

GENERAL NOTES

Eleven-year-old Grackle.—Bronzed Grackle (*Quiscalus versicolor*) 42-307569, banded at Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Northampton, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, on July 17, 1945, as an adult male, was "found" in Hazlet, New Jersey in March, 1955.

The date of banding would indicate nearby nesting by this Grackle. An age of eleven years at least is indicated by this recovery record. The bird was never caught subsequent to banding at the station.—Edwin A. Mason, Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Northampton, Massachusetts.

Wing Length in the Black-capped Chickadee.—Previous study of the wing length in the Eastern Purple Finch (*Bird-Banding*, 25: 97-101) led me to tabulate my wing lengths for *Parus a. atricapillus* at Lincoln, Mass., in the three categories shown below:

Known immatures	63.5 ± 1.9 mm.; 32 birds
Known adults	65.3 ± 2.0 mm.; 21 birds
Age unknown	63.9 ± 1.9 mm.; 49 birds

This suggests that adults have wings nearly two millimeters longer than do immatures. Probably most of this increase occurs at the first postnuptial molt. Whether this holds for both sexes I do not know.

If we give known immatures a weight of 80 and known adults a weight of 20, we find a weighted average of 63.9. The precise agreement with birds of unknown age is surely the long arm of coincidence, but that the average for unknown aged birds should be close to that of the immature is equally surely no coincidence. Any series of passerines of unknown age almost certainly contains about 80 percent of birds less than one year old.

I venture to cite this as one more reason for not deducing the dimensions of a population from a very small sample. The smaller the sample the less likely is its age composition to be that of the population as a whole. Further, many wing measurements in the literature which are alleged to be of adults are actually nearly those of first winter birds.—Charles H. Blake, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass.

High Tree Sparrow Wintering Site Tenacity. — During the winter of 1954-55 a high wintering ground site tenacity was evidenced for Tree Sparrows (*Spizella arborea*) by the return of 32 (31.7%) of 103 individuals banded during the previous winter. Middleton (*Bird-Banding*, 23: 22-28; 1952) reported the return of one out of five tree sparrows while trapping in snowy winters prior to 1945, while Mason (*Bird-Banding*, 23: 28; 1952) reported a 21% return from 43 birds in Massachusetts. The following table lists records for a permanent banding station on a wildlife management area in St. Charles County, Missouri.

	1953-54	1954-55	
Total individuals banded	103	344	
New Bandings	103	312	
New Banding Repeats	39	84	
Percent New Banding Repeats		37.9	26.8
Returns			32
Percent of Returns			31.7
Repeating in Year of Return			20
Percent Repeating in Year of Return			62.5

The higher percentage of returning tree sparrows, compared to new birds which repeated during the winter of return, points to either a very specific wintering site tenacity or an acquired feeding ground habit. Repeats also showed the returning birds to be present throughout the winter period (Nov. 10-March 30).

During both winters five government sparrow traps were used while three Japanese mist nets were set on random days throughout the second winter. This differential trapping method, use of both wire traps and mist nets, partly nullified the trap shyness problem and contributed to success in retrapping the returns. (14 individual returns were taken only with nets.) Secondly, a growth of Lambs' Quarters (*Chenopodium album*) in a neglected one-quarter acre garden acted as a natural baited area, concentrating up to 300 tree sparrows at one time. This