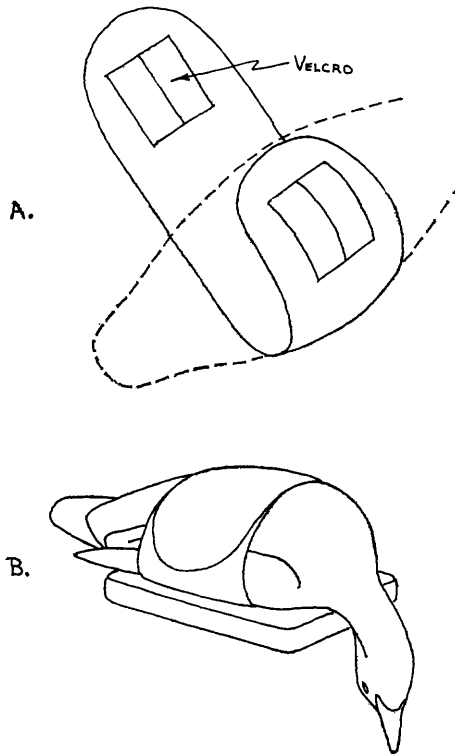


A pair of 2-inch strips of Velcro was sewn to each end of a 4- by 12-inch piece of nylon fabric (Fig. 1). A 2-inch strip of Velcro made the device adjustable for holding birds of both sexes and of various ages.

Figure 1. A plastic-covered nylon belt (A) and its use in holding birds (B).



The device has the following advantages: light-weight, durable, adjustable, compact, and easy to keep clean and dry. The Velcro was strong enough to hold both the wings and feet against the body to prevent struggling. Birds were placed on their backs for weighing (Fig. 1).

A similar device for holding birds of other sizes could be made easily.—Leigh H. Fredrickson, Gaylord Memorial Laboratory, University of Missouri, Puxico, Missouri 63960.

Aspiration of Seeds by Trapped Red-winged Blackbirds.—At my farm in Eldora, New Jersey, I operate an ordinary Government Sparrow Trap, baited with commercial wild bird seed. In a year's time I usually catch between 50 and 100 Red-winged Blackbirds, *Agelaius phoeniceus*, my actual recent totals being 57 for 1968 and 84 for 1969. Many of the birds "repeat" in the same year and "return" in later years, so I handle birds more times than the above numbers indicate.

Occasionally—about once in fifty new (unbanded) birds—a Red-winged Blackbird, on being driven from the trap into a gathering cage, will suddenly begin to flop about and then die within about one minute's time. For a while I kept no special record of those occurrences, but I have now listed the past four. The occasions were as follows:

Dec. 12, 1968. Adult female.

April 13, 1969. After second year male.

May 4, 1969. After second year male.

Feb. 14, 1970. After second year female.

In every instance the bird's mouth and throat were filled with bird seed. On incising the skin to examine the trachea, I found one seed that had passed for a distance of about a centimeter down the trachea, obstructing it completely. Through the Cape May County Extension Service, I had one of these seeds identified by Jennie A. Bloodgood, State Seed Analyst, N. J. Department of Agriculture, Trenton, as Prose Millet, *Panicum milaceum*. This seed measures about 2 millimeters in diameter and is an abundant constituent of the wild-bird-seed mix.

Other birds caught at the same time have not had this difficulty. It looks as if the Red-winged Blackbirds first of all gorge themselves and then become over-excited, aspirating the seeds because of increased respiration occasioned by fright.—C. Brooke Worth, R. D. Delmont, N. J. 08314.

RECENT LITERATURE

BANDING AND LONGEVITY

(See also 14)

1. **Operation Baltic 1967.** (Akcja Baltycka 1967.) P. Busse and M. Gromadzki. 1969. *Acta ornithologica* (Warsaw), **11**(9): 329-354. (In Polish, with English summary.)—This bird-ringing report summarizes Polish work at 4 Baltic Sea stations from 1960-1967 (225,470 individuals of 142 species banded) with work of 1966-1967 reported in detail (38,366 of 91 species). Notable totals of banded species were: Robin, *Erithacus rubecula*, 55,675; Golderest, *Regulus regulus*, 51,588; Great Tit, *Parus major*, 25,533. Short-term recoveries totaled overall, 33,960. Previous work of this project was reported *ibid.* **10**(11).—Leon Kelso.

2. **Weight changes of Semipalmated and Least Sandpipers pausing during autumn migration.** G. Page and A. Salvadori. 1969. *Ontario Bird Band.*, **5**(2): 52-58.—It is usually assumed that migration pauses allow birds to replenish energy reserves for long flights, but there are only a few species for which direct evidence exists. *Ereunetes pusillus* and *Erolia minutilla* were trapped and retrapped, and the data show a convincing weight gain as a function of time during the migration pause. These are the sorts of data that banders should attempt to get for every migratory species.—Jack P. Hailman.

3. **"Vogelwarte Helgoland" moved to a new site.** G. A. Radtke. 1969. *Ring*, **58A**: 194-196.—The postwar rebuilding of Wilhelmshaven harbor necessitated moving the famous German banding station to a new headquarters in a 1872 fort nearby. Facilities in the new laboratory are described. The well known colony of Herring Gulls (*Larus argentatus*) on dock 3 is now all but gone due to the harbor alterations, after providing nearly two decades of subjects for the careful study of Goethe and others. As a lover of gulls and one-time visitor to the site, I lament the colony's passing.—Jack P. Hailman.

4. **The change of rings is endangering the "individuality" of a ringed bird.** H. Bub. 1969. *Ring*, **58A**: 187-188.—The inadvisability of removing a band in order to substitute a new one needs repeatedly to be emphasized. If one must put his own band on, put it on the other leg: at least I think that is what the author is suggesting with the terminal sentence, "There is however no scientific argument for double ringing which cannot be expected of a bird on principle."—Jack P. Hailman.