Although this issue of EBA NEWS is actually the May-Juno issue, it is being prepared during the first week in October. Various circumstances have transpired to prevent the Editor, who also must double as typist and proofreader, from getting out an issue during the past several months. The members have been very patient in waiting for another copy of EBA NEWS to arrive, and the Editor very much appreciates their forbearance while at the same time apologising for the delay. It is hoped that arrangements can be made for someone more expert in typing to assume that task, either voluntarily or on a paid basis, thus facilitating the preparation of copy.

The Blue Jay symposium, originally scheduled for this issue, will be presented in a later issue. For one thing, the paucity of material received makes a worthwhile report difficult; this is not due solely to lack of cooperation but also, and chiefly, to insufficient work with this species.
In accordance with action of the Council, the Editor has elected to combine the issues for May and June, July and August, and September and October. A decrease in the number of issues will, to a large degree, be offset by using an extra sheet in each of those issues, giving a total of 30 rather than 36 pages of material. The latter two issues referred to above should appear in close succession, after which we hope to return to a current basis.

AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

For the past month or so, Council Member Eleanor Deter (Mrs. John B. Deter) of Ramsey, New Jersey, has been extending invitations to banders in the northern New Jersey and southern New York area to attend a get-together at her home for the purpose of discussing problems of local interest, etc., on Saturday, October 17.

However, about a week ago, Mrs. Deter called the Editor to say that, due to the critical illness of her son with polo and pneumonia, she would have to cancel plans for the affair. Although it will not affect the cancellation of the meeting, it is good to report that a phone call to Eleanor Deter last night (October 4) provided the encouraging information that her son is now improving, and I know that all members of A.R.N. will join in wishing him a speedy recovery.

Pennsylvania Bird Banders -- Wanted!

In a letter to the Editor, Dr. Paul H. Fluck of Lembertville, New Jersey, active bander, author, and human dynamo, makes the following offer which should sound good to licensed Pennsylvania banders.

"The banding station at Washington Crossing Park, Pennsylvania, is now open to licensed Pennsylvania banders who are welcome to come there and band any time they please.

"All bands are taped by species and are hung on a large board. The record book is self-explanatory. Reports are listed on filing cards. All you need to bring is your lunch and some baits for the

traps. There is an indoor bathroom with hot and cold running water and ample room in the Strickland house for shelter in bad weather. All that you have to do is set the traps and bait up.

"The Washington Crossing Park Bird Banding Station is a new experiment in bird banding. The public is invited to watch birds being banded. Naturally, we don't let folks flock around the traps, but we do bring the birds back in collecting cages to show the visitors. To pass the bands around, then band the birds, and away they fly. In the past twelve months more than 3,000 Boy Scouts, nature groups, bird watchers, and school children have visited the station. Next year we hope to pack in 5,000 to 10,000 visitors.

"Right now, the station is being operated only on Saturdays and Sundays — but with the help of more banders we should be able to keep things going three to four days a week. Last year we banded 1,150 birds of 42 species. Our big day — May 25 — brought over 200 birds, including 73 new birds that were banded. Almost any day in October and November we should take at least 50 new birds. There are more than thirty traps — all set up and ready to go.

"If you want to try your luck at the Washington Crossing station, just call Dr. Fluck (Lembertville, N.J., 109) or Dr. Herman Fisher, Nature Director, Washington Crossing Park (Montgomery, Pa., 3760), or write directly to Dr. Fluck, or stop in to see us some weekend so that there will be someone on hand to show you around the traps.

"The fall migration will not be easy, and we need your help. Let us know when you can look for you."

