D. Stower. Rec'd. 7/21/41

EBBA NUS

A FRIENDLY REPORT ISSUED MONTHLY TO THE MEMBERS OF THE EASTERN BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION

Members In
Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina,, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and other States and in Canada.

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BANDING AT BRANCHPORT

One of the things that makes Branchport, N.Y. an outstanding town, to our mind, is the fact that it is the home of Verdi Burtch, an ornithologist of considerable local fame and a veteran bander. A recent letter relates some of his activities. They are of such general interest that we can't resist telling you of the highlights.

Mr. Burtch agrees that House Wrens are scarce this year in his locality, but adds that this has been the first year that he has been able to catch Goldfinches. He caught his first one on March 20th and between that date and May 2nd he caught 109. Most of these birds were caught in a drop trap but they were also taken in Sparrow, One Funnel, Potter and House traps. For bait he used weed seeds which he gets from farmers or the local feed mill. This is Mr. Burtch's favorite bait and he has used it to catch Red-wings, Cowbirds, Grackles, Yellow-throats, Rusty Blackbirds, Pipits and the whole sparrow tribe. He also mentions the capture of House Wrens, Long-billed Marsh Wrens, Carolina Wren, Sora, Virginia Rail and Florida Gallinule, but Ebba is not sure that he means to infer that these were caught with weed seeds. However, to get back to the unusual capture of Goldfinches, this seems to have some connection with another unusual catch of the same species by Horace Groskin at Ardmore, Pa. He also reported a catch of about 400 of these birds this spring.

Mr. Burtch states he makes it a point to speak before Garden Clubs, Bird Clubs and schools at every opportunity. His most recent talk was before a Camera Club in a nearby town. He also writes banding news for the local papers and encloses an interesting clipping from the Penn-Yan Chronicle Express relating his work with Tree Sparrows. Ebba doesn't know his grand total of Tree Sparrows banded, but he mentions the capture of 110 last winter and speaks of 136 returns in all. The clipping mentions Tree Sparrows banded by Malcolm Lerch at a station seven miles away. It relates that 6 Tree Sparrows have returned to his traps six winters in succession, 5 returned five winters and 17 have returned four winters. He has had his Tree Sparrows found dead in the summer in northern Quebec and in Novia Scotia. One was found by Hoyes Lloyd of the Canadian Nat'l. Park Commission, and a personal friend of Mr. Burtch.

On June 29th Mr. Burtch drove to a lake 100 miles from his home and banded 349 Common Terns, 1 Black Duck, 2 Red-wings and 4 Spotted Sandpipers. Had four helpers, two to band and two to catch birds. He says that he could have banded more young Terns but that he only had 349 No. 3 bands.

Yes...Ebba thinks Branchport must be quite a nice town because Verdi Burtch comes from there.

NEWS FOR THE BIRD BANDERS

Jesse V. Miller, of New Hyde Park, N.Y., will return next week from a month's stay at Stoddard, N.H., where he has been checking on the bird residents of a small island he partially owns. During the latter part of this month, he expects to visit Leroy Wilcox, with "Ye Editor" at the east end of Long Island, N.Y. and take colored Kodachrome pictures of Wilcox banding shore birds.

Russell C. Richards of Berwyn, Pa. will conduct his banding operations for the summer at Chautauqua, N.Y. He would like to hear from any bander who has discovered a good way to trap flickers other than at their nest hole and what kind of trap and bait is considered best to catch robins. Ebba has sent him all the data on file here in answer to these two questions but your way may be a better one. Please write him direct to Box 1131.

Howard P. Mahnken of Brooklyn, N.Y. has just closed his first "official" year of banding with a total of 330 birds of 17 species. Congratulations are in order, we believe. Mr. Mahnken is also considering some experiments with young cowbirds, sort of doubling up on the foster parents. For instance, he plans to take a nestling cowbird from its first foster parents and introduce it in the nest of another set of parents, such as starlings. Has any member got any comment on such an experiment. Personally, EBBA doesn't think such an experiment would work. What do you think?

Beecher S. Bowdish of Demarest, N.J. reports that an adult brown thrasher banded at his station on July 7, 1937 was brought to him by three small boys on June 23, 1941 and was apparently killed by a car on the road within a few blocks of his station. The bird has never appeared in the traps since it was banded. This little item illustrates two suggestions. Make friends with the children around your station and seek their cooperation. Secondly, it is Ebba's belief that more birds are killed by automobiles within the vicinity of any large city (50 miles or so) than by cats. However, I fear such a remark will bring forth strong denials from Mr. Bowdish.

