

THE JUVENAL PLUMAGE

By Charles H. Blake

In songbirds and woodpeckers the most striking character of the juvenal plumage is its softness. The barbs and barvules are less close together than in later plumages. The vanes of the body feathers are less coherent. This character does not apply to quills and greater primary coverts.

More specific means of identifying the juvenal plumage exist. The undertail coverts are almost downy (decomposed). This character is not usable in titmice, the adult undertail coverts being similar. The drumsticks and axillae feather out very late, so often are nearly bare until the postjuvenal molt has begun.

There are also clues to the identification of the postjuvenal molt. In those species (a considerable majority) in which the wing quills are not replaced at this molt, the absence of symmetrical molt of these quills during body molt is very evident. When either the greater or middle secondary coverts are being replaced without indication of secondary molt, the probability is good that the bird is in postjuvenal molt.

The above may not apply to non-passerine birds, nor entirely to flycatchers, swallows, and horned larks. The juvenal plumage in our flycatchers appears quite similar in texture to the later plumage. It is quite possible that this is because it is worn for a relatively long time.

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COLLECTOR'S ITEM FOR SALE

The price of this item (not printed in the previous issue) is \$10.00. The first person who sends the Editor, who has been entrusted with its sale, a check for this amount will receive it by return mail.

The item consists 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. Department of Agriculture in November, 1929 and long out of print.

FLASHLIGHTS ON BATS

Dr. Wayne H. Davis writes in Bat Research News 5(3):25, in connection with his project on the colony behavior of big brown bats (ptesicus): "To work out the feeding range of bats in the colony we are putting tiny flashlights on them. There are a few bugs in the system yet, but it is very promising. The bats can carry them nicely, and, very strangely, don't seem to object to them. I expected the bats to try to scratch them off, but they don't."