



May 3 .... John Morgan here this evening and Mrs. Bell called to us to say that a Crow was trying to catch an adult Killdeer in the field across the road. The Killdeer was doing the broken wing act and was keeping just ahead of the Crow that was walking along behind her. We immediately knew that there were young or eggs nearby. I clapped my hands and the Crow left. With binoculars we soon saw one young one about the size of your thumb following the old one. The only way we could find it to band was for John to watch from the yard with binoculars until it moved again and then direct me to the right place. It was huddled on a bare spot of ground and blended in with the surroundings perfectly.

The Killdeer is another of my favorites. When I was a lad the Killdeer nested in the pasture fields on our farm. Before I reached the age of 12, it was my chore to bring in the cows and horses to the barn every morning. The Killdeer broken wing act would fascinate me and I would search diligently for their nest. The Killdeer usually won but occasionally I would be successful. They sometimes wintered in our area and I often wondered how they could find enough to eat, but they select an open spring that never freezes and manage to survive. A friend tells me that a Killdeer has spent at least two winters on his farm. On extremely cold blustery nights this Killdeer would stay under a little bridge between the house and barn.

Killdeer are well adapted for flying at night and are often heard flying from one field to another - especially on moonlit nights. We have many electric wires crossing our farm, but I have never found a dead Killdeer beneath these wires. Of the 149 Killdeer banded here there has been only one recovery. It was banded July 2, 1955, and was recovered on March 1, 1956, at Ponce de Leon, Florida. The finder reported "caught bird, it could not fly, removed band and released."

May 26 .... My best Christmas count helper, Mrs. Alberta Dayton, was laid to rest today. I first knew her as a teacher while I was in high school. Mrs. Dayton was very interested in all phases of nature and left her mark on many of her students. She became interested in

birds when a small child and was greatly influenced and impressed when she saw her grandfather take the time to carefully remove the four eggs from a Killdeer nest and then replace them after plowing corn on their farm. Her enthusiasm has been passed on to her son and in some respects I feel he has already equaled her in his knowledge of birds. It was a private funeral (at her request) and travelers along the country road that goes through their farm pass the mound of fresh earth near the woods where her favorites, the Red-tailed Hawk and Great Horned Owl, nest.

June 6 .... Every once in a while there is a heart warming incident that makes one think that people are basically kind and thoughtful after all. It was very hot today and after church the whole family went to the Monongahela River for an afternoon of water skiing. Upon reaching home toward evening my sister told us that a local club had been telephoning to ask me to please come and settle an argument as to the name of a bird that had four young in a nest above the cash register back of the bar. Since some local birders were paying us a visit, I neglected to go. Just before dark they called again and insisted that I see the birds. Although I am not a drinking man they welcomed me with open arms and explained everything in detail. I was really surprised to see the location of the nest. A pair of Carolina Wrens had entered the air vent and built their trash nest fifteen feet across the room on a shelf stacked with bottles. Since it was almost dark, the mother wren was on the nest (the four babies were sticking their heads out from under her) and apparently unconcerned among all the noise of perhaps 15 people, loud music, and the clutter of the cash register not over 12 inches away. There were plenty of lights and the place reeked with cigarette smoke and the smell of beer. The bartender explained that he had at first thrown the nest out four times, but the wren won. The club members suffered through a very hot day because (to quote the bartender) "we didn't dare turn the fan on as it would have killed her when she entered with food."

June 19 .... Our son Dave and I returned home today from the Brooks Bird Club Foray at Mt. Lake, Giles County, Virginia. Mt. Lake (elevation approx. 3900 ft.) is located near the top of the Allegheny Mts. and is approx. 30 air miles west of Roanoke, Va. It is a lovely place - consisting of a large stone hotel and numerous cottages near a large crystal clear natural lake.

As usual, the 140 people attending the Foray had a busy and memorable week. The bird banding chief this year was EBBA member Clark Miller. Clark gave a fine demonstration of an easy and simple way to erect a high net in the woods. Other EBBA members attending the Foray were Mr. and Mrs. Ballentine, Dr. Burt, Mrs. Ben Kiff, Mrs. Wm. Katholi, John Linehan, Fred Scott, and Mrs. Harvey Shreve.

Some of the highlights of this Foray were - the magnificent views from Bald Knot and other lookout points, the trip to the Cascades, the Eagleston Cliffs, the pair of Blue Grosbeaks (EBBA member Anne Shreve



found the nest containing two young), the Black Vultures, the Bewick Wren that sang for most campers, the playful Ravens, the song of the Veeries, the large number and variety of birds along Poverty Creek Road, Fred Kift and his mail call, Dr. Burttt, and his charts, the many cherry trees that were really loaded with cherries, the nightly movies and the campfires - those wonderful campfires that are a tradition at every Foray.

Box 142, Clarksville, Pennsylvania

THE NET, THE LENS, THE BRUSH AND THE TAPE

By George B. Reynard, Research Associate  
Cornell University, Laboratory of Ornithology

Reprinted from EBBA Workshop Manual, Vol.4, 1965

Few people other than 'ringers' or 'banders' have the opportunity of such intimate inspection of living creatures as interesting as birds. This not only lets you make detailed observations of color and pattern of various plumages, of immatures and adults, of individual differences in markings and behavior, but certainly gives you firm confidence in field identification of species you have handled.

Speaking as a non-bander, and with limited experience in helping with mist netting or even seeing it done, I can freely offer some advice. Share your temporary 'captives' with three (or more) specialists. First, the Lens. On an expedition to Puerto Rico, my companion, EBBA member Stephen Harty, had his mist nets up in areas never before worked in this way. With a single lens reflex 35 m.m. camera, he took facial close-ups of such interesting species as the Puerto Rican Tody (*Todus mexicanus*), Adelaide's Warbler (*Dendroica adelaidae*) and the Robin-like Zorzal or Red-legged Thrush (*Mimocichla plumbea*). These color shots are not only artistic but give valuable information on coloration of soft parts, eyes and facial feathers. If a friend of yours is a shutter bug, invite him or her to your net lanes - but NOT, of course, on a big day! It would be better when a very few birds are coming in to help pass the time away.

Second, the Brush. We don't need any more bird paintings, you say? Your established and experienced artist friend may not want to paint from a bird in hand or collection box, but how many young budding artists now in grade school or college wouldn't welcome the chance and challenge of sketching a Sparrow Hawk or Crested Flycatcher?

The Tape. The most frequent sound you may hear of a bird in net or hand is an alarm or distress note. I have had my tape recorder at several net lanes. The different yet similar descending alarm calls given by the Brown Thrasher, Catbird, Brown Creeper, and several Vireos are making an interesting collection. Such sounds, no doubt inherent, may be of value as another index of relationships between species, and extension of the study to less well-known species in exotic areas by a net and tape team is welcome. With Pigeon Hawks now rare in New Jersey, I was particularly glad to get from a netted bird at Island Beach, a good series of its calls, as well as some color movies at the same time.

You have the species, its weight, sex, probable age, direction of travel; let's have more photos, paintings and sound.