Editor's note: Banders from outside of Pennsylvania are welcome, too, provided they are licensed to operate in that state. To get such authorization, it is necessary (1) to send your permit to the Bird-Banding Office at Perham, and the request to have Pennsylvania added to it, after which the permit will be returned to you, and (2) to write to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Harrisburg, Pa., requesting that you be granted a Pennsylvania permit, giving them your Federal permit number. There is no charge involved.
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY A FORMER PRESIDENT

The following sketch by former B.N.A.A. President Horace Groskin, of Ardsley, Pennsylvania, was originally sent to John V. Dennis, of Leesburg, Virginia, in reply to his request for data in connection with his book on attracting birds which is now in preparation. Mr. Dennis thought that the sketch was of sufficient interest for use in EEDA NEWS, so he sent it on to the Editor. In order to bring it a little more up to date than it was originally, Mr. Groskin was asked to revise it as of May of this year, and he also commented on its use in EEDA NEWS. The sketch follows.

"From May 1937 to May 1957, I have banded a total of 1,448 birds representing 60 different species. Of these, 124 individuals returned to the banding station. Several hundred of my birds were retrapped by other banders or found dead.

"The species I have banded in largest numbers was the Purple Finch — 7,371 individuals. Returns numbered 135 (2.18), many of these returned a number of times in following years, up to eight and one half years later. Of my Purple Finches, 135 were retrapped by other banders or were found dead at distances of from 10 to 1,164 air line miles from the banding station. The Purple Finch does not nest in this area. They are present only during the months between November and May.

"I have banded 2,471 Goldfinches, 2,171 Junco, about 1,500 White-throated Sparrows, over 500 Song Sparrows, 445 Pine Siskins, and 410 Cardinals. For bait I use sunflower seed, and for Song Sparrows, Juncos, White-throated Sparrows, and others, I use a mixture containing hemp and millet. I keep up all the year around for woodpeckers and, in summer, for Cuckoos.

"One cannot expect to get any large number of birds to band unless a large number are present the year around, and the best way to obtain large numbers is to be liberal with food. The food should be distributed liberally upon feeders where there are no traps. Then the birds are accustomed to coming for food, then the traps can be placed nearby.

"The most interesting birds I have banded recently were the Philadelphia Vireo, Common Redpoll, Summer Tanager, and White-winged Crossbill."

Note: The story is going the rounds that Mr. Groskin really proved his point when he announced the capture of the Summer Tanager at a meeting of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club, which organization is noted for the good-natured going over that members get when they announce records of rare birds such as the Summer Tanager.

As I heard it, Mr. G. stood up and announced the occurrence of a Summer Tanager on a certain day in April (1952). "Whew! That's a rare one," said a member; "Tell us another," said a notorious rascal. "And what's more, I banded it!" said Mr. G. "Probably was a Cardinal," said a doubting Thomas. "And furthermore, here it is in this box," triumphantly concluded our former president.

CONSIDERING BAND SIZES

In a previous issue of EEDA NEWS, a letter was published from the Reverend Charles Stock, of Annapolis, Maryland, concerning the discrepancy between suggested band sizes and those which many banders find to be better fits. In response to a plea for such data as members may have accumulated in this connection, the following from Dr. Charles H. Blake, Lincoln, Mass., is the only communication received. If any other members have any information at all concerning better band fits, please send it in immediately. This topic is of even greater importance now than it was several months ago, since, as readers know, the banding office, in connection with issuing a manual in loose-leaf form, plans to revise its list of recommended sizes, so they would send Seth for a copy of what you send to EEDA NEWS so that he may have it to use when they work on their revision of the present list.

Dr. Blake writes as follows: "Pursuing the completion of a study in progress, I submit the following suggested changes in the list of band sizes:

[Further details about band sizes are not visible in the image.]"
May-June 1953  ZEBRA NEWS  Page 6

Crested Flycatcher  12
Cuckoo  12 (nestlings need 2)
Redwing  13
Baltimore Oriole  13
Evening Grosbeak  14A
Eastern Purple Finch  1
White-throated Crossbill  1 (one bird)
Sedge Sparrow  1
Glaucous-colored Junco  1
Eastern Song Sparrow  12
Eastern Fox Sparrow  12
Hoe-breasted Grosbeak  14A
Blood-colored (one bird)  1 (one bird)
Scarlet Tanager  15
Black and White Warbler  0
Blackpoll Warbler  0
Yellow Palm Warbler  0
Yellow-breasted Chat  13 (one bird)
Oatbird  15
All Myioborus thrushes  15
Eastern Bluebird  15

"The extent to which logs since may vary from one population of a species to another has never been determined." (Wouldn't this make a worthwhile cooperative research project—2L?)

