

Western

Regional

News

Western Bird Banding Association

Founded 1925

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Auxiliary Marking Jon J. Atwood	Annual Report Otis D. Swisher					

Auxiliary Marking Jon L. Atwood Annual Report Otis D. Swisher
Applications for membership in the Western Bird Banding Association should be sent to the Treasurer. All
classes of membership receive North American Bird Bander, the joint publication of Eastern Bird Banding
Association and Western Bird Banding Association. Membership classifications are: Active Member, \$6.00

per year; Associate Member, \$6.00 per year; Sustaining Member, \$12.00 per year; Student Member, \$4.50 per year; Life Member, \$150.00. Outside the U.S., add \$2.00 to each membership class except Life Member.

From the President

On behalf of WBBA I would like to thank Keith Dixon, Martha Balph, and Jim Gessaman, the local committee on arrangements, for their efforts in making our annual meeting at Utah State University such a success! Old acquaintances were renewed, new friends made, and many useful ideas exchanged. Hopefully others came away as rejuvenated as I did. For those of you who did not make it to Logan, you missed a good time; try to make it next year when we will probably be meeting in California in the summer.

It is both appropriate and a pleasure to acknowledge at this time some of the many people who have contributed so much to the association in the last year. At the top of the list is our editor, Eleanor Radke. The quality of our publication clearly indicates the amount of time and attention to detail she gives it. As pointed out in her annual editor's report we also got, for no increased price, over 200 pages of NABB vol. 1, compared to 88 for the last year of Western Bird Bander! We are indeed grateful for her efforts. Shirley Spitler has taken great care of our finances and Fern Tainter has worked hard on new memberships. Otis Swisher deserves special recognition for, in addition to his duties as secretary, compiling the 1975 and 1976 annual reports. Richard DeHaven and his other reviewers have done a great job in sifting the many journal articles to produce the always interesting Recent Literature section of NABB. The other members of the board, Mike San Miguel, Van Truan, and Roger Boyd, have provided ideas and commentary helpful in the operation of the association's affairs. To all, I offer my gratitude on behalf of WBBA. I want to add my particular thanks to Roger Boyd who is leaving our board after serving two years, and to welcome Martha Balph, our new Vice President, as well as the two newly appointed directors-at-large, Bruce Sorrie and Carl Marti.

Many matters came before the board of directors at the annual meeting. Several of the outcomes of our deliberations will be brought before the membership later in the year, including two proposed by-law changes to be voted on at next year's meeting. If you have any suggestions or other matters you wish us to consider, please forward them to me or one of the other officers. We would like to hear from you.

Charlie Collins

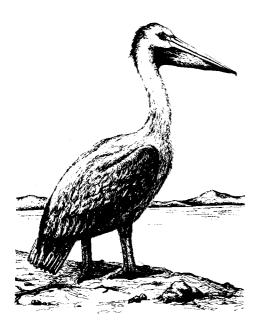
Who is . . . ?

WBBA's Second Vice-President, Dr. Martha H. Balph, is a Research Assistant Professor of Wildlife Science at Utah State University, Logan. At the age of six years, while growing up in New England, Martha acquired a lifelong interest in birds through frequent nature hikes with her father, the Rt. Rev. Robert M. Hatch, who is an avid amateur birdwatcher. She hopes to pass this interest on to her two young sons. Since early childhood, Martha also has enjoyed drawing birds and other wildlife; as a teenager she illustrated nature articles written by her father, and later she worked as a biological illustrator at the National Museum of Natural History.

Martha began to band birds in 1964 during a summer spent at a field station of the American Museum of Natural History. She subsequently used banding and color banding as part of her senior thesis research on winter bird populations at Wellesley College and in her graduate research in avian behavior at the University of Wyoming and Utah State University.

Martha's primary research interest is passerine social behavior, although she also has conducted and published studies in several other areas, including the growth and development of young birds. Since the early 1970's, she has been studying communication and social organization in several species of winter flocking finches in northern Utah. Much of her current research is in collaboration with her husband, Dr. David F. Balph, who is also a behaviorist on the Wildlife Science faculty at USU. Most recently, the Balphs have been banding and studying the winter social behavior of Evening Grosbeaks (and acquiring scars to prove it!).

