



# EBBA NUS

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

*Spec. 6/20/42 W. Storer*

REACHING  
OVER  
**375**  
BANDERS  
EVERY MONTH

June, 1942

"LET US BAND TOGETHER"

Vol. 5, No. 6

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## WHAT WE ALL ARE SEEKING

"Encourage banders to get into print such material as their files contain which should be entered on the record for all to see. Data lying buried in notebooks is so much wasted effort. It seems a pity that having spent so much time and effort in banding birds and keeping records, the results should be discarded. With the Fish & Wildlife Service no longer in a position to publish material, it is more than ever up to the banders to get printed the information they have, which will add to the sum total of ornithological knowledge.

"Very likely there is some misconception regarding what should be submitted for publication. While I am by no means an authority on the subject, my fumbleings prompt me to try to clear the air. It seems to me there are two broad classifications. One is that certain data has been accumulated; it is brought together and analyzed from all angles; it is interpreted, and then conclusions are arrived at if any seem warranted. The other classification is one that calls for no great writing skill, or for any great skill of any kind in presentation. In this case certain things have been accomplished: so many birds banded--so many birds taken as returns or recoveries--so many males to so many females--so many immatures to so many adults--so many of this species compared to so many of another--10 birds were caught, only 1 was found to be infested with lice. A list of such items could go on indefinitely. They all contain one thing in common. They are scraps of knowledge which by themselves do not mean too much. Compared with similar scraps from other stations, in time, - and if they are available in print - many such items could be brought together. When added up, subtracted, or compared, they many mean a good deal.

"All the above merely means that I hope EBBA will continue to work for the publication of the material rotting in banding station files. At the present time the necessity of getting more banders to add their mite seems greater than ever. With restrictions of both men and money, reducing the output of research and papers reporting research, if we are to hold together our own journal, material from the small stations must be forthcoming. If it so happens that the copy coming to EBBA NUS is in greater quantity than can be handled, and some of it contains items which should be placed on permanent record, it occurs to me that it should be suggested to the author of the item that he send it to BIRD BANDING. (\*\*) This journal is the only thing we have that ties all banders in North America together."

Edwin A. Mason,  
Wharton Bird Banding Station  
Groton, Mass.

(\*\*) Such procedure has always been the policy of EBBA NUS.



## A SUBSTITUTE FOR RUBBER BANDS

A Pennsylvania bander suggests a splendid substitute for rubber bands on traps. He writes that old clock springs make excellent trap springs. Broken clock springs are given away by watch repairers. They can be broken into convenient lengths as needed and the broken ends can have the temper taken out by heating red hot. After the temper is out the ends can be bent or have holes drilled in them as desired. It pays to drill holes to wire the spring in place, or they will slip around.

## NEWS FOR THE BIRD BANDERS

George Dock, Jr. of Scarsdale, N.Y., reports that a grackle banded by him at Scarsdale on April 29, 1941 was shot at Salisbury, on the eastern shore of Maryland on Jan. 10, 1942. Mr. Dock writes, "This may help to indicate the general winter range of grackles which summer in southern New York and have a migratory swing of only 300 miles."

Mr. Dock also reports the return of 2 male robins banded a year ago, back in the same flat trap within a week of the same dates they were banded in 1941. Banders should note the mention of a "flat trap", which seems to be still the best type of trap for catching the adults of this species.

"Ye Ed" of Huntington, N.Y. is happy to report the capture of 22 Blue Jays this spring. White bread in a top-opening trap is the equipment used and 12 were new birds and the remaining 10 were returns from previous years.

In EBBA NUS, Issue 2, Vol. 3, there is a 50¢ house trap described. In such a trap Dr. Harold B. Wood of Harrisburg, Pa. reports the capture of 6 catbirds at one time this spring. A nice haul. He reports banding more catbirds this year than ever before, having caught 24 in the first 18 days of May. As 1500 of these birds have been banded at Huntington, L.I., it is hoped he will get one from these parts bearing our band.

Malcolm Lerch of Penn Yan, N.Y. writes that he and Mrs. Lerch have enjoyed the biggest April since they started banding. They report the banding of 146 new birds of 10 species, 18 returns and a Field Sparrow with an acute case of the "trap habit". Juncos were exceptionally numerous in Penn Yan this spring and they banded 70 as against a previous high of 20. On the other hand Field Sparrows are scarce.

Edwin Mason of the Wharton Bird Banding Station at Groton, Mass., writes, "Our boxes here are well taken, and it would seem at this stage of the game that we have more Bluebirds and Tree Swallows than last year."

