

MIMICS AND THRUSHES - Workshop Session
Reported by William E. Savell

One of the interesting workshop sessions held in the Biology Building of Douglas College at the Annual Meeting, June 6th, concerned the identification, ageing, and sexing of Thrushes and Mimics, and was conducted by Rutgers' Assistant Instructor, Tom Crebbs. Twenty-eight study skins in various plumages were available for inspection.

Numerous aids to ageing the five rufous thrushes were pointed out, such as the fact that the buff edgings to the greater wing coverts is a dependable indication of an immature bird only during the fall, as some buff edged feathers are not moulted, but carried over into the following year. In the case of the Swainson's Thrush and the Gray-cheeked Thrush, attention was called to the fact that the Gray-cheeked Thrush's chin is always gray, while the chin of the Swainson's is always white. The most reliable method of distinguishing the immature from the adult Catbird is now considered to be the light color of the mouth lining, the mouth of the adult always being dark. No method of sexing the five similar thrushes is presently possible. The usual method of identifying the Veery, Hermit Thrush and Wood Thrush by the different distribution of coloration was mentioned. Banders were urged to be alert for the possible appearance of the Western Bluebird, especially during the fall months, noting this species is distinguishable from the Eastern Bluebird by its dark throat.

Deviating from the subject in reply to questions relating to the study skins, Mr. Crebbs noted that evening classes in many metropolitan areas are occasionally conducted, covering various phases of ornithology, including the proper methods of preparing study skins. Books on the subject, "Preparing Birds for Study Purposes" by Dr. Charles H. Blake, and "Preparing Museum Skins" by Dr. A. A. Anthony, were suggested. It was emphasized however, that a collector's permit is required before any protected species may be taken.

These workshop sessions are an invaluable aid to the bander, being highly informative, very interesting, and presented by the most capable people in the field. We are very grateful to Mr. Crebbs for his fine presentation.

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COLLECTOR'S ITEM FOR SALE

The Editor has been entrusted with the sale of a copy, in good condition, of the Manual for Bird Banders, by Frederick C. Lincoln and S. Prentiss Baldwin, issued by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture in November 1929 and long out of print. It will be sent to the first person who gives the Editor a check for this amount.