W.B.B.A.'s 1977 Annual Meeting



The Student Center of Utah State University in Logan, Utah, was the site for the 52nd Annual Meeting of the Western Bird Banding Association.

The local committee consisting of Keith L. Dixon, Martha H. Balph, and James A. Gessaman, did a fine job of arranging for a place to meet, papers to be presented, meals and housing, and a superb field trip for Sunday.

Papers sessions

After a warm welcome by Dr. Dixon, Dr. Balph presented the first paper and chaired the morning session. Her paper reported the results of a study of the movements of wintering Evening Grosbeaks between adjacent banding stations. She also indicated that she has noted little problem with color band removal and no problem with F&WS band removal.

David R. Anderson, Utah CWRU, spoke about the "Estimability of age-specific survival rates from banding studies of young birds." His conclusion was, in effect, that it is difficult or impossible to determine age-specific survival rates using young birds.

Stellanie S. Ure of Salt Lake City gave a slide presentation of the equipment, techniques, and bird species she has worked with successfully in a raptor rehabilitation project.

Logan, Utah 22-24 April

Myrtle or Audubon's Warbler? Bruce Sorrie, Biologist at Point Reyes Bird Observatory, — using slides — illustrated several characteristics which distinguish these two yellow-rumped warblers: (1) Throat patch shape; (2) Throat color; (3) Eye Line; (4) Tail spots; and (5) Cheek patch.

Dr. Gessaman chaired the afternoon papers session. Dr. H. Elliott McClure gave a fascinating summary of his work of over 25 years' banding in Southeast Asia. Copies of his books, "Migration and Survival of the Birds of Asia" and "Some Ectoparasites of the Birds of Southeast Asia" were given free to persons wishing them.

The second paper of the afternoon was presented by Dr. Collins for Dr. L. Richard Mewaldt, who was unable to attend the meeting. A summary of the work done by 7 station banders for the Cooperative White-crowned Sparrow Project was presented in graphic and statistical form. Timing of pre-migratory weight increase and deck replacement vs. geographical location were discussed.

John Ratti, Department of Wildlife Sciences, Utah State University, Logan presented "Weights, measurements, and migratory behavior of the Vancouver Canada Goose." Band recoveries in the Willamette Valley of Oregon seem to indicate that the Vancouver sub-species is being recovered; however, these recoveries may, in fact, be from a population banded in the Glacier Lake area of Alaska and mistakenly identified when the young birds were banded.

Kimberly G. Smith's paper closed the afternoon session with a study documenting the marked increase in numbers of Blue Jays in several western states over the past few years.

From the BBL

It was especially fitting that Jay Sheppard should give the report from the BBL — back "home" in WBBA territory for his last presentation before leaving the BBL.

At the present time, approximately 2050 master permit holders and 3500 sub permittees are banding 1.2 million birds a year. To handle the immense amount of data involved, the BBL has coverted to a new and faster computer which will store all banding records in one system. This will permit immediate access to all encounters for all banded birds.

Volume II of the Banding Manual is expected to be ready for mailing to banders in late summer or early fall. Mr. Sheppard reviewed age classifications of White-crowned Sparrows as an example in the use of the age code forms which will be a part of the new Manual.

Business meeting

Treasurer, Shirley Spitler, presented her report showing that W.B.B.A. is in very good financial condition in spite of rising costs. A full report is available to any member requesting one.

Eleanor Radke, W.B.B.A.'s Editor, expressed her appreciation to W.B.B.A. for sending her to E.B.B.A.'s Annual Meeting. The exchange of ideas was helpful to all concerned. The two editors of NABB are constantly in touch with one another, endeavoring to improve the appearance and quality of NABB. Readers are encouraged to send banding-related articles to either editor for use in the journal.

Worksheet editor, Dr. Collins, indicated that several worksheets on western birds are in preparation, including the Varied Thrush. Anyone working on a species and who has gathered enough data to be useful, is asked to contact Dr. Collins (see W.B.B.A. masthead). Keys are especially needed for such closely-related species as Carpodacus.

