

O.R. Station Reports (continued from page 121)

OCEAN CITY - Maryland - Gladys H. Cole

September was a warm month but a good one despite the smaller number of nets in operation and the constant noise of the bulldozers all day long for six days a week. An adult Brown Creeper, 116-53306, that we banded on September 28 (weight 8.9 grams) was recaptured at Damsite on October 9 (weight 8.5 grams). We had our first foreign retrap, a Great Crested Flycatcher, 75-140074, banded by Mr. Robert Yunick at the Island Beach O.R. station. Mr. Yunick was too busy on September 14 to do any more than put a band on this flycatcher. We caught it 13 days later (September 27) and recorded a wing measurement of 89mm., fat class of 3 (exceptionally fat for a flycatcher) and weight of 39.3 grams. It would have been even more interesting if the bander had been able fully to process the bird.

October was a warm month with no hurricanes forcing us to close, and with few strong cold fronts. We caught an unusual number of Red-breasted Nuthatches (111) but had no heavy flight of White-throated Sparrows or Slate-colored Juncos as we have had in previous Octobers. Totals for October were 5,962 birds of 89 species. Myrtle Warbler led with 2,604; next were White-throated Sparrow 342, Slate-colored Junco 261, Swainson's Thrush 212, Golden-crowned Kinglet 212, Ruby-crowned Kinglet 204, Hermit Thrush 198, and Gray-cheeked Thrush 129. We kept the station open through November 3 this year.

Our total for the season was 10,390 birds of 107 species as compared with 1967 when we banded 10,817 of 120 species. We had eight banders and some new helpers this year. This was our 14th year, and as in other recent years we wonder if it will be our last at this location, due to development.

(This report as well as the following were adapted from reports appearing in Maryland Birdlife 24:4, December 1968. -Ed.)

ST. MICHAELS - Maryland - Jan Reese

A dry fall season permitted the operation of a banding station at St. Michaels (same location as in 1967) for 57 days between August 24 and November 4. Six to eight 30mm mesh nets were employed for a total of 1927 net hours. Nets were generally opened for a few early morning hours daily prior to October, but the netting schedule was changed to late afternoon thereafter. October 12 and November 2 proved to be the two most productive days.

A total of 402 new bandings of 41 species were made in 1968 for an average of 0.2 birds per net hour. The most frequently captured species were Robin (77), Myrtle Warbler (56), Cardinal (56) and White-throated

Sparrow (56). Predominance of Robins was enhanced by an excellent natural supply of berries. Grains, seed plants and insects were reasonably plentiful also. Of the new birds captured 388 were fully processed with the exception of weighing. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the 1968 St. Michaels banding station was the number of returns. Of the 54 birds recaptured, 13 (24%) were birds returning for the first time since they were banded in the fall of 1967.

MONKTON - Maryland - Stephen W. Simon

Nets were operated on seven days in September and 16 in October. From one to 10 nets were used for a total of 626 net hours. In this period 308 individuals of 43 species were banded. The best day was Oct. 12 when 55 birds were banded.

The six highest species are as follows: Slate-colored Junco 102; White-throated Sparrow 57; Ruby-crowned Kinglet 24; Cardinal 15; Carolina Chickadee 13; and Chipping Sparrow 13. There were 23 returns and 97 repeats. A Chipping Sparrow returned on October 26, 1968 that was banded on October 9, 1966. The oldest Junco returning during this period, out of seven, was one banded in January 1965.

KIPTOPEKE BEACH - Virginia - Frederic R. Scott

For the sixth successive year a banding station was operated at Kiptopeke Beach during the 1968 fall migration. The station lies overlooking Chesapeake Bay near the southern tip of the Delmarva Peninsula and was described in some detail in the May-June 1968 issue of EBBA News. As in 1967, the station was run for just over seven weeks, from Sept. 7 to Oct. 27. Banders in 1968 were Mitchell A. Byrd, Charles W. Hacker, H. Brad Hawkins, Mr. & Mrs. Sydney Mitchell, F.R. Scott and Walter P. Smith.

Results in 1968 were considerably better than in previous years, with 12,336 birds of 101 species trapped in 18,634 net hours versus 8590 birds of 96 species in 17,725 net hours in 1967. Trapping efficiency was up to about 662 birds per 1000 daylight net hours versus about 484 in 1967. There were probably several causes of these increases. Continued experimentation and improvements in net placement were undoubtedly factors, but there were other reasons too. The weather was the best yet for this station, with few disruptive periods of hard rain and many mild frontal systems to keep the transients moving. Techniques were generally comparable to previous years, with the nets being kept open all day except in periods of heavy rain, and most birds were skulled, weighed and their wing chords measured. The proportion of 1½" mesh nets was somewhat higher this year.

