

MEMBER NETS 1½ REDPOLLS A MINUTE

By Timo Tallgren

In November, 1965 there was a very strong invasion of Common Redpoll (*Acanthis flammea*) in Finland which caused especially on the southern coast a mass appearance of birds.

The breeding area of this race, which nests in Finland, is for the most part on the northern side of the polar circle from Lapland east to Siberia. The breeding result of the summer of 1965 was very abundant and when the birds started to wander they gathered in thousands along the southern coast of Finland in suitable places.

On my ringing place in Pasila (in Helsinki) there were in November between 1500 and 6500 Redpolls a day, the numbers changing continuously.

One particular morning, when I arrived at the ringing place, there were about 6,000 Redpolls on the weed field. At 7:45 a.m. I raised only 4 nets (6 meters long) with the net poles in a line and started to drive the flock. At first I caught 190 birds at the same time. I loosed them and it took about an hour and a half. After this I drove the flock again and the same was repeated. This continued the whole day from 8 o'clock in the morning until 5 o'clock in the afternoon.





Timo Tallgren at his net

In the evening I could count the ringing. I had ringed 836 Redpolls in 9 hours, using 4 6-meter nets. This works out to $1\frac{1}{2}$ birds a minute -- or more than 23 birds per net/hour.

I have never before seen anything like that. . . .when, for example, in only one 10-meter net there could be 120 birds at the same time!

IT IS FANTASTIC! In November I visited this place 11 times and ringed a total of 3790 Redpolls. This also shows how effective ringing can be during some unusual mass appearance or an invasion.

I hope to get some recoveries from abroad out of so large an amount of birds ringed. The Finnish percentage of recoveries is 0.3% and we have only four recoveries from abroad -- all from the U. S. S. R. (south-western direction.

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