Miss Lisa von Borowsky of Brookville, Fla. will give a lecture on birds, banding etc. on Sept. 5th before the assembly of the Junior-Senior High School at Manhasset, L.I., N.Y. This is the school in which our indefatigable member, Jesse V. Miller has organized and conducted a Junior Banding Club for the last two years and it is through the organization that this lecture has been arranged.

TRAPPING HINTS AND TIMELY TIPS

by

Russell C. Richards, Chautauqua, N.Y.

A set of fifteen colored bird pictures wrapped in individual cellophane packs can be procured from the Advertising Dept. of Church & Dwight Co., Inc. of 10 Cedar St., New York City, FREE of any charge, simply by requesting 25 sets of cards to give to children. When I have a boy or girl among my pupils or in the neighborhood, bring me a bird, or tells me where there is a bird's nest, I reward them with a gift of a set of bird- pictures. (These pictures are very good and make splendid gifts for children and should be very useful at any banding station).

I find a shower-bath curtain safety-pin very useful for holding bands. I usually assign a series of ten to twenty numbers of a size to one species and label the safety pin holder with a little adhesive tape tab designating a single species, writing on it with ink. This plan has many advantages; try it!

A WASHINGTON RECORD TO SHOOT AT!

Rev. Edward Stoehr of Washington, D.C. has just sent his report into the Survey for '40-41 and is certainly nominated for congratulations for a banner year. His total amounted to 2,553 individuals banded, of 88 species. Considering the great success he has had with warblers, EBBA has procured a list of his catch of these feathered sprites for this period. It is hoped that Rev. Stoehr's catch will serve as a goal to attain by many of us. Frankly, "Ye Editor" after scanning the list, feels a trifle green with envy, but here is the list:

Species	Fall '40	Spring '41	Total
Black & White	5	8	13
Worm-eating		1	1
Blue-winged	8	1	9
Brewster's		1	1
Golden-wing	2		2
Nashville	2	1	3
Tennessee	1		1
Parula	5	1	6
Yellow		1	1
Black-throated Blue	9	9	18
Myrtle	3	12	15
Magnolia	16	17	33
Chestnut-sided	29	8	37
Bay-breasted	10	1	11
Blackpoll	5	1	6
Blackburnian		3	3
Black-throated Green	22	5	27
Yellow Palm		1	1
Ovenbird	30	26	56
Kentucky	8	1	9
Connecticut	1		1
Md Yellow-throat	20	58	78
Chat		2	2
Hooded	3	1	4
Wilson		3	3
Canada	15	25	40
Redstart	28	19	47
Species - 27	Fall - 222	Spring - 206	Year - 428

Besides the above warbler totals, the year's take of thrushes are something to be proud of and they run as follows: Robin - 250; Bluebird - 3; Wood Thrush - 56; Veery - 16; Gray-cheeked - 33; Olive-back - 83; and Hermit Thrush - 45. A total of 486.

Rev. Stoehr has completed his work at Washington, but has made all arrangements for the work of this banding station to continue. He has turned over all his equipment to Fr. Fabian, his assistant, who has a banding license. From the glowing reports Rev. Stoehr has given us about his assistant, Ebba would not be surprised to see Fr. Fabian beat the above record next year. Rev. Stoehr is not sure as to just where his duties will take him in the future. It may be possible that he will locate in Ohio. Members can be sure that he will start another banding station and while it will be necessary for him to build a new set of traps at his new location, no matter where it is, it is certain to be a success.

RECORD KEEPING SYSTEMS

On several occasions EBBA has been requested to relate the manner in which records and tabulations are kept at the different stations. Well, as the old lady said about kissing a cow, everyone to their likes. It would seem that the personal records kept at the individual stations are to the likes of the operator. Different stations have different ways in which such records are kept. What is suitable for one station may not fit with another. Ebba judges that the more simple a system is the better and easier it is to handle. It must be one that can be fully understood by the user and easy to expand. Many of the stations have a simple ruled note-book, of the size of this sheet, in which the number of the band is put down first, species next, sex, age, date of banding, etc. Two pages are used and the second sheet is left blank for repeats and subsequent returns and recoveries, somewhat as follows:

41-139321	Purple Grackle	M.	ad.	June 1, 1941	June 5, Apr.3,1942	47	841
41-200041	Brown Thrasher		ad.	June 3, 1941	July 2	23	842

(One Page) Center of book (Following Page)

In the above system the number is the key and inasmuch as when a dead bird is found by a child or a lay person the correct species is not always known yet the correct number is, so that the number is the thing to look for. Numbers of course run in consecutive order as much as possible. When a bird has come back to the station as a return, the number in the first column is under-lined. Records are transferred from this book on rainy afternoons to government forms by species. This system is simple, yet has its draw-backs for special studies. When a special study is in progress a card index should be made out for each return bird of the species under consideration. The number 47 denotes the number of birds of this species caught to date and the number 841 denotes the total of birds banded at the station to date.