The best flight days were September 13-14 and 27-30, and October 5, 9, 14, 20, 22 and 26, with a peak of 959 on October 20. The flight on the 20th was particularly interesting since it was mainly a warbler flight,

with few sparrows and juncos. The Myrtle Warbler predominated, of course, with 743 caught, but there were also 16 other warbler species, including 10 Parulas, 42 Black-throated Blues, and 10 Connecticut Warblers. Seasonal trapping totals for the most common species were Myrtle Warbler, 3325; Yellowthroat, 1116; American Redstart, 979; Swainson's Thrush, 794; Gray-cheeked Thrush, 650; and Veery, 519. There were only a few birds banded that might be considered rare: a Western Kingbird on Sept. 10, Bewick's Wren on Oct. 6 and 26, Warbling Vireo on Sept. 16 and 28, a Golden-winged Warbler on Sept. 13, and a Clay-colored Sparrow on Oct. 16. There were three foreign retraps, but results on them are not yet known.

In general, the numbers of most birds were higher in 1968 as compared to 1967, especially thrushes and warblers. Some species dropped, however, and Sharp-shinned Hawks went from 33 to only 18. Some of the interesting increases included Veery, which went from 271 to 519, Red-eyed Vireo, from 187 to 409, Tennessee Warbler, from 15 to 29, Parula from 44 to 118, and Magnolia Warbler, from 131 to 260.

A detailed tabulation of this operation is available for 15¢ from Walter P. Smith, 3009 Chesapeake Ave., Hampton, Va. 23361. Anyone wishing to help with this banding station in 1969 should get in touch with one of the banders noted in the first paragraph.

HOMESTEAD - Florida - Erma J. Fisk

From the 90-degree heat and poison ivy of mid-September at O.R. at Ocean City, Maryland, I hurried south to set up my own, solo station in the poisonwood and 90-degree heat of sub-tropical Florida. This was the first such migration study for this area of interest because of its locality. It is the furthest south O.R. station in the scheme and in EBBA territory.

Eighty inches of rain over the summer had turned my net lanes into a tropical jungle, and ten more the first few days as I labored to clear them, did not help. I opened up on October 1st with six nets set and gradually increased this to ten. My area is perhaps two acres of abandoned agricultural land grown into a tangle of salt bush (*baccharis*), Brazilian pepper (*schinus*) and lead tree (*leucaena glauca*) with assorted weeds and grasses, broom sedge, Spanish needle, smilax, poison ivy and a host of others. Similar territory runs on two sides, pinewoods with a heavy understory, uncleared on the third; a dense Florida "hammock" on the fourth. I have a shallow pond, a weedy garden and no near neighbors.

I ran the station for the major part of most days from October 1 to November 9, except for a two day interruption from hurricane Gladys, which brought neither heavy winds nor birds. Clearing and maintaining, furling and reopening nets, banding, etc. is a far different affair when you work alone than when you have an eager group of runners, companionable recorders,

visitors bringing in food and supplies, and Gladys Cole/Chan at your right hand! Since I had no idea what I might get, every day was like a Christmas stocking. I ended up with 1049 individuals of 65 species, which includes 74 returns from previous years' irregular winter banding, and one foreign Painted Bunting (not yet verified). My net hours were 2712. Unusual records for this area were a Canada Warbler, a Bell's Vireo, a Philadelphia Vireo and two Wood Thrushes. My biggest day was 58 on Oct. 22, my smallest, 2 on Nov. 7.

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If you receive a particularly interesting foreign retrap or recovery report, please drop me a line. In many of the foreign banding publications, lists of these are published from time to time. I am referring in particular to good examples of reverse migration, direct recoveries and recoveries to areas not heretofore known as habitat for the species in question. In this way, other EBBA members can enjoy reading about them and learn from your recovery information. When submitting these items, please indicate species, age, sex, date banded, place banded, weight, fat class (for direct recoveries) and date and place recovered, and present status of the bird.

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AN EXTREME IN GULL'S DEFENSE BEHAVIOR
By Thomas H. Davis

The two photos that appear with this note were taken at a gull colony located at Captree State Park, Suffolk County, New York. Last summer I initiated a breeding bird census-gull study at this colony and found 17 pairs of Great Black-backed Gulls and 830 pairs of Herring Gulls. Their nesting area lies between and around two large parking lots: consequently, it is trespassed on quite frequently by curious people. These photos evidence the gulls' defensive efforts. I have visited several gull colonies and only at Captree have I ever actually been struck. While banding young gulls here I quit after four blows to my head within 15 minutes. I would guess that this extreme defensive behavior is the result of so much human interference.

The Black-backed Gull in the photo is aimed at my head, about ready to utter its charge call, a loud guttural "waugh!". I ducked just after taking this shot and the bird's lowered feet passed through the space vacated by my head. This bird occupied nest B9 which contained three eggs (one of them pipped) on May 30 when I obtained the photograph. You might also note that it wears a band on its left leg; this individual's extreme wariness and aggressive behavior prevented my reading the number with a telescope. I crouched beside the Herring Gull's nest to take its picture. When the bird charged, I waited until it was within ten feet, and then