A SLATE-COLORED JUNCO RECOVERY

By Mabel Warburton and Charles H. Blake

On the morning of 23 September 1968, M. W. banded a Junco (J.hyemalis) at Island Beach State Park (near Seaside Park), New Jersey, with band number 75-29525. This bird was recovered on 17 November 1968 near Hillsborough, North Carolina, by C. H. B. It was recorded as quite brown with a wing length of 69 mm., and was retaken on two further dates up to 1 March 1969. The same bird was taken four times in the span 10 November 1969 to 8 January 1970. That season it was somewhat brown above with a wing of 71 mm. The bird was aged as a juvenile by eye color at banding by M.W. C.H.B. concurs on the basis of the changes between 1968 and 1969 and considers it probably a female.

The lack of recapture at Island Beach in 1968 indicates that it did not stay there long and the similarity of the two initial capture dates at Hillsborough seems to show the normal arrival date on its wintering ground. In 1968, it required, apparently 55 days to cover an air distance of 370 miles. The nominal rate of travel was 6.7 miles per day. Even a detour to avoid crossing the Deleware and Chesapeake Bays would have increased the distance only to about 425 miles. A flight speed for the Junco of 15 miles per hour would be, if anything, under the mark. If each migratory jump lasted only four hours, it could have covered the distance in seven to eight nights. This leaves 47 to 48 nights off passage.

The dates are interesting in other respects. The average date of arrival of Juncos at Island Beach is 14 September, although in 1968 the earliest arrival was 8 September. At Hillsborough the species arrives at the end of October, so our bird was not particularly late at either place.

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LONGEVITY AND DISPERSAL OF THE DOWNY WOODPECKER

By: Ralph W. Condee

From 1 September 1965 to 31 August 1971, 35 Downy Woodpeckers (Dendrocopus pubescens) were trapped or netted 125 times, banded, and released. Sixteen were female, 19 male. The study area, about 5400' x 1800', is mixed deciduous forest, cutover brushy woods, and open pastures, at elevations from about 1300' to 2000' in central Pennsylvania, about ten miles northeast of the Pennsylvania State University.

Here are the 12 (apparently) oldest of the 35:

Bird	Sex	Date Banded	Date Last Trapped	Estimated Age#	No. of Trappings	Maximum Distance&
337	F	03-29-69	08-24-71	38.24*	5	1969'
800	M	11-04-65	03-31-68	33.31	17	812'
181	F	03-26-67	03-26-69	33.26	2	2406'
001	M	11-07-65	02-24-68	32.08	7	1000'
147	M	10-22-66	11-30-68	29.30	8	1375'

Bird	Sex	Date Banded	Date last Trapped	Estimated Age#	No. of Trappings	Maximum Distance&
172	F	01-18-67	11-30-68	29.30	5	297'
191	M	11-12-67	04-07-68	22.07	3	2235'
173	F	01-18-67	03-10-68	21.10	4	375'
005	F	11-21-65	01-18-67	19.18	7	(+)
194	M	11-26-67	12-08-68	18.06	7	2390'
367	M	01-16-71	08-05-71	14.05*	4	1875'
368	M	01-16-71	04-29-71	10.29	3	1825'

Notes

The estimated age arbitrarily assumes the bird is 1 day old on 1 June prior to banding. Age is expressed in months and days: 38.24 = 38 months, 24 days.

* Presumably still alive at the end of the study period

\+ No significant figures available.

& See references.

This chart has the obvious limitations that none of the Downies listed could be aged at the time of banding, and that the time of survival after the last trapping is unknown because no birds were found or reported dead.

During the study period 491 birds of other species were trapped or netted, banded, and often repeatedly retrapped a total of 1490 times; the greatest repeater was a Tufted Titmouse (Parus bicolor) which was trapped 76 times in more than three years. These are relevant facts in that much of the evidence and dispersal is necessarily negative; therefore the opportunities in which a bird might have been trapped at a given time and place, but was not, are cumulatively significant.

Precise conclusions are of course impossible because of the inherent limitations of the study. But is is notable that among the (apparently) oldest Downies, sex seems not to have been a factor in longevity; of 16 females and 19 males banded, the 12 oldest were 5 females and 7 males. It is also notable that only 1 out of 35 could be shown to survive more than 3 years; only 6 more than 2 years. The disappearance in less than a year of 24 birds out of 35 is probably not the dispersal of young birds after the nesting season, since these birds were banded at various times in the year: of the 13 birds banded but never retrapped, only 1 was banded in the fall (11-12-67); all other "one-timers" were trapped in winter or spring. It seems improbable that many of these were "skulkers" in the area, in view of the 1615 successful trappings or nettings throughout most of the study area during the six year period. The "one-timers" may have died soon after banding or they may have moved to unknown places for unknown reasons.

References

Condee, R. W. 1969
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