

giving a "handle" 2 feet long. To the top part of this handle is fastened one end of a ball of kite string.

After dark the bander climbs up on the roof to the chimney (very quietly and stealthily since the swifts are surprisingly light sleepers) and covers the top with an insect net or trout landing net. Then a flashlight is shined down the chimney to see if swifts are present; a headlight is infinitely superior, for besides leaving both hands free it directs a beam of light to wherever one turns his head. When birds are present a quantity of the kite string is payed out in advance—enough to permit the can to be lowered rapidly to a point below the lowest swift. The biggest problem in this work is to prevent the frightened birds from dropping down into the fireplace or whatever the chimney connects with; getting the can down rapidly solves it. One should take care not to allow the can to bang against the chimney wall, for the noise may send the swifts fluttering up into his face and some may escape.

To secure any desired swift, the can is brought up to it from below so that it does not quite touch the bird's tail, whereupon a quick upward jerk scoops the individual into the can. Once in, a bird is apparently completely unable to escape, for it cannot gain a foothold on the slippery sides nor can it raise itself up with its wings. The swifts are hoisted up one by one and placed in a gathering cage, fastened to the operator's belt, to be taken indoors later where they may be banded and studied in detail.

If there are several adults, and young that are able to fly, in a chimney, it has been found best to capture the uppermost one first and keep working down; however, at this point the bander may have to adjust his procedure to the conditions at hand. When a lower individual is caught, the rising can sometimes frighten the upper ones into flight, and they come fluttering up to the bander at an inappropriate time; quickly covering the top with a net will prevent escapes. Should it become evident that birds are moving dangerously far down the chimney, the can should again be dropped rapidly below the lowest swift and then deliberately banged against the sides or bottom to drive them back up.

Having completed one's examinations, the swifts are returned to their chimney. If a bird be placed on the inside wall as far down as the bander can reach, it will usually drop deeper of its own accord. The advantages of this method are obvious enough: since no traps are required, a great many chimneys may be "worked" on the same night, and one need not lose time waiting for the swifts to emerge. In order to capture Chimney Swifts nesting inside buildings, the reader may wish to consult an earlier paper in *Bird-Banding*, Vol. 15, No. 2, pps. 68-71.

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Some Recoveries of Black-crowned Night Herons.—Few sight records were obtained from Black-crowned Night Herons (*Nycticorax n. naevius* Boddaert) color-banded in eastern Massachusetts in 1939 and 1940, as part of the Heron Survey. Six recoveries were reported in the years 1939 through 1942, along the Atlantic coast from Massachusetts to Florida. It was a pleasant surprise to receive two additional recoveries from the Hobbs Brook Basin rookery at Waltham, after a gap of more than eight years and within six days of each other. The following list includes all individuals of this subspecies known to have lived ten years or more, based on the files at the Patuxent Research Refuge in October 1950.

- 335776, banded at Barnstable, Mass., June 17, 1925 by L. B. Fletcher, was found at Matanzas, Cuba (letter of February 10, 1940).
- 210243, banded at Rowsonville, Mich., June 14, 1929 by T. L. Hankinson, was found dead at Collins Shoals, Tenn., on April 5, 1951.
- A702343, banded at East Springfield, Mass., June 30, 1929 by H. E. Woods, was found dead near Springfield about May 1, 1944 (this recovery was published in *Bird-Banding*, 17: 64, and still represents the oldest individual known for this subspecies).
- 542689, banded at Indian Head, Saskatchewan, July 9, 1932 by G. Lang, was found in July 1942 near Weyburn, Saskatchewan.
- B642712, banded at North Eastham, Mass., June 15, 1933 by O. L. Austin, was found dead at Great Pond, Provincetown, Mass. (probable date of death: fall of 1947).

39-645743, banded at Waltham, Mass., June 20, 1939 by E. A. Bergstrom, was found dead at Newton Upper Falls, Mass., on September 5, 1950.