The Board of Directors meeting was summarized by the Secretary, Otis D. Swisher. The Board authorized appointment of two Directors to represent Members-at-Large: Bruce Sorrie, two-year term; Carl Marti, one-year term. Two suggested changes in the By-Laws are to be submitted to members prior to the 53rd Annual Meeting, at which time these changes will be voted upon. One of these relates to the preparation of a budget; the second would add a new class of non-subscribing membership. With regret, a \$2.00 surcharge was authorized to cover the increased cost of postage on all Canadian and foreign memberships, to take effect immediately. No increase in dues was approved.

The Board authorized sending exchange journals to the Joselyn Van Tyne Memorial Library of the Wilson Ornithological Society, after the Editor and Recent Literature Editor have used them. W.B.B.A. members have loan and reprint privileges with this library.

The Board, being unable to underwrite the cost of expanding the Cooperative White-crowned Sparrow Project, thanked past cooperators for their work and Dr. Mewaldt, its director, for his guidance of the project and suggested that W.B.B.A. look for another cooperative project.

A request for the use of the W.B.B.A. mailing list was not granted.

The 1978 Annual Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tempe, Arizona as a joint meeting with the Cooper Ornithological Society.

Nominations for 1977-78 officers were presented. Elected were: Dr. Charles T. Collins, President; Van A. Truan, First Vice President; Dr. Martha H. Balph, Second Vice President; Otis D. Swisher, Secretary; Shirley S. Spitler, Treasurer; and Eleanor L. Radke, Editor.

Banquet

The banquet and evening program were held in the U.C. Center Colony Room. Laurence W. Ryel, State of Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources, and visiting lecturer at Utah State University, gave a slide presentation illustrating the problems faced by the Kirtland's Warbler on its breeding grounds. In addition, management problems, and ways of dealing with them, were pointed out.

Field trip

Sunday morning, after meeting for early breakfast, a group of about 15 went on a field trip to Bear River National Wildlife Refuge. It was a beautiful sunny day and birding was great. We saw most of the 60 species known to nest at the Refuge; some were engaged in courtship displays and territorial defense.

Amoung the birds seen were Eared, Western, and Pied-billed Grebes; White Pelican; Great Blue and Black-crowned Night Herons; Snowy Egret; Whitefaced Ibis; Gadwall; Pintail; Green-winged and Cinnamon Teal; Shoveler; Redhead; Common Goldeneye; Bufflehead; Ruddy Duck; Marsh Hawk; Virginia Rail; Long-billed Curlew; Solitary Sandpiper; Willet; Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs; Least Sandpiper; Dowitcher; Marbled Godwit; American Avocet; Black-necked Stilt; California, Franklin's and Bonaparte's Gulls; Short-eared Owl; all six swallows; Black-billed Magpie; Longbilled Marsh Wren; Yellow-headed Blackbird. In addition to the birds, we found the geology of the area of considerable interest. We were on the lake bed of old Lake Bonneville, a huge body of water which at one time had been over 1000 feet deep. The various levels of the old lake had left their almost-indelible marking on the mountain ridges west of the Refuge. The Great Salt Lake of today, as large as it is, is scarecely more than a puddle-remnant of the original lake. And, it occurred to several of us that, in this year of drought, we could certainly use some of that water from immense old Lake Bonneville.



In Memorium

Shirley Wells of San Pedro, California, one of W.B.B.A.'s newest Life Members, has used up that membership, having lost her lengthy battle with cancer on 21 April 1977.

She became a member of W.B.B.A. in 1968 and has served as Secretary, 2nd Vice President, and 1st Vice President, but had to give up serving on the Board in 1974 because of her failing health.

Shirley started her banding career as a subpermittee to Jay Sheppard, when he was in Long Beach, but very quickly she became a Master Bander and maintained her banding station on the Palos Verdes Peninsula from 1969 almost to the very end. Her main interest was hummingbirds, and her work has led to new knowledge on the hybridization of hummingbirds. Publication documenting these findings is forthcoming in the very near future. Her contributions in this field have been enormous and we have lost a peerless field observer. She has documented all of her observations so that her files can serve as a wealth of information.

