

SYMPOSIA

Mr. Daniel Smiley, Jr. contributes the following anent the Junco Symposium:

"I have used small cards with four feather outlines drawn on them. While the bird is in hand, I sketch the actual location of the white and gray of feathers from each side of the tail. At the same time various plumage notes are recorded by a simple code.

"The following are some of my tentative conclusions about Juncos which may be modified by further study of the data:

1. The amount of gray or brown at the tip of the bill varies with the season for individuals and between individuals, and is not an indication of age or sex.

2. The amount of white in the outer four feathers on each side of the tail varies between Juncos. In some cases the records from returns over a period of years showed an increase in amount of white after successive molts of an individual. In other cases the amount of white remained constant over a period of years. My present information makes me doubt if the white in tail feathers is a reliable indication of age or sex. This needs study, as it is not in agreement with the findings of other banders.

3. By accident I stumbled on an observation which may prove to be significant in age determination of Juncos or other birds - particularly seed eaters. While handling several returns, all at least three or four years old, I noted that the upper mandible seemed to project further beyond the tip of the lower than on most of the unbanded birds I was trapping. I found that the difference in length of the two mandibles could be measured with some degree of accuracy by means of a garage mechanic's "feeler Gauge." The range of variation was between 15 and 31 one thousandths of an inch.

4. During the winter of 1929-30 I was banding at Haverford, Pa. The winter resident Juncos there seemed to have definitely more brown in their body plumage than the Mohonk winter residents

which I handled during vacations and the following winter. I have no concrete evidence on this, just an impression.

"Some of my comments are not in agreement with observations reported by other banders. I do not want to start an argument, but I do urge caution when one starts generalizing about Juncos."

These comments represent a challenge to all members banding Juncos to secure sufficient data to solve the problems involved. It should be relatively easy!

Comments from NEBBA and WBBA on the symposia proposal have been received. As expected, there are various points to be ironed out before the proposal would be acceptable to both Associations. No word yet from Inland.

Unless there is a great deal of additional material received before August 20 it will be necessary to postpone or abandon the Trap Symposium. Several members, notably Karl Bartel and Beecher Bowdish have submitted information but much more is needed. What has happened to those who discussed this subject so enthusiastically at the Annual Meeting? So far not one of them has sent anything in.

STATION REPORTS

Mr. Frank Frazier sends the following report on his 1950 year's banding:

Recoveries

- #48-281220 AOU 493 Starling 6-9-50 Reported "Found", band sent in by "unknown" person from Hudson Co., N. J. 9-25-50
- #49-17459 AOU 517 Eastern Purple Finch Adult Male 3-5-50 Trapped and released by Jas. F. Nields, Jr., Greenwich Rd., Hardwick, Worcester Co., Mass. on 4-22-50
- #49-108816 AOU 587 Red-eyed Towhee Adult Male 4-25-49 found dead at Halethorpe, Baltimore Co., Md., by Mr. Harvey Brackbill of Baltimore on 5-2-50.
- #49-108883 AOU 704 Catbird 5-10-50 Found dead at Irvington, N.J.