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E B B A   N E W S

Eastern Bird-Banding Association News Letter

SEPTEMBER 1951

Published Monthly by

THE EASTERN BIRD-BANDING ASSOCIATION

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"Let Us Band Together"

\$2.00 per year

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Vice-Presidents - Geoffrey Gill - Raymond J. Middleton -  
Leroy Wilcox

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TRAP SYMPOSIUM

Most of you didn't cooperate, hence there is not enough material at hand to conduct this symposium. The material which has been received will be used in the regular issues with the hope that it will stimulate sufficient interest to justify a full issue on traps at some future date.

NEW MEMBER

Mrs. Philip Boyer, Teatown Rd., Croton-on-Hudson, New York

September 1951

EBBA NEWS

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COWBIRDS FEEDING COWBIRDS

Dr. Harold B. Wood of 3016 N. Second St., Harrisburg, Pa. sends in this note:

"Laurence B. Fletcher reported watching a male Cowbird feed a young Cowbird with bread crumbs, in 1924. Walter I. Allen of Altedena, California, reported in the Western Bird-Banding News that he watched a pair of adult Cowbirds with a young one, saying, 'When the three were together the young bird was fed by the female after much begging'. Harold B. Wood on July 1, 1950 watched a male Cowbird on a lawn with two young Cowbirds. The adult tried to teach the young ones how to search on the ground for food, as a hen will show her chicks, but without any scratching. He would peck into the grass, then look at the two fledglings about a yard away, and repeat that act, gradually moving closer to them. He did not pick up any food as there was none there. Finally, the young Cowbirds flew away followed by the adult.

"More observations are needed as it is a debatable activity - much so. I stood about 20 feet away."

ODDITIES

On June 4 Jeff Gill was called to evict a nest of Common Terns from a small cabin cruiser in Huntington Harbor, N. Y. Since there is no known colony of these birds nesting on the North shore of Long Island and since these birds seldom nest in single pairs, Jeff bet the owner of the boat that the birds were not terns. A fleet of three boats went out to the anchorage complete with news-camera men and motion-picture cameras. Jeff lost the bet.

A week before he received a call from a lady who claimed her children had found a three-legged bird. Impossible. That is what Jeff thought. However, the three legged young Starling is now a specimen in the American Museum of Natural History. When Gill had it the bird was alive, but badly man-handled by the children. It definitely had three legs, the extra limb growing from the hip and

of about the same length as the others but having only two toes. When last heard from Gill was out looking for Passenger Pigeons and Auks.

FROM NEBBA

Merrill Wood calls our attention to a change in NEBBA as follows:

Mr. Richard M. Hinchman, 75 Fairbanks Rd., Milton 86, Mass., is now the Secretary-Treasurer of the Northeastern Bird-Banding Association. Mr. Charles B. Floyd recently resigned because he was called to Washington for special work in connection with leather production.

BIOGRAPHICAL

Dr. Harold B. Wood has given us (at the Editor's request) the following biography:

"My first bird book was a personal drawing and coloring of birds copied from library books, with the sheets sewed together. In 1927 I accepted an invitation to become a federal bird bander. The first bird banded was a Sparrow Hawk which was found dead a mile away four months later. This was followed by just 5000 birds banded, of 85 species. These birds varied in size from a hand-caught humming bird to a loon, a turkey vulture and two of Broley's Bald Eagles. Homing experiments were carried on with female Cowbirds, one returning 100 miles in exactly four days. Not one bird banded elsewhere has entered our traps.

"My contributions to banding include getting the classification of 'recoveries' universally accepted; subdividing the reported young birds into 'nestlings' and 'juveniles', with 'young' omitted; getting traps painted black; suggesting plumage studies to determine age of birds; encourage museum exhibitions of banded birds; and suggesting more publicity of banding and various studies of bird life.

"Most exciting banding: of young Black-crowned Night Herons. Try it if you haven't.

"Most enjoyable and enlightening trips: To other bird banders. Try that, too."

Dr. Wood might have added that he has contributed much time and interest to the progress of EBBA over the years.

