GENERAL NOTES

A small Great Crested Flycatcher: a problem in identification.—On 27 August 1963 at Island Beach, Ocean County, New Jersey, Mrs. Mabel Warburton mist-netted a small *Myiarchus* flycatcher. Confident that the bird represented the first New Jersey record of one of the small *Myiarchus* species of the southwestern United States and Mexico, I prevailed upon Mrs. Warburton to let me collect it. Subsequent comparison of this specimen (now no. 159,730 in The University of Michigan Museum of Zoology collections) with a series in the American Museum of Natural History by Wesley E. Lanyon and myself showed that the bird was a very small Great Crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus crinitus*).

The bird was an immature female with a completely ossified skull and an ovary that measured 5 x 3 mm. The specimen's measurements are: bill, 13.6 mm; wing (chord), 87.0 mm; tail, 71.5 mm; tarsus, 17.5 mm; weight, 25.4 gm. Comparative measurements of 6 specimens of female Great Crested Flycatchers from Michigan in late summer are: bill, 14.9 mm. (range, 14.3 to 15.7); wing, 99.0 mm (96.0 to 104.0); tail, 87.5 mm (82.0 to 95.0); tarsus, 19.5 mm (18.5 to 20.5, 5 specimens); weight, 33.3 gm (1 specimen). At Island Beach twenty other Great Crested Flycatchers weighed from 28.0 to 42.5 gm (mean = 33.8) (B. G. Murray, Jr., and J. R. Jehl, Jr., *Bird-Banding*, **35:** 253-263, 1964). The bird was undergoing an extensive body molt when captured.

Although the Great Crested Flycatcher can be distinguished from the Ash-throated Flycatcher (*M. cinerascens*) by the characters given by A. R. Phillips *et al.* (*Bird-Banding*, **37:** 153-171, 1966), bird banders in the east confronted with an unusually small individual may refer to R. T. Peterson's *Field Guide to Western Birds* (1961), where the Ash-throated Flycatcher is described as "A medium-sized flycatcher, smaller than a kingbird, with 2 white wing-bars, *whitish* throat, *very pale yellowish belly*, and *rufous tail*" (original emphasis). The bander may also consider the Olivaceous Flycatcher (*M. tuberculifer*), "Of the same type as the Ash-throated Flycatcher, rufous-tailed and pale yellow-bellied, but considerably smaller with a grayish instead of white throat." The possibility of misidentification seems evident. Banders should be warned that size CANNOT be used as a character to distinguish the species of this difficult group of flycatchers (see also A. R. Phillips and W. E. Lanyon, *Bird-Banding*, **41:** 190-197, 1970). Because of the rarity of the smaller *Myiarchus* flycatchers in the east, banders that catch suspected *M. cinerascens* and *M. tuberculifer* are encouraged to compare their birds with museum series.

I am grateful to Wesley E. Lanyon of the American Museum of Natural History for identifying the specimen and to Robert W. Storer for allowing me to measure specimens in The University of Michigan Museum of Zoology.—Bertram G. Murray, Jr., Department of Natural Science, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, 48823.

A simple method for trapping breeding adults in nesting boxes.—During our studies on the ecology of the Great Tit (*Parus major*) conventional methods sometimes appeared unsatisfactory to trap some adults feeding their young. Therefore we have developed a low cost apparatus that can easily be placed, does not frighten the bird and has proved useful in the field.

A permanent magnet with concentric poles of which the inner is surrounded by a coil is built in the lid of a nesting box. The magnet holds a hinged door of stiff iron wire in horizontal position.

When a current is sent through the coil, the permanent magnetic field decreases and the door falls, blocking the exit of the nesting box (see Fig. 1). Unlike other systems where current is disconnected, here current is only used at the moment of trapping, so that there is no danger of exhausting the battery during eventually long waiting periods.

If the attractive force is lowered as far as possible by covering the magnet with a non-magnetic layer (increasing the distance between the poles and the iron door) only about 100 ampereturns are necessary to free the door. The coil is not directly connected to the battery but over a silicon bridge rectifier located in the lid near the coil. This makes wrong connection of the battery impossible. In spite of the voltage drop of about 1, 5 V due to the rectifier, a 6 V dry battery proved to be sufficient to activate the trap door from a distance of 50 m.