

confusion develops because of the fact that a young bird is not only much harder to find than a nest, but also because there are usually more than one "local" in a given small area. Therefore the disturbance is not limited to a small distinct area. Also, sometimes the young move without the parents knowing and the parents either keep up a disturbance over the place which the young bird has left, or else they follow us all over a wide area and show no peaks of excitement around any one spot.

We found that any bird in a nest could be safely banded if it was over five days old. Any bird that at least has its primary feathers formed and beginning to break out of their sheaths is old enough. To catch a bird on the wing is a technique that has to be learned largely by experience, but both of us used basically the same method. The best way is to spot a young bird before it flies, and if the bird is a catchable one, it will be very reluctant to fly and will tire easily. If spotted, crept up upon, and suddenly lunged for it can be caught without too much effort. A second person to create a diversion to divide the bird's attention is very helpful. The more usual occurrence is that the bird or birds will be flushed as one goes thrashing around in the brush. We have found other young in the same bush from which a young bird has been flushed. A bird young enough to catch will always drop to a bush or to the ground soon after taking flight unless caught by a strong wind. We had to run after the bird in most cases, and many times the bird would fly up a second or third time, but they usually tired soon and if we could keep our eyes on them we could usually catch them.

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* SEXUAL MATURITY IN FEMALE YEARLING GRACKLES Two Common Grackles banded as immatures during the second week of June, 1958, when recaptured 50 weeks later, had well defined brood patches. Since aging immature Grackles in June can be done with certainty, good evidence of first year breeding in these birds was obtained.

* CAPTIVE GRACKLES DISBAND THEMSELVES Two Common Grackles that were banded and placed in captivity in early May had removed their bands when examined about six weeks later. One hundred Grackles were confined for 1240 bird-days during the interval, indicating bands were lost at the rate of one band per 600 bird-days, or about a two percent loss in the month and a half. Until studies of disbanding by wild birds can be made, observations of captive birds yield the only clue to this activity. No indication of disbanding has been observed among captive Redwinged Blackbirds.

* - The two above items were submitted by John T. Linehan, Agricultural Hall, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware.
