

GENERAL NOTES

Homing by wintering Hermit Thrushes.—In eastern North America the Hermit Thrush (*Hylocichla guttata*) regularly winters south to central Florida. It is scarce farther south in the state (Sprunt, 1954) and unknown in the West Indies (Bond, 1956, and supplements 1-12, 1956-1967). The Archbold Biological Station in southern Highlands County, Florida is near the southern limit of the species' range. Here small numbers are seen in winter in most habitats, especially Sand Pine Scrub (Woolfenden, 1969), and it seems probable these represent wintering individuals and not transients. About ten Hermit Thrushes have been captured in the course of a small mammal live-trapping program on the station, using large (3 x 3 x 9 inches) Sherman traps. Recapture of five of the six banded individuals provides new information on homing behavior in the Hermit Thrush.

On the morning of 11 March 1969 two Hermit Thrushes were captured in Sand Pine Scrub habitat. Both were subsequently banded and released later the same morning at the laboratory building 5,200 feet southwest. Early the next morning both birds were recaptured, one 150 feet and the other 250 feet from the points of original trapping. On the morning of 12 February 1970 another Hermit Thrush trapped in the same habitat was banded and released at the laboratory the same morning. Almost one month later (10 and 11 March) this individual was recaptured successively at two stations only 150 feet apart and less than 360 feet from the point of original capture. On 18 and 20 February 1970 two unmarked Hermit Thrushes were trapped in Slash Pine-Turkey Oak habitat. Both were banded and released at the laboratory the same mornings they were captured. A year later (17 February 1971) the last caught of these two birds was found dead in a trap within 430 feet of the point of original trapping (exact station not recorded), and almost two years later (20 January 1972) the other was trapped and released 269 feet from its point of original capture. Baldwin (1921) reports on one Hermit Thrush banded at Thomasville, Georgia (28 February 1917) and recaptured at the same locality three years later (23 February 1920). Although all of these records may be of wintering birds, this seems more likely for those from Florida.

Based on our few banding records, we conclude that at least some Hermit Thrushes wintering in Florida occupy specific areas, to which they return from short distances in at most a few hours, and to which they return from breeding grounds several hundred miles north in successive years. The four other species of North American *Hylocichla* thrushes winter in Central and South America. Although they are known to return to the same tropical localities during migration (Galindo and Mendez, 1965; Nickell, 1968), their status on the wintering grounds remains unknown.

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