

should be regarded as conspecific. This problem can be solved only by taxonomists and behaviorists on the redpoll breeding grounds, and it is dangerous for a bander even to speculate.

Meanwhile, whether the perplexing redpolls represent hybrids, confusing individuals of two similar species, or are merely color phases of a single species, the bander may have a problem in separating them for record purposes. The undertail coverts and not the rump should be used as the differentiating feature, and in borderline cases the decision will be difficult to make.

Finally, I feel banders could make a small contribution to our knowledge of the movements of the different geographic populations of redpolls. Detailed measurements (including tail lengths and weights) should be kept and I would further suggest that any bander with such an opportunity should furnish the nearest taxonomist with a representative series of study specimens for the permanent record.

I wish to thank Dr. Raymond A. Paynter, Jr., for allowing me to see the redpoll study skins in the collection of the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University.

—C. Stuart Houston, 2401 Hanover Ave., Saskatoon, Sask.

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**Reaction of Wood Warbler to Young.**—During several years of investigations on the behavior of European warblers towards their (mostly banded) fledglings I once made a quite interesting observation: Young Wood Warblers (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*) had been banded while they were still nestlings. I was very much surprised to see the adult male repeatedly trying to pull the aluminum ring from the legs of his young two days after they had left the nest (the female took care of the other part of the brood). During this procedure the young birds apparently had great difficulty in keeping their balance on the roosting twig. On the following days this behavior was not observed again.

It is well known that many parent birds remove everything from the nest which does not belong in it. Often they succeed in pulling rings from the legs of the nestlings when they have been banded while too young, or they even remove the nestling together with the ring. The observation reported above shows however, that this behavior is not only produced by the stimulating complex of the young, a foreign item *and* the nest, but in rare instances also outside the nest.

Examples of similar conduct for American birds are quoted in *Bird-Banding*, 25: 61 (April 1954), and the earlier notes cited therein. In only one of those cases the young bird—a Horned Lark—had already left the nest at the time (A. J. Berger). The rings had been kindly supplied by the "Vogelwatre Radolfzell" (Germany).—Peter H. Homann, A 813 W. St. Augustine St., Tallahassee, Fla.

#### LETTER

To the Editor:

In the latest issue (*Bird-Banding*, 33(4):204-05), my eye caught the account of a replacement tail molt in our Kestrel, *Falco sparverius*. While the note suggests "that the new right retrices were about 45 to 60 days old", I am sure this is an overestimate. The lesser period of 45 days is sufficient for the Gryfalcon, Peregrine Falcon, or Prairie Falcon to put in a new feather completely, including the shorter primary remiges. Even in the slow-molting Golden Eagle, a retrice does not take 60 days! The fail feathers of a juvenile Kestrel are not completely "in" when it leaves the nest cavity at approximately four weeks, but are in at least as far as the replacement retrices in the figure. I don't see how they could be more than 28 days from the dropping of the old feather, unless damage was done to the papilla

and follicle which might have delayed replacement.

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Yours sincerely,

Walter Spofford (s)

### THE RING -- REQUEST FOR HELP

This is a request for help. The RING, the quarterly international bird banding journal, would like American banders to submit for publication notes and articles on banding techniques, ideas, and unique recoveries.

At the recent XIIIth International Ornithological Congress I discussed with Prof. Dr. Rydzewski, the editor of the RING, why Americans have not been contributing as frequently as would seem warranted by the highly advanced status of banding in the United States.

Our conclusions were that Americans *do* have important and interesting items to contribute to the world knowledge of banding, but they have been hesitant to submit them for many minor reasons.

If you have difficulty getting your ideas into writing, both Prof. Rydzewski and I would be most happy to help you in every way we can. Your ideas, methods, and unusual recoveries are of interest to others both here in the U. S. and abroad. May we help you make them available to other banders? Please feel free to contact either:

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OR

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Please Note:

1. You do not have to subscribe to The RING to publish in it.
2. The RING is published in English.
3. This is *not* a solicitation for money or subscriptions as most of the publication costs are met by the Polish Zoological Society.
4. Subscriptions, if you desire, may be obtained for \$1.50 annually from: European Publisher's Representatives, Inc., Times Building, 1475 Broadway, New York 36, N. Y.

—David B. Crockett

### XIV INTERNATIONAL ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS

#### *Preliminary Announcement*

It was decided at the close of the XIII International Ornithological Congress at Ithaca, N. Y., that the next Congress would be held in Great Britain in 1966, with Dr. David Lack as President. At a meeting of the British members of the International Ornithological Committee Dr. N. Tinbergen was elected as Secretary-General and, after full consideration of various possibilities, it was decided to hold the Congress in Oxford. A British Executive Committee was formed.

In view of the decision of the full International Ornithological Committee that there was no need to hold the Congress in the breeding season (the intention being that, if practicable, it should be held outside the breeding season), the British Committee decided that the meeting should take place in late July. It is not possible to meet in Oxford during August.

In view of the further decision of the full International Committee that the 1966 Congress need not be preceded nor followed by excursions, the British Executive Committee decided that, if it proved practicable, only one excursion would be organised—a week's cruise of Scottish sea-bird islands in a ship of sufficient size