

GOOD WILL AND UNDERSTANDING

By Mabel Warburton

Good will between bird banders and their neighbors, or any person who in any way becomes involved in your bird banding activities, cannot be over-stressed.

Much of the misunderstanding between bird banders and the public is due to the fact that the common man does not understand just what we are doing. It is surprising to us who are so intensely interested in our work to find persons who haven't the vaguest notion of what it is all about. Some bird banders are working to instruct the people, especially children, but many of us are doing nothing at all.

My problem was a neighborhood dog. He accompanied some children who cut through my woodland, and on several occasions got into my housetrap and killed birds. Telling the children what I was doing and how important it was to keep the dog out, seemed to have no effect. I called the neighbor on the telephone, but this seemed inadequate; she was only mildly interested, and seemed to think not much harm was being done by letting her dog roam.

Finally I hit upon the idea of sending her a letter. I wrote out all the interesting material about my bird banding station that I could think of: I told her when it was started; what its purpose was; how many birds I had banded; of how many species; and finally appealed to her to help me in this work by keeping her dog home. I pointed out that it was decidedly unfair for her dog to come into a place where I deliberately coaxed birds to come, and then destroy them.

In a few days she called and thanked me for the letter, and told me they had gotten rid of the dog. She seemed genuinely interested in what I had written her, and said they had not cared to keep the dog inside, nor to train it in any way, so had sent it out on a farm.

It may not always be this easy, but in this case, there was a happy ending for all.



Note: Incidentally, the Pennsylvania bird bander has the law on his side; it is unlawful for ANY dog to run at large in this State, licensed or unlicensed. Although the enforcement is left up to each municipality, and is not often taken too seriously, it is the law.

300 West Trenton Ave., Morrisville, Pa.