Shirley's banding station served very well, too, in helping others to learn of birds and to get started on their own bird studies, often using the tool of bird banding to implement this. Her infectious enthusiasm, her willingness to share her knowledge, her ability to get involved and give freely of her time with rare good humor, and above all — her uncompromising love of life could well serve us all as a guide.

She is survived by her husband, Dr. J. Gordon Wells; her mother, Alice Fries; her daughter and



Shirley Wells



son-in-law, Mr. & Mrs. J.B. Gordon; two grandchildren, Katie and Ellen Gordon; and a host of friends.

In closing, I would like to quote Dr. Charles T. Collins at W.B.B.A.'s Annual Meeting:

"The immensity of this loss can only truly be appreciated by those of us who were fortunate to have known her."

I, for one, was fortunate to have known her well and could not have stated it better myself.

Grace A. Nixon

Attention California banders: Changes in California banding regulations

At its 11 March 1977 meeting in San Luis Obispo, the California Fish and Game Commission revised section 653 of the Fish and Game Code dealing with bird banding regulations. Under the new regulations (which take effect after 30 days):

1. Banders with a federal permit are no longer required to have a state permit **unless** they are banding raptors and/or resident game birds.

2. Annual reports will only be required of those with state permits to band raptors and/or resident game birds.

3. Birds accidentally killed or found dead may be salvaged (as presently allowed by federal regulations) for donation to a public scientific or educational institution.

4. Banders with a federal permit, but not having a state permit, may band inadvertently-captured raptors. However, no rare, endangered, threatened, or fully protected species may be banded even if inadvertently captured, unless covered by a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Fish and Game. Any such birds accidentally captured "shall be immediately released unbanded at the site of capture."

By and large these changes represent a welcome reduction in unnecessary and/or redundant bureaucratic procedures. Raptor and game bird banders will still have to apply for a state permit, provide a statement describing the goals of their intended study, and furnish a list of birds banded each year. The provision allowing salvage is also a welcome addition, bringing state and federal regulations into agreement.

The arguments supporting the prohibition against banding accidentally-captured rare, endangered, threatened or fully protected species were unconvincing and based on the unliklihood of significant data being obtained in this fashion. My letter debating this point and advocating the opposite view (there is no detrimental effect and some positive information might be obtained through banding) was received too late for consideration.

Further changes may be possible at a later date. If so, perhaps the granting of state subpermits to federal subpermittees can be considered as also outlined in my letter. At present, a subpermittee requiring state authorization must obtain an individual state permit. For the most part, the changes are steps in the right direction.

Charles T. Collins

Bird migration in Yosemite: A bird-banding workshop

The 1977 fall birding seminar at Yosemite National Park will be a banding workshop. This 3-day course, on 19-21 August, will include practical field experience in actual bird banding, record-keeping, and data analysis. Students in teams will participate actively in the field endeavor.

There will be 12 hours of lecture time, 19 hours of field work. Equipment will be furnished. Participants camp in the Crane Flat campground and walk to the study site in Crane Flat meadow.

The workshop will be taught by Robert Stewart, staff biologist at the Point Reyes Bird Observatory. Mr. Stewart has an M.A. degree in biology from Oregon State University and has taught more than 35 courses in avian ecology and migration. He has amassed a vast amount of knowledge on Yosemite's resident and migratory bird populations.

Fee for this 2-unit course is \$40.00; for an additional \$20.00, extension credit will be given by University Extension, University of California, Berkeley.

For further details of this workshop (and the spring sessions on breeding ecology) send for a descriptive brochure to: Yosemite Natural History Association, P.O. Box 545, Yosemite National Park, CA 95389.

W.B.B.A. decals

Attractive, three-color decals — with the W.B.B.A. logo — are now available. In black, white and orange, these decals make an eye-catching addition to luggage, car and camper windows, banding bags, etc.

Send your order, along with one dollar (\$1.00) for each decal, to Shirley S. Spitler, Treasurer, P.O. Box 3128 YPG, Yuma, AZ 85364. Profits will go towards making a stronger W.B.B.A.

All new and renewing Sustaining Members will receive a complimentary decal.

