Japanese buckwheat, roughly in ratio by volume of 5-2-1-1, has been found excellent for Red-winged Blackbirds and Bronzed Grackles. The oats in the mixture probably aided this bait to attract male Bobolinks prior to the nesting season. Twenty were trapped in 1939. In 1940 eight and one female were banded and a return from the previous year trapped. The buckwheat has aided in attracting a few mourning doves into the traps. This species is also fond of hemp.

Oats soaked in water for a few days were very efficient during winter months as a bait for White-throated Sparrows and Meadow Larks in South Carolina. For unknown reasons this bait has not been found satisfactory in Massachusetts.

By relying upon the two mixtures referred to above, plus the use of water, a large number of species can be trapped. Seventy-three were trapped at the Wharton Station in 1939. Such baits have the advantage of being unattractive to cats and dogs. When it is found desirable to resort to bread and cracker crumbs, meat scraps, nuts, and suet, it is good policy to raise the traps well off the ground by means of a table, bench, or other similar support.—EDWIN A. MASON, Wharton Bird Banding Station, Groton, Massachusetts.