39-645858, banded at Waltham, Mass., June 17, 1940 by E. A. Bergstrom, was found dead at Fort Erie, Ontario, on August 31, 1950.

The recovery of a Black-crowned Night Heron banded near the Atlantic coast in the Great Lakes drainage was unusual, as the migration paths are along the coast, but there are at least six other recoveries of birds banded in Massachusetts or New Hampshire and taken in the eastern Great Lakes area. It was noticeable that recoveries of these herons banded in New England were very scant along the shores of the Gulf of Mexico, except for Florida. Recoveries from south of the United States tended to be more-or-less due south of the region where the birds were banded. For example, the 11 Mexican recoveries were mostly from birds banded in the Middle West; the 23 Cuban recoveries were mostly from birds banded in New England. The disparity in number of recoveries from these two areas seems to arise out of the greater number of birds banded in New England, of this species. Other recoveries south of the United States can be summarized as follows: British Honduras, 3; Dominica, 1; Grand Cayman, 1; Guatemala, 2; Haiti, 2; Jamaica, 2.

The recovery of the two Waltham birds affords a little evidence as to the durability of the colored celluloid bands which they once carried (two on the 1940 bird, one on the 1939 bird). The evidence is unfortunately negative: the 1940 bird definitely had no color band when found, and it is almost certain that the 1939 bird had none. The consensus of opinion seems to be that it would be most unusual for a celluloid band to last ten years, particularly in salt water habitats.

My thanks are due to those who took part in the original banding at Waltham (notably Mr. C. S. Robbins) and to Messrs. J. J. Hickey, Seth H. Low, Jr., R. A. Paynter, Jr., and H. H. Poor, for their comments and help.—E. Alexander Bergstrom.

Trapping Rose-breasted Grosbeaks.—This species (*Hedymeles ludovicianus* L.) is reputed difficult to take. Checking my trappings I find 31 per cent of trappings in Potter traps on platforms about 3½ feet above ground, 62 percent in a small Chardonneret hung about 5½ feet above ground from the lower limb of a tree. Only seven percent of the trappings were at ground level. My bait is sunflower seeds. The species decoys readily.—Charles H. Blake, Mass. Institute of Technology, Cambridge 39, Mass.

The nesting season of a pair of banded Song Sparrows.—Nests of the Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*) may be found in southern Michigan from the third week of April well into August. By color-banding both members of a pair at Ann Arbor, Michigan, I was able to follow them through one breeding season. All young were banded while still in the nest. Consequently, they may have left the nest earlier than if they had not been disturbed.

The female was discovered adding lining to her nest on April 30, 1949. The nest was not checked until 7:00 p.m. the following day, but at that time it held one Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) egg. The contents of the nest on subsequent days was: May 2, 8:00 a.m., two Cowbird eggs; May 3, 6:45 a.m., one host and three Cowbird eggs; May 4, 7:30 a.m., two host and four Cowbird eggs; May 5, 7:45 a.m., three host and four Cowbird eggs; May 17, 7:45 a.m., three host and four Cowbird eggs. One Cowbird (down still wet) had hatched by 7:55 a.m. May 18, and eleven hours later the nest held three Cowbird nestlings. The other eggs did not hatch. The three Cowbirds fledged May 27.

On June 18, I found the second nest containing one Cowbird and four host eggs. Four of the eggs (including the Cowbird) hatched June 20 or 21, but the nest was destroyed June 23 when the weeds containing the nest were cut.

The third nest, with three host and two Cowbird eggs, was found July 2. On July 5, I found a drained Song Sparrow egg on the ground ten yards from the nest; the female was incubating three host and three Cowbird eggs. One of the Song Sparrow eggs disappeared from the nest before July 8. At 1:00 p.m. July 14, the nest held one Cowbird egg (which did not hatch), one Cowbird emerging from its egg, and one Cowbird and two Song Sparrow nestlings which had just hatched.