

UNUSUAL BAND WEAR
By Constance Katholi

In October 1968 I retrapped Downy Woodpecker, #29-183389, originally banded over $5\frac{1}{2}$ years ago on January 18, 1963. The band had worn down in such an unusual way that the prefix was all but obliterated. (See drawings.) Since Last fall I have had the opportunity to examine the bands on a number of other Downy woodpeckers which returned after widely differing time intervals; I find: (1) that this particular pattern of wear is characteristic of this species, and (2) that it begins to take shape in far less time than five years. Another example, Band #102-195439, placed on the bird on February 13, 1965, was likewise so worn that the upper half of the numbers 1-0-2 was rapidly disappearing. The wear occurs as a "double scallop", one hollow forms (always) at the point of band closure, and the other directly opposite, i.e. exactly where the prefix is imprinted in the metal, and on that edge of the band placed toward the foot. This, of course, is the point of maximum friction as the bird moves about with his leg at right angles to the trunk of the tree. Additionally, the Downy's very short tarsus probably contributes to the situation. I can not recall observing this type of band wear on other members of the woodpecker family. It does not occur on the White-breasted Nuthatch whose activities would seem to equal, or even exceed, those of the Downy along the same lines, although the band, does become well polished.

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