pressure of a collective predator population on a collective prey population is roughly proportional to the relative densities of prey species. Collective predation on a collective prey tends to depress the various prey species toward their thresholds of security simultaneously, so that no one species can draw enough predation to endanger its existence. The pressure of predation is not only proportionate but steady, and thus tends to hold the increase of prey species below the point where less persistent but more drastic forces, such as intraspecific conflict, starvation and disease, come into play. Predation is a basic natural force; it must be understood by naturalist and sportsman alike before management can be fully effective. Predator control by man, except on a local, short-term basis for economic reasons, draws no justification from biological fact.

Hawks, Owls and Wildlife is by no means an easy book to read, but those who take the time to digest it will be well repaid by its stores of primary data on raptors, its reasoned conclusions on predation.—Joseph A. Hagar.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

October 30, 1957

Sir:

Probably no two netters will ever have precisely similar experiences. This leads me to suggest a few more footnotes to Mr. Low's splendid article in the July, 1957 number of *Bird-Banding*.

1. I agree in general with the comments about thrush nets on page 117, but under special conditions they have been very useful in taking mourning doves, grackles, and flickers.

2. It should be noted on the same page that the shelfstrings are subject to permanent stretch, which is best remedied by shortening them as close as possible to one end of the string.

3. There are some situations not mentioned at the top of page 119 which I have found particularly useful. Nets between two hedges work well and sometimes across a stream bed even if it is dry or nearly so. One may also improve take in forest by cutting flight paths. These are merely straight passageways about three feet wide and extending from the knees to the shoulders of the bander. They should be 40 to 60 feet long.

4. If one does roll up a net on a mailing tube or similar object (in Tropics I have used pieces of bamboo about 15 inches long with a septum in the middle) one should be sure to roll and not wind. If one does wind, the net receives a half-turn of torsion for each turn around the stick and this makes it difficult to set the net if one does the natural thing and unrolls it.

5. I find that bands on legs make almost no trouble if great care is taken to close them tight leaving no notch in which a thread can lodge.

6. I would add to the list of bad actors (pp. 125-126) bluebirds and the smaller woodpeckers.

Yours very truly,

Charles H. Blake

Box 613,
Hillsboro, N. C.

November 10, 1957

Sir:

In his review of Lanyon's *The Comparative Biology of the Meadowlarks (Bird-Banding*, **38**: 249, 1957) Austin suggests hybridization and cytological techniques in the final determination of speciation of meadowlarks. Another technique in species determination was suggested to me two years ago by Professor Linus C. Pauling of California Institute of Technology. He stated his belief that the hemoglobin molecule differs in structure as between every species, and that hemoglobin structure would be a reliable index of animal species.

Sincerely yours,

Oscar M. Root

Brooks School,
North Andover, Massachusetts