Another system used by some stations consists of a quantity of index cards filed alphabetically under the common name of the species. When banding the numbers are jotted down with the data in a small note-book and then each evening transferred to the card index file. This system seems much easier to handle and work with on special studies, but when a band number and not the species of bird is reported it may be awkward to find. The card looks something like this:

Cardinal		1940		(1941)
Mar. 14	(37-244146)	Ad.	M.	
Mar. 21	(37-244147)	Ad.	M.	
Apr. 11	(37-244149)	Ad.	M.	(Nov. 9-'40)
Apr. 14	(37-244150)	Ad.	M.	(Apr. 11-'41)
	1941			
Apr. 19	(37-244154)	Ad.	M.	
Apr. 22	(37-244155)	Ad.	F.	Pair

With any individual bird that returns year after year for 5 or 8 years such a card would get cramped but the operator can always use the reverse side of the card for such individuals.

There is also the card index with one card to each bird. The only drawback to such a system is that it soon gets very bulky. No system is perfect for all stations, but if you have a good system, let's hear about it.

NEWS FOR THE BIRD BANDERS

Howard H. Krug of Chesley, Ontario, spent several days in the later part of June, banding young gulls at the nesting colonies in Lake Huron. He mentions an attempt to band some young eagles in a nest on one of the islands, but we are not yet sure whether he was successful. Up until June, Mr. Krug writes that trapping at his home station hasn't been anything to boast about and he hasn't had a chance to complete his new Brenckle trap. Ebba hopes that this trap will be ready and working for the Fall migration.

Mr. and Mrs. William Pepper, Jr. who have operated a banding station for many years in Wyncote, Pa. are changing the scene of operations and now should be addressed at 7150 Crittenden St., Philadelphia, Pa.

Dr. Harold B. Wood of Harrisburg, Pa. and one of bird banding's most enthusiastic ambassadors of good-will, writes of a recent visit to bander Meritt B. Skaggs of South Euclid, Ohio. He says, "When I saw him last year, I advised him to paint his traps black and he did it with remarkable results. I fully believe that such a step solves the whole difference between new and old traps. The older are more oxidized, and hence less visible. Black paint does this quickly. If I remember correctly, I have mentioned this several times and the only color Ebba advises using is green." Begorra, Good Doctor, Sure and it is sorry I am. 'Must be the Irish in me.' Still being in the verdant stage of life, Ebba confesses a partiality to nature's own colors. Let those who must, black-out their traps but we still will favor dark green as a color for equipment. Rev. Stoehr whose work is commented on elsewhere in this issue, has never painted a trap but admits he uses old wire.

For those banders who are interested in weights and measurements, Mr. Howard Braund, Route 5, Canton, Ohio, we hear, captures a lot of warblers and has quite a lot of such data.

Thomas R. Paxton of Atlanta, Ga. recently received his banding license and the first thing he did was to join our organization. May Ebba be forgiven for thinking that this is one of the best ways to start banding and one in which success and more fun for the bander is assured. We hope many new banders will follow Mr. Paxton's example.

LeRoy Wilcox of Speonk, L.I., N.Y. states that on June 20th he spent nine hours on Cartwright Island (L.I., N.Y.) and succeeded in trapping 11 adult ospreys on their nests. Out of the 11, two were banded by Wilcox 5 years ago at Orient, L.I., N.Y., as young, both in the same nest. "I had trapped 2 adults previous to this year, so now feel satisfied it is possible to trap both sexes on the nest. These are the only adults trapped on their nests to date in U.S., and I hope to keep the work up each year, also enlarge on trapping activities. There are about 25 nests on the ground on Cartwright Island which makes it ideal for trapping these birds. There are also about 500 herring gulls nesting on this island." With his work on piping plovers, he reports banding 66 new adults, 103 young out of 57 nests and taking 40 returns of this species. To which may Ebba add "Hmmm--not bad?"

May we steal a little space to relate an incident that came to Ebba's attention. During a 5 day rainy spell last month, a family of chipping sparrows was upset by a chipmunk. The helpless young were unceremoniously spilled on the lawn in the rain, at least 4 days before they were ready to leave home. After many trials and tribulations the lady of the house hit on the plan of placing the young in a water pail, hanging the pail beneath the front porch in the daytime, and taking it in each evening. The parents fed their children each day, looking for their children each morning promptly at sunrise and showing no fear of anyone. Yes, the whole family is doing nicely, thank you...and sh-sh, they all wear bands now, parents and all!

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Eastern Bird Banding
Association

Geoffrey Gill, Sec'y.
Overlook Dr., Huntington
Long Island, New York

Sec. 562 P. L. & R.

Dr. Dayton Stoner
New York State Museum
Albany
New York.