W.B.B.A. members granted library privileges at WOS Josselyn Van Tyne Memorial Library

In exchange for receipt of our publication, the Wilson Ornithological Society has kindly agreed to grant library privileges to W.B.B.A. members.

Banding journals available are: Bird Banding — Vol. 1 to date. EBBA News — Vol. 1-3, scattered; Vol. 4-9, all; Vol. 10-25, scattered; Vol. 26 to date. Inland Bird Banding News — Vol. 1 to date.

The following letter (addressed to Dr. Charles T. Collins, coordinator for W.B.B.A.'s bulletin exchange) explains the means by which W.B.B.A. members can utilize the services of the Josselyn Van Tyne Memorial Library.

"(WOS Library Committee members) have discussed your proposal of granting library privileges in return for receiving your journal here at the library. We have agreed that this is a satisfactory arrangement, and I look forward to helping your members find what they need.

"I will restate the conditions of the loans for your benefit. We pay postage for the item going out, and the requesting member pays for returning it (it may be sent Library Rate). When requesting any item, please give as full a citation as possible. If you require a journal article, please ask for it specifically, not just 'Auk, vol. 80.' This way I can send a reprint if we have it, rather than the whole bound volume (most of our journals are bound). If the article is short, I would just as soon send a xerox if that is acceptable. We charge five cents per page, currently, and I can often get two journal pages on one xerox page. Thus the cost is often less or the same as postage would be, (And you may keep the copy, of course.) Rare items may not be sent through the mail, although they may be looked at here. We request that any loaned item be kept for a maximum of a month, although I will certainly give an extension if needed. This minimizes my having to write if an item is needed by someone else.

"Unfortunately, we do not have a current list of our holdings. We receive about 140 journals currently, plus have many more old ones which are no longer published.

"I hope that this is all the information that is needed. If anyone has a question, please let me know. I am sure that this arrangement will be a beneficial one to both our organizations."

(Signed) Janet Hinshaw, Librarian Josselyn Van Tyne Memorial Library Museum of Zoology The University of Michigan Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Clearance sale

Some back issues of Western Bird Bander and its predecessor, News from the Bird Banders, are still available. However, many more numbers are now out of stock because of recent orders. We can offer the following:

1926-1955: A limited number of incomplete sets of approximately 45 issues are available to members or libraries at \$5.00 per set (postpaid). These sets include many very early numbers and provide interesting reading of past activities.

1955-1966: All numbers out of stock.

1966-1973: Some numbers are available at \$0.25 per quarterly issue. Do not send advance payment with orders as we may be out of specific numbers you want. We will bill you later for the numbers we can provide.

1974-1975: Copies of numbers 2, 3, and 4 for both years are available at \$1.00 per quarterly issue.

Order from: Dr. Charles T. Collins, Department of Biology, California State University, Long Beach, CA 90840. Please make checks payable to Western Bird Banding Association.



EOY Reports

The BBL reminds banders to be sure to send in their EOY Reports **now**, if they have not already done so. The penalty for failing to submit an EOY Report may be cancellation of ones banding permit.

Scarlet Tanager banded in San Luis Obispo County, California

Fern R. Tainter

Early in the afternoon of 27 November 1976, a bird struck a windowpane at the home of my neighbor, Norma Thomas, south of San Luis Obispo, California. She ran out and picked it up. It appeared stunned, but uninjured. With a medicine dropper Norma administered first aid in the form of a small droplet of bourbon. The bird soon revived and began to flutter about the container where she had placed it.

She had never seen a bird like it, so she brought it to me for identification. Peering through the holes in the box, I could tell it was a tanager. My first guess was female Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*) for that's the species we'd expect on the central California coast. But on closer inspection, we discovered that our captive had no wing bars!

Its upper parts were olive green; its underparts yellow, increasing in intensity on the undertail coverts; its wings and tail were black; the maxilla was darker than the lower mandible; and the undersides of the wings were white. With these field marks, the bird had to be a male Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*) in winter plumage! We could hardly believe our eyes!

At that point we decided to measure the bird and compare our data with published records to verify our identification. The skull, of course, was well sified. The wing cord was 94 mm, the tail, 66 mm; tarsus, 19 mm; exposed culmen, 15 mm; length, about 180 mm.