OUTSIDE OCEST HEP

On April 19, 1952, while banding under the permit of Dr. Paul E. Fluck, Dr. J. A. Jarvis, of Pemberton, New Jersey, now in very active banding in his own right, banded an adult male Red-eyed Vireo. Six days later, on April 25, 1952, it was reported killed about 20 miles away, the interesting thing being that, although it should have been migrating northward, it was taken southward of its place of banding. It is also of interest to note that the imaginary line connecting Pemberton and Longview Springs (the place of recovery) almost exactly parallels the southwesterly course of the Delaware River which lies some ten miles to the northwest, although the flat topography of the coastal plain makes it seem unlikely that the bird could have been

May-June 1953  ZEBRA NEWS  Page 7

following the course of the river valley, and even if it were so, it would have been in the wrong direction for spring.

Very little is known as to whether birds ever do overshoot the mark during migration and subsequently retrac their paths to a place through which they had recently passed nor is there anything to warrant the assumption that, failing to find a mate in one location, a bird must continue in a northerly rather than a southerly direction. Since the date of banding is considerably earlier than one finds mated pairs in this species in the present locality, it would seem that failure to find a mate would hardly be a factor in the present case. Indeed, one can not even be certain that this bird arrived with the migratory wave of Vireos which hits the Philadelphia area during the latter part of April; it may have ventured in the general region and may have been wandering aimlessly around for some unknown reason. In any case, it is an interesting case to speculate about.

MORE ABOUT FINDING BIRDS

The following letter from Mr. John T. Dennis, Box 376, Route 1, Locustburg, Virginia, concerns the request for information from Mr. Dennis which was published in a previous issue of ZEBRA NEWS. As readers may recall, Mr. Dennis is engaged in preparing a book on attracting birds. The letter follows:

"Many thanks for the good treatment you gave my recent request for information on baits in the last issue of ZEBRA NEWS. Your remark on the desirability of including material on the use of water, decoys, nesting material, and other non-food attractants is very well taken. Since writing you I had pretty much come to the conclusion that I shouldn't limit myself to food alone. I am sure that many banders would have perfected successful techniques which need publicizing. I would be very happy, therefore, if ZEBRA NEWS readers would send me not only information on food baits but also on any other attractants.

"I might mention that I have had a good many valuable suggestions sent to me on the use of live insects as bait. One bander expressed hope that an animated imitation fly could be perfected for use in
Taking flycatchers. Speaking of water baits, it has been suggested to me that water traps are highly effective under wild cherry trees bearing ripe fruit. The cherries are said to make birds thirsty.

"I think one of the soundest pieces of advice I have received is to make use of the agricultural produce of your own region which is taken by birds. Foreign food items may not be recognized as food, or taken only after a period of conditioning. As an illustration, I might cite my experience with soy beans. It is well known among game managers that geese, many ducks, and bob-white quail readily take soy beans in regions where they are grown. It occurred to me that here was a food that had been overlooked by breeders and feeding station operators. Last winter I obtained a supply of soy beans, soaked them in water so as to make them soft and palatable, and offered them at my feeding station at Leesburg. They went untouched. Soy beans are not grown to any extent here, and the birds were as uninterested in them as in pollutants. Next I tried them on Ring-billed Gulls at Daytona Beach, Florida. This proved an exception to the rule. The gulls took them on first offering, but not with any great enthusiasm. But at Lake Okeechobee in Orlando, Ring-billed Gulls which are fed to satisfaction by residents and tourists, passed them up entirely; so did the Coots and various species of ducks on the lake. My final experiment was at a very successful feeding station in Gainesville, Florida. Soy beans which I placed on feeders in early March went untouched.