NEWS FROM INDIA

Our former President, Dr. C. B. Worth, now stationed at 3 Ali Asker Rd., Bangalore, Mysore, India, writes as follows:

"This letter is in response to your announcement of a trap symposium, especially the part about questions and answers. I have a question. For a long time I have had in mind the possibility of trapping tree-top birds by a trap that could be raised and lowered by a rope and pulley. I tried one out here for several weeks, but it never worked. What I made was a wire cage with a top entrance of the Chardonneret type. Above this was suspended a water-drip contrivance, so that water would fall into a small dish in the trap. It was necessary to fill the water reservoir only once or twice a day. But, although birds flitted about the trap at about 30 feet elevation in a mango tree, none of them evidenced curiosity or interest. It may be that Indian birds have different ideas from American ones. However, what I should like to know is whether any USA bander has tried, or had success, with such a trap. My former idea, which I never put into practice, was that this might be a good way of getting warblers, vireos, flycatchers, etc., that commonly haunt tree-tops. A platform with a trap on it that could be hoisted up to the birds would save them the trouble of coming down to ground level and thereby possibly catch more birds."

He also calls our attention to a booklet "Trapping Methods for Bird Ringers" by P. A. D. Hollom, published by the British Trust for Ornithology as Field Guide Number One. Price 2s 6d. It comments that it is particularly helpful in regard to large traps.

WARBLERS

Mrs. Eleanor Dater of Ramsey, N. J. had the unusual experience related herewith:

"On June 26 I caught a female Laurence who was mated with a Golden Wing. I banded both adults and the 4 young. Earlier I banded 6 young of a male Laurence plus female Blue Wing - not so lucky with these adults. I am sure it is the same male as last year as it was in the exact same spot."

MOCKINGBIRDS

From Mr. W. M. Davidson of 1504 Bodell St., Orlando, Fla.:

"The Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*) is very abundant in Florida the year around and is indeed the State Bird. Flocks of immature birds are often observed during their first summer and one of the sports in which I have seen these flocks indulge is 'teasing' Red-shouldered Hawks (*Buteo lineatus*).

"On my place at Orlando there was the double attraction of heavily-fruited wild cherry trees and a bird bath. During July 1951 I trapped and banded 132 immature Mockers: 94 of these entered a top-opening water trap, the rest entered other traps occasionally unbaited. There were only 3 repeats. Many of the birds were observed to flash their wings and the singing of immature males was heard frequently."

FALL MIGRATION OF THE BROAD-WINGED HAWK  
A Cooperative Study

This study, although not directly connected with banding, may be of considerable interest to many EBBA readers. Observers throughout the fall migration range of the Broad-winged Hawk are cooperating in a series of simultaneous counts of migrating Hawks, with observations concentrated on Sept. 15, 16, 22 and 23

in the North, and Sept. 22, 23, 29 and 30 in the southern states. We are anxious to have a large number of persons afield in every eastern state and province on each of these dates in order to obtain an accurate pattern of the Broad-wing's migration, and trace the peak flight southward. This will be an excellent opportunity to compare any flight along a ridge, river or shoreline near your home with flights at other localities in the East, and at the same time contribute to the over-all picture. Postal inquiries addressed to Chandler S. Robbins, Patuxent Research Refuge, Laurel, Maryland, will be forwarded to the person who is making arrangements for coverage in your state, and you will be supplied with forms on which to record the number of birds you count in each half-hour interval from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Standard Time. Even if you do not feel qualified to identify the various species, your Hawk count will still be valuable, and your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

CHANGES IN ADDRESS

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Mr. J. C. Dickinson, Jr. | - From: Department of Biology<br>University of Florida<br>Gainesville, Florida |
|                          | To: Museum of Comparative Zoology<br>Harvard University<br>Cambridge 38, Mass. |
| Mrs. R. E. Lynn          | From: Collegedale, Tennessee   |
|                          | To: 1805 Haley Ave.<br>Nashville 8, Tennessee                                  |
| Dr. William Edgar Curtis | From: % Dept. of Biology<br>St. Lawrence University<br>Canton, N. Y.           |
|                          | To: % Biology Department<br>Allegheny College<br>Meadville, Penna.             |

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