We checked our data, just to be sure, against figures for Hepatic Tanager (*Piranga flava*) and Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*) as published by Oberholser and Kincaid (1974) and found they did not fit. On the other hand, all our measurements fell within the extremes listed by the above writers and by Godfrey (1966) for the male Scarlet Tanager.

I then placed on the bird's left leg a size 1B band, number 1211-25985.

Since there were no records of Scarlet Tanagers in San Luis Obispo County, we telephoned Dr. Eric Johnson, ornithologist at California Polytechnic University, thinking he would want to see it. He came at once. He assured us that it was, indeed, an adult *Piranga olivacea* and suggested we call it an AHY bird. Our prisoner was then released.

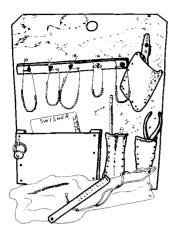
Although Small (1974) lists 12 records for the Scarlet Tanager in California (nine in the fall and three in the spring), and an individual was banded in 1975 at Point Reyes Bird Observatory, as shown by Swisher (1976), the species is unusual in the state. "Our" bird was the only Scarlet Tanager banded to date in San Luis Obispo County, and probably the first one definitely identified in the area.

I should like to express my thanks to Norma Thomas for bringing the bird to my banding station and to Dr. Eric Johnson for his prompt and courteous assistance in helping us determine its age.

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E.B.B.A. and W.B.B.A. present . . .



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EBBA Workshop Manual — Volume II is available from Kathy Klimkiewicz, 13117 Larchdale Rd. #2, Laurel, MD 20811. EBBA members: \$1.75 each; non-members: \$2.00. Make checks payable to: Marion Glass, MABBG. Money will be used to finance further workshop manuals.

EBBA Mist Nets are available in the sizes listed below. Prices with an asterisk (*) are for EBBA Sustaining Members only. Please write for order blank. Checks must accompany your order. Regular Parcel Post on all orders over \$10.00; for orders under \$10.00, please add 50* for postage and handling. Pennsylvania residents, please add 6% Sales Tax. Make your check payable to EBBA Net Account. **Order from:** EBBA Net Committee, Biology Department, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA 15701. Prices appear below:

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11/4"	3.85*	4.20	-		7.30*	7.95	
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11⁄2″			6.10*	6.70	8.50*	9.25	

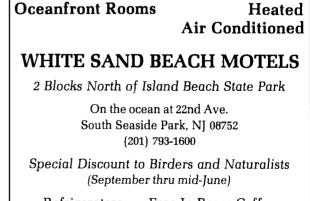
McCamey Chickadee Trap: \$9.00 F.O.B. Eugene.

This trap is precision made and is designed to take birds the size of jays, grosbeaks, and cardinals. It is illustrated in EBBA Workshop Manual #5, 1975, p. 22.

It is sensitive to birds the size of chickadees and a 5 gram weight will trip the door. The main features are the sensitive treadle, a door lock for feeding when not activated, and a large handle for a gloved hand in winter. The back is fastened on with clips for easier access in case the treadle gets worked over by a squirrel.

Hundreds of these traps have been sold to nature schools, universities, and individuals in the States and Canada over the past ten years.

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EASTERN BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION

Ted A. Beckett III, President Magnolia Gardens, Rt. 4 Charleston, South Carolina 29407

As in past years, we are again looking for volunteers to serve on one of our committees.

If you are interested, please remove this flyer, fill in the appropriate information, and mail the sheet to the above address.

This information will be collected by Mr. Beckett, and made available to the appropriate committee chairpersons.

This is for EBBA members only. You are an EBBA member if you pay dues to the Eastern Bird Banding Association.

Please note that all EBBA members will receive NORTH AMERICAN BIRD BANDER, which includes EBBA NEWS and WESTERN BIRD BANDER as a joint publication.

YOUR NAME

ADDRESS_____

I am interested in the following committees as Chairperson or committee member as indicated:

CITY_____ZIP____

	CHAIR	MEMBER
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FINANCE		
PROGRAM		
PUBLICATION		
NOMINATING		
CONSERVATION		
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OTHER COMMENTS: (Please use space below or other side)

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