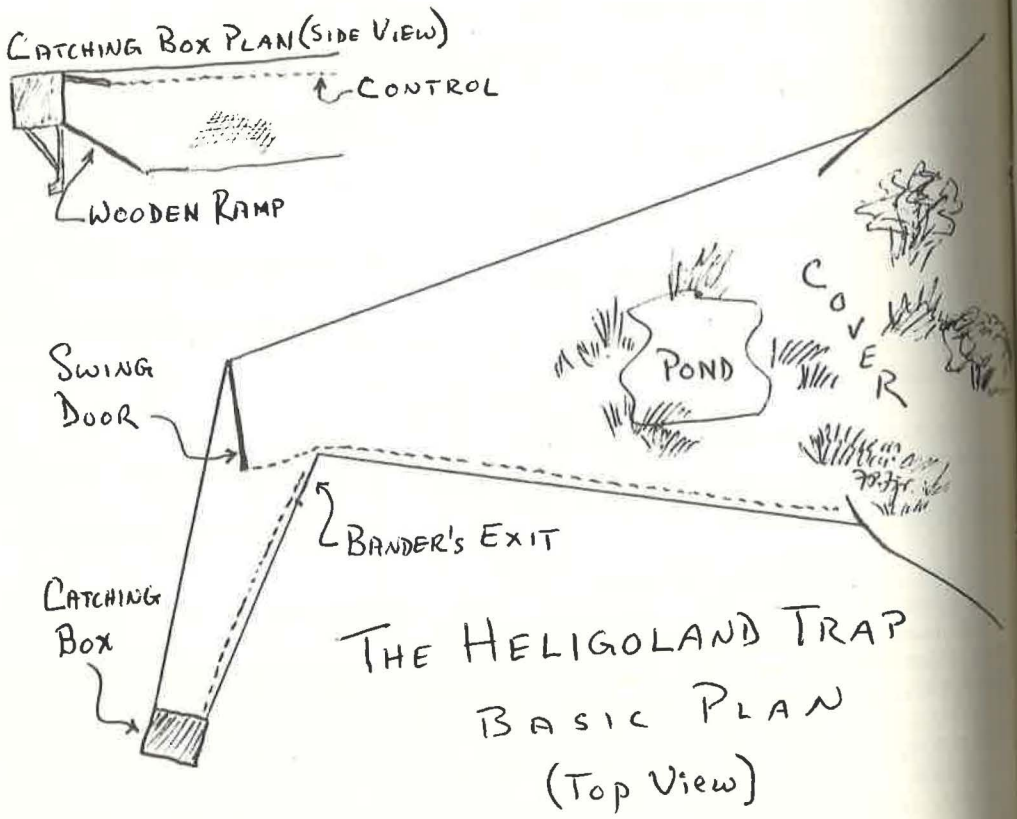
The book contains picture subjects taken by the ordinary 50mm lens and, for comparison purposes, pictures taken through 7 power binoculars as well as through 15, 20 and 30 power scopes. Generally these are pictures of fixed objects or zoo animals, good as examples of what can be done but not very appealing to a birder whose photographic target would more likely be a wild bird or animal.

In sum, this reviewer finds the most value in the data which can prevent an inexperienced buyer of a glass or scope from blindly purchasing the wrong instrument. On the other hand, this reviewer's personal experience resulted in the conclusion that better pictures can be taken more easily using regular camera and telephoto equipment.

-- Reviewed by Charles W. Lincol



BANDING IN EUROPE: HELIGOLAND TRAPPING

By M. J. Thomas

October 20th - 752 birds banded. October 21st - 225 birds banded. All this long before the mist net had become the artifact of the big catch.

I have been reading some notes by a well-known British naturalist, R. M. Lockley (R. M. Lockley, I Know an Island, London, 1938), on a visit he made to the island of Heligoland in 1936, and I thought that some of his and my experiences with the Heligoland trap might be of interest. For those who are not familiar with either Heligoland or its "trap", I should explain that Heligoland is an island off the coast of Denmark, made famous by Heinrich Gatke, who was one of the pioneers of migration study based on bird banding. The island lies in the main stream of the West European coastal migration, and in the fall, birds from Scandinavia drift down Denmark's west coast and then cut across Heligoland to the Dutch coast.