"I have yet to experiment with soy beans in a region where they are grown extensively. It would be interesting to find out if they might not be taken by field foraging birds—blackbirds, grackles, cowbirds, meadowlarks, etc.

"I would advise that soy beans be thoroughly soaked before being offered. They smell from three to five times normal size. Smelling of soy beans eaten by Canada geese is a not infrequent source of mortality. More than balancing this drawback is the fact that soy beans are non-perspirable, rich in protein, and 100% edible. The main drawback so far is getting birds to take them."

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May-June 1953

EMBA NEWS

Page 9

A NOTE OF FLORIDA BURROWING OWLS

by C. Brook North

During three years in Tampa, Florida, I was able to band about a dozen adult Florida Burrowing Owls. These were all caught with a butterfly net in a building of a abandoned army camp at the Tampa International Airport. Several of these birds were later reported as having been found dead or caught and released, all of them in Tampa. The oldest owl was No. A-500061, banded on November 23, 1947, and reported as found dead in a letter to the R. and S. Service dated May 6, 1952.

These birds were common at the airport, being often seen at the edges of the landing strips, especially at night when the lights of incoming planes marked them out clearly. Some were killed by airplanes, but their numbers did not seem to be affected.

A pair nested for two years within about fifty feet of a building on the airport grounds where we had our laboratory. We used to see jets of sand flying out as the birds expanded their burrows prior to egg laying. The resulting sound at the entrance was the customary perch of one or both adults throughout the day. Five young were reared in the first season, but the nest was flooded out by a heavy rain in the second year. I found one other nest; it resembled the first one exactly. Inquisitive people dug this one out, and one day I arrived just in time to prevent the same thing happening to the first nest. The oncomics of these defenseless birds therefore includes men in at least two destructive categories.

(Note: Dr. North, who spent the last two years doing medical research in India, has now returned to this country, but we do not have his current address at hand. His last copy of EMBA NEWS was returned to the Editor bearing the notation "Moved" as well as three forwarding addresses, one of which was the intriguing advice, "C/o Poor Box 84")
From Frank Frasior, E.H.B.A. Secretary, come two suggestions which are of interest.

The first suggestion really is in the form of a query which the Editor can’t answer. The query is, "What is the latest word on the use of mirrors in traps? Inland (Bird Banding Association) seems to be excited about their use. I’m going to road up on it, but I haven’t seen anything since I began banding over four years ago, until a month or so ago."

Mr. Frasior’s second suggestion is one with which the Editor wholeheartedly agrees, for carrying it out not only often results in more recoveries being reported but it also focuses public attention on the whole problem of the need for wildlife protection as well.

Mr. Frasior’s letter says, "Perhaps it might be a good idea to point out to banders the advisability of getting more local publicity for themselves, their stations, and the whole bird banding project. The results of this would certainly be more returns and possibly more recoveries. Inland has a pastor, I bought some from them, which can be put up where it would do more good. Maybe we can make one up for E.H.B.A.—or get some of theirs and get our name on them. Last members need to be taught how to get publicity for themselves. How about some suggestions?"

As a case in point, I have before me, thanks to member William A. Tampin, 56 Ionic Street, Springfield, Mass., clippings from the Springfield Sunday Republican of May 31, 1953, concerning the spring field meeting of E.H.A. at Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary and with the banding activities of Bill Tampin at Springfield. Nearly two full columns of text and eight pictures, seven of them reproduced in the retrogruave section of the paper accompany the story. Publicity such as this is very helpful to the banding program.

Locally, the Editor and his wife have been very fortunate in having the sympathetic interest of a local newspaper writer, 21n...
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