

"I am trying to compile and summarize my bird banding going back to 1933. It's interesting but time consuming. I have written up a little on Junco results here in Iowa where I have banded them hit and miss over seven or eight counties. Mostly, however, I concentrated where I lived, which was in Calhoun Co. for the 1933 - '39 period. Fremont Co. 1940 to 2½ years later, then the last period in Boone County (1944 - 1950)

"During 18 years of banding I find that I have banded 8821 birds of 112 species. I have 17 recoveries, eleven of them out of state and two from Canada, one from Honduras.

"I have given quite a bit of attention to the mechanics of trapping, taking special pride in going after a certain species. I once transported water weekly by horse-back to an isolated set in order to catch a Yellow-Breasted Chat (very rare in this area). By both luck and patience I succeeded in capturing the Chat - the only bird I ever captured at that particular location - and it was an automatic trap.

"I am making copies for the Bird Banding Magazine, the EBBA and IBB as well as submitting an article to our local "Iowa Bird Life" magazine. I need to work up a little local interest in banding. Most Iowa banders are not banding much. Most of the permits are college deals and are used only on some special problem, which in many cases gets but a half dozen birds banded in a year. I tried to cooperate with one fellow on a Tree Sparrow study. He banded one Tree Sparrow.

"It must be much more interesting in the East where you have more operators."

Many EBBA members would be interested in Mr. Jones' experiences with the mechanics of capturing unusual birds. Your Editor has written him asking him to write them up for the News.

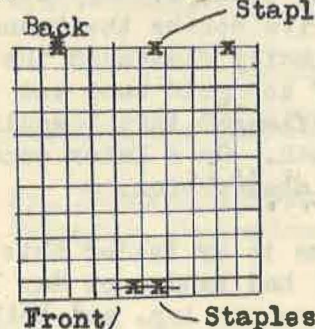
#### BANDING ROBINS

Mr. Fast wasn't banding as many as he thought he would, so he wrote to an expert, Mr. Irwin Sturgis of Lafayette, Ind. for advice. Mr. Sturgis' reply was forwarded to the News by Mr. Fast. Although too long to quote in entirety in one issue it is of sufficient interest to bring to your attention. Mr. Sturgis writes:

"I have best results by using very crude type traps operated by the figure 4 support as described on page 16 of the new 1947 manual for bird banders. I use a longer horizontal bar than the manual describes. The one I use comes to within about 1/2 inch of the back of the trap. The back part of this bar rests on the ground and the front part that attaches to the other parts of the figure 4 is about 2-1/4 inches above ground.

"I make my traps out of laths. I get a piece of 1" x 2" material two yards long and cut it into 4 pieces 18" in length. Then I nail these together so that I have a rectangle 18" by about 20" over all dimensions. With this as a base I begin nailing on laths in a pyramidal shape until the top opening is about 5" on the side. Each round of laths should slightly overlap the round beneath it. It will take about seven rounds of laths to reach this top size. When this is reached I take a piece of hardware cloth and staple it to the back of the top. I drive two staples through the front lath in such a way that the staples will be on each side of one of the meshes when closed. I fasten this with a safety pin. When a bird is caught this pin is unsnapped, the door raised, and the bird removed through this door. Be sure to keep door covered with other hand while trying to catch a bird; otherwise some will escape around the arm while trying to catch them. I slip a piece of newspaper under the hardware cloth before I raise it up high enough for a bird to escape. Then, holding this down tight around my other arm, I never lose a bird by escape. I used to lose some before I figured out this foolproof method.

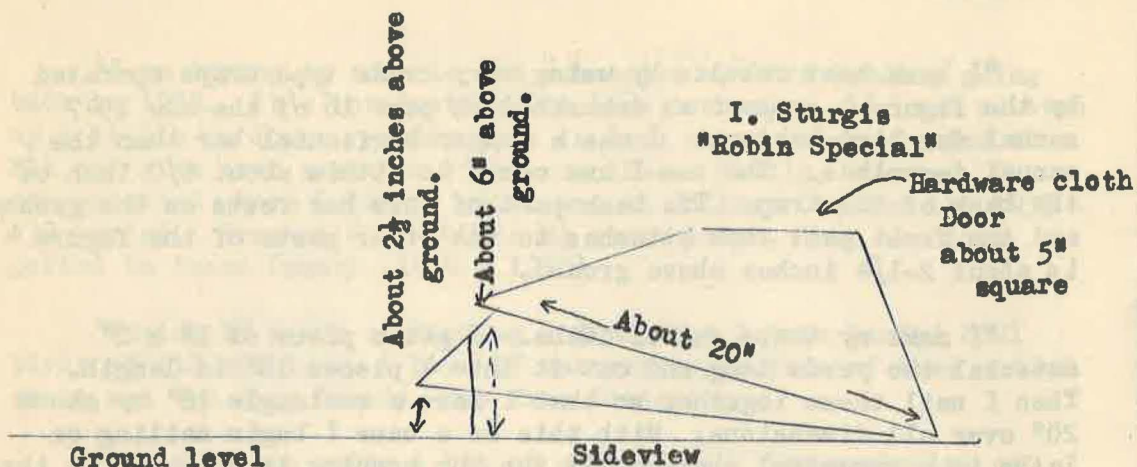
"I use white bread, biscuit or pie crust for bait. Break this up into small pieces the size of a five cent piece or smaller and sprinkle it on either side of the trigger for several inches in the middle of the trap. These sets should be made on the ground near shrubbery or trees where Robins frequent." (to be continued in March)



Do not nail the back of the hardware cloth down tight. Leave enough of the staple out so that the door raises up and down as if on a hinge. Use three or four small screen staples for this.

Safety pin to keep door locked. The staples come through the mesh and the door locked by inserting between the two staples and fastening





#### Lath drop trap pattern

(If you decide to try any of these traps I would like to know the results you obtain.)

#### COLORED BANDS

Seth Low sent the News a letter from Mr. Hervey Brackbill of Baltimore, Maryland, describing a problem which he has encountered with the new colored aluminum bands. Mr. Low would appreciate comment from other banders on this problem. Mr. Brackbill's letter follows: "I have been using some of the new metal color-bands ("gold" ones only) of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, and since the Fish & Wildlife Service now recommends these, I thought you would be interested in hearing of a sort of fault that has come to light.

"On May 14, 1950, I banded an adult Blue Jay, placing the numbered band above a gold band on one leg. Yesterday, October 5, 1950 I saw this jay again for the first time, at very close range at my feeding shelf. In this space of five months the bouncing of the bands as the bird hopped had distinctly flattened the meeting edges of both bands — the upper edge of the gold band and the lower edge of the numbered one. Each had a "flange" that I would estimate at half a millimeter in width and depth. On a later occasion yesterday, and again today, I confirmed that observation.

"On the other hand, there came to my feeder this morning, October 6, 1950, a Starling that I had banded on May 1, 1950, with a gold band above the numbered band on one leg, and both of these bands were still in perfect condition. Starlings do not hop.

"This repeats the experience I had some years ago with aluminum color-bands of my own making. Before I knew either how to make or where to obtain celluloid bands, I made color-bands by cutting cheap