

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir:

I am interested in obtaining blood samples from bird banders for a continuing study of the exposure to a number of viruses and arboviruses known to occur in birds.

Similar studies have been made in the past and perhaps at present unknown to me. Worth, Hamparian, and Rake reported in *Bird-Banding*, **28**: (2) 92-98, 1957, a "Serological Survey of Ornithosis in Bird Banders". Daniel Trainer and others reported (*Trans. 28th N. Am. Wildlife and Nat. Res. Conf.*, March 4, 5, and 6, 1963) "The Exposure of Wildlife Workers in Wisconsin to Ten Zoonotic Diseases".

Our study is a serological survey of ornithosis, eastern and western encephalitis, St. Louis encephalitis, California encephalitis, encephalomyocarditis, visicular stomatitis, tularemia, brucellosis, leptospirosis, and histoplasmosis among bird banders, particularly banders of large numbers of birds.

A great deal has been made in the popular press about birds as disease carriers, and their possible menace to humans. It is my feeling that more data needs to be on hand in anticipation of the day when some overenthusiastic Public Health people may decide the necessity of exterminating bird populations. Certainly no group of people is more exposed to wild birds than bird banders, especially those who have handled literally thousands or hundreds of thousands of wild birds. If it can be shown that these people have an extremely low incidence of exposure, surely it can be concluded that the general public need have little fear. On the other hand if there is any significant exposure, we all should know about it.

Those caring to cooperate should send me 15 - 20 cc of blood (unoxalated) in a test tube along with an index card giving:

Name,            Age,            Sex  
Address  
History of past chest infections  
Contact with domestic birds (ducks, chickens, etc.)  
Duration of banding  
Species most handled  
Total banded annually  
Total banded to date.

Please mail first class.

Sincerely  
C. A. Kemper, M.D.  
Box 2  
Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

April 11, 1966.