Given the right weather conditions, wave after wave of migrants will be crossing Heligoland. To catch some of these birds, the Heligoland trap was developed, and this trap is standard equipment at most of the coastal bird observatories around the British Isles. On Heligoland, the trap was located in the Fanggarten or bird-catching garden, an area of allotments just on the edge of the Upper Town. The trap was an elaborate affair, much more elaborate than the one I have sketched. It had four traps in an area 100 yards by 30 yards, the funnels located one behind the other so that birds flying over the top of the first and diving for cover might then be driven into trap two, three, or four. The Fanggarten was surrounded by high walls. It was attractive to birds because it was one of the few areas of cover on the island.

The traps are beaten at frequent intervals. The trapping party enters the trap area gently beating the bushes in front of the first funnel. Some birds will be driven into the funnel and will fly into the catching box at the funnel's apex. Those that have escaped are then driven down the garden, the last trap having a mouth almost as wide as the garden. Lockley tells how in his first drive, they carried back to the banding office nearly ninety thrushes, redwings, blackbirds, chaffinches, and chiffchaffs (the commonest West European warbler).

I have worked with the Heligoland trap on Skokholm Island, which lies off the coast of West Wales. Whilst I admit that there is excitement to be had in seeing a flock of birds flying into a well-placed net, I believe that my most exciting trapping experiences have been with the Skokholm Heligoland trap.

The island, 250 acres lying in the path of Atlantic westerlies, has little cover, but in the mouth of the trap are a number of thick, shelter-providing bushes. As one walked toward the trap, one had no idea of what

one might find. It was our practice on the island (since it is a Bird Observatory, the only people one meets, other than lighthouse keepers, will be fellow ornithologists) to beat the trap if we were passing. Gently tapping the bushes, making those strange hissing noises that are peculiar to "bird watchers a-flushing" we moved down into the funnel of the trap. Perhaps nothing would move, or sometimes a knowing wren or songthrush would fly back, close to the trap walls and out into the open (they were residents and knew all the tricks of the trap). Often a solitary chiffchaff or willow warbler would move down the funnel and into the catching box. There were, however, those occasions that remain vivid memories: an excited shout, "It's a Hoopoe!" and down into the end of the funnel would fly that beautiful vagrant from the more central parts of Europe. We may on occasion get a small warbler unfamiliar to us, and then ensued the excitement of weighing and measuring, counting primaries and secondaries - a reed warbler that might be a Blyth's, but never was! Finally the rare occasion when there was a rush. A beat produced a catching box full of fluttering birds. These would be taken to the observatory laboratory, weighed, measured (and identified, if necessary), banded, and released. This done, on a good day another beat would produce another box full of birds. I understand that the Heligoland trap has not been used in this country to any great extent. If this be the case, then banding here has been without one dimension of excitement.

The diagram: I have shown a simple Heligoland trap plan. The entrance to the funnel may be 25 - 30 feet wide, and the height of the trap will usually be 8 feet. The funnel is, of course, roofed with netting. Thirty feet from the entrance, the funnel changes direction, narrowing down to a width of about three feet. At the end of the funnel is a glass-ended catching box. The beater, having put the bird beyond the swing door, may close it by pulling a string which runs from the door to the funnel entrance. Similarly, he may remote control the door of the catching box. The box stands on legs so that it is some five feet off the ground.

Syracuse, N. Y.

THANKS FROM DR. PAUL FLUCK

The following is taken from a letter from Dr. Fluck to President Dater: "Please express my thanks to the officers and members of the Eastern Bird Banding Association for the helpful check Mrs. Dickerson sent to the Washington Crossing Park Bird Banding Station last week. This contribution will be used to purchase equipment needed in one of our scheduled banding research projects, quite possibly a long-planned study on corneal injuries of netted birds. Jeanne and I are honored by EBBA's endorsement of our programs and we hope that other banders will undertake similar banding programs, in their own areas.