

EVENING GROSBEAKS AT PERU, NEW YORK

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In response to requests for material, I have written up some of my bird banding notes for ten years, from 1956 to 1966, on the Evening Grosbeak.

I come under the category of the small individual backyard bander. We became intensely interested in observing and identifying birds after we moved from Long Island to the small north country town of Peru, New York, ten miles south of Plattsburgh, and five miles west of Lake Champlain, at 443-0733. Here, in the center of a small town of 1200 people, on a property of lawn and large elms, shrubbery and small trees, we had an incursion of evening grosbeaks in 1955, and wanted to know more about them. We applied for a banding permit which we received in 1956. In the meantime we procured the necessary traps, etc. for banding, and were greatly helped by visits to well known banders, such as Mr. Edwin Mason, Arcadia Wildlife Refuge near Northampton, Mass., and Mr. and Mrs. Shaub, also of Northampton, who had specialized in the evening grosbeak.

The countryside around Peru consists of open fields and wooded lands, on the edge of the Adirondacks. Large apple orchards are the main business, with dairying, and a little farming in addition. There were cats, dogs and children that occasionally disturbed the birds. As I was working with the Girl Scouts at the time, I enjoyed showing both the girls and boys how the birds were banded, and encouraged them to learn more about birds.

Mason traps and 3-celled Potter traps were used, and banding was done mostly from November to March or April, so that the resident winter birds were banded as well as the migratory winter flocks, such as pine siskin, redpoll, goldfinch, purple finch and evening grosbeak.

During the period of 1956 to 1966, we banded 1046 evening grosbeaks - 723 males and 305 females. There were 16 foreign retraps. Of these, the longest time lapse between banding and retrap was 6 years, 2 months:

Band #48-223973 AM- Banded 2-11-1950 By Mrs. Thomas B. Thines,
Glastonbury Conn.
Retrapped 04-21-56 By Washbourne, Peru, N.Y.

The foreign retraps were banded in many states - Connecticut, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maine, New York, New Jersey and Vermont.

There were 50 evening grosbeaks banded by the Washbournes from 1956-66, at Peru, N.Y. that were reported retrapped, killed or found dead by others. Many of these birds were reported from Canada.

Two of these birds had a very interesting history:

55-111976 was banded at Peru by us on April 19, 1956, an adult male. It was trapped and released on Jan. 11, 1959 by Harry C. McDade, Mann's Hill Road, Littleton, N.H. (2 yr. 9 mo.) On July 4, 1961, the same bird was shot by a hunter, S.W. Clark, Quebec, Canada. Time lapse since banded was 5 yr. 3 mo.

55-132745 was banded at Peru by us on Jan. 27, 1958, an adult male. It was trapped and released on May 7, 1958 by Mrs. Eloise McGregor, Ellenburg Depot, N.Y. On March 18, 1960, the same bird was trapped and released by Mr. Rowley Frith, Ottawa, Canada. Time lapse since banded 2 yr. 2 mo.

A few other interesting retraps were:

<u>Band #</u>	<u>Date Banded at Peru</u>	<u>Reported by</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time lapse</u>
54-153007	01-09-56 AM	Thos. Braesseau, St. Leon Le Grand Quebec, Canada	07-07-60 Hunter	4 yr. 1 mo.

<u>Band #</u>	<u>Date Banded at Peru</u>	<u>Reported by</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time lapse</u>
55-111943	03-22-56 AM	Forest A. Dilling, Bowmanville, Ont. Canada	02-28-60 Trapped	3 yr. 11 mo.
56-169559	01-28-59 AM	Wisconsin-Tr. & R.	03-01-62	3 yr. 2 mo.
56-169591	03-05-59 AF	Wisconsin-Tr. & R.	02-14-62	3 yr. 2 mo.
55-132606	05-01-56 AM	Mrs. Basil O'Donnell McNamee, N.B. Canada	06-23-59 Caught by child	3 yr. 1 mo.
55-111921	03-09-56 AM	John Theberge N. Oshawa, Ont. Canada	03-07-59 Tr. & R.	3 yr.

In addition to the places above where the evening grosbeaks were trapped or caught, individuals that we banded were reported at Littleton, and Wolfboro, N.H., Burlington, Plainfield, Woodstock and Saxtons River, Vermont; Liberty and Buffalo, N.Y., Andover, Mass., State College, Pa.; New Jersey, Marquette, Michigan; Ludlow and Fort Kent, Maine; Ottawa, Quebec, Lakefield, and Toronto, Canada; Boiestown, Prince Edward Island, Apohaque, and Alma, N.B. Canada.

We tried to see if there was any pattern in the direction from Peru that the birds were retrapped. The following birds seem to be going south in January and February.

<u>Band #</u>	<u>Date Banded at Peru</u>	<u>Reported by</u>	<u>Date</u>
54-153003	01-09-56 AM	Mrs. Marion Mason	01-28-56 at Essex, N.Y.
54-153009	01-10-56 AM	Mrs. Marion Mason	01-18-56 at Essex, N.Y.
54-164343	01-15-56 AF	Mrs. Marion Mason	04-08-56 at Essex, N.Y.
54-199414	02-09-56 AM	Mrs. Marion Mason	05-01-56 at Essex, N.Y.
52-130858	01-20-56 AF	Mr. J.G. Hitchner	05-06-56 Pitman, N.J.

Below is a list of evening grosbeaks that were trapped and reported north of the banding area. Where there is a lapse of three to six months, they could have gone south before being reported:

<u>Band #</u>	<u>Date Banded</u>	<u>Reported by</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Lapse</u>
54-164818	01-07-56 AM	Eloise McGregor	02-12-56	Ellenburg, N.Y.	1 mo.
55-132626	05-07-56 AM	Eloise McGregor	05-09-56	Ellenburg, N.Y.	2 days
55-132745	01-27-58 AM	Eloise McGregor	05-07-58	Ellenburg, N.Y.	3 mo.
58-198081	01-04-66 AM	D.S. Christie	05-31-66	Alma, N.B.	4 mo.
56-169694	12-02-59 AF	T. Brousseau	06-26-60	St. Leone Grand, Quebec	6 mo.

We find some data pointing towards evening grosbeak migration to Canada in the following items:

All our foreign retraps were banded in the U.S. rather than in Canada.

Of birds banded by us and later reported - 29 were reported from the U.S. and 20 birds were reported from N.B. Ontario, and Quebec. Of these reported from Canada, 8 were reported by banders who trapped and released them, 5 by hunters, 6 were found dead, and one gave no information. It is difficult to draw any conclusions from this sparse data.

We have been interested in reading about the studies of evening grosbeak by Mr. and Mrs. Parks, and by Mr. F.R. Scott in EBBA News. We feel, as they do, that a great deal more research must be done on this bird before we can come to any definite conclusions about their migration routes. If it would be helpful to anyone to have our complete list of foreign retraps and our banding returns from 1956 to 1966, we would be glad to send it.

We are now at a different location on Lake Champlain, five miles from Peru, and have not had as many grosbeaks at our station as we had in the years 1956-66, although we see them in the general area.

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