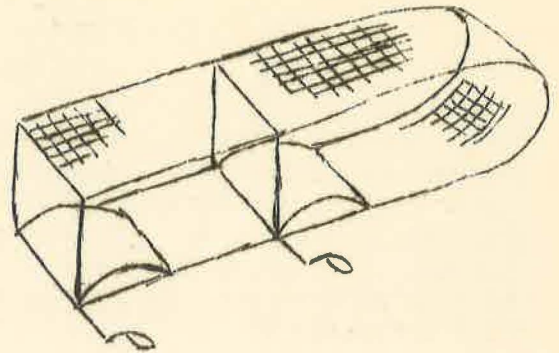
## TWO MORE NEW JERSEY PURPLE FINCHES LOCATED

Apropos of an item in the May issue of the NUS, concerning where the New Jersey Purple Finches went after being banded, two more have been located. By an omission in our February issue on the report of Horace Groskin's banding station at Ardmore, Pa. in 1941, we find that a Purple Finch banded by Mrs. Irene D. Swart of Boonton, N.J. on March 15, 1940 was later trapped by Mr. Groskin on Feb. 9, 1941. Keahon Garland of Demarest, N.J., also reports that a Purple Finch banded by him on March 13, 1939, was killed Nov. 29, 1941 at Calhoun County, Alabama. The recovery was reported by H. H. Truitt of Glencoe, Ala. This makes a total of 4 recoveries of this species from N.J. which have come to our notice recently.



## TWO IN ONE GATHERING CAGE

A step-saving and time saving gadget is the multiple gathering cage used at the Ungemah Station in White Plains, N.Y. This equipment was viewed by banders on their recent jaunt through Westchester and caused such comments as: "Why didn't I think of that".... "Simple as A B C".



This gathering cage is nothing but an elongated model of what most of us have been using but differs in the fact that it is divided into two compartments with an extra door midway of its length. Both doors swing inward and are made of light tin. They are so fitted that they will only swing the one way and a bird entering the gathering cage, naturally rushes to the far end and when the second door is closed, the front compartment can be used for picking up other birds. Such a gathering cage is particularly useful in handling a number of Juncos or other small birds that can be caught in groups.

The sketch herewith doesn't give any measurements as these are left to the bander's discretion, depending on his traps but it does give an idea of the general construction. The entire gadget is built of hardware cloth with the exception of the doors.

## NEWS FOR THE BIRD BANDERS

Robert Shilleen, who bands under the direction of Sister Mary Esther at Clearfield, Penna., writes that they hope to add an 8-cell Brenckle to their trapping equipment very shortly. They have banded 85 birds this year so far among which were 12 Fox Sparrows. Two small flocks of Evening Grosbeaks present at their station scorned all baits tried and eluded their traps.

A Red-shouldered Hawk, No. 210575, banded as the largest of a brood of 3 nestlings on May 18, 1930 by Beecher S. Bowdish at Demarest, N. J. was shot by John Nutry, Pennington Ave., Waldwich, N. J. in April, 1942.

A female Towhee banded May 3, 1940 by Howard P. Mahnken of 8921 Shore Court, Brooklyn, N. Y., was "caught" on March 9, 1942 near South Jacksonville, Fla.

Jesse V. Miller of New Hyde Park, L.I., N. Y. has sent in a summary of 5 years banding at a former station operated by him at Peterborough, N.H. This report lists some 823 birds banded of 18 species. While with most of the species, the number is too small a sample with which to reach any general conclusions, it does point to a high ratio of returns with certain birds common to that area. Of all the birds banded, Purple Finches head the list with 531 individuals. Of these birds 72 returned to the same station in following years while 64 more were caught from nearby stations; 61 of these were from a station 2 miles away, 2 were from a station 30 miles away and one more was taken from Chestnut Hill, Mass. Two of Mr. Miller's birds were later recovered in North Carolina, one was shot and the other trapped down there by a bander. Small samples of other species such as Bronze Grackle, Black-capped Chickadee and Rose Breasted Grosbeaks also show a high return ratio.

Raymond T. Fuller of Winterton, N.Y. (located 13 mi. from where Pa., N.J., & N.Y. meet) reports a notable scarcity of certain species of birds in his area again this year and would like to know from other banders if marked shortages are noticeable elsewhere.



## NEWS FOR BIRD BANDERS

Dr. C. Brooke Worth returned from Mexico and is now smoothing his ruffled feathers at his home in Swarthmore, Pa. To celebrate his safe return he has forwarded the fourth clipping from a Mexican paper relating the recovery of still another Herring Gull at Tampico. This Gull was found wearing band No. 40-685309 and was captured alive by Sergeant Augusto A. Rebolledo of Mexican Army. The Mexican paper has now come to the conclusion that either the birds are crazy or their keepers are careless. It can be assumed from the series number that this is another bird banded as young by bander McArthur in the Inland area.

Dr. Harold B. Wood of Harrisburg, Pa. reports that in 14 years he has banded 499 Purple Grackles with 10 repeats, 11 station returns, 2 found dead in his own yard and 20 found dead or shot elsewhere, 5 individuals of this last group being found in the city of Harrisburg. In all this lot there was only one albanistic bird.

In a discussion of this trait it has been pointed out that the word albino should only be used for a complete albino, which necessarily has pink irides. A partial albino is more correctly described as albinistic. A white bird is not necessarily an albino, but may have white pigment in its feathers, as a white leghorn. An albino's feathers would be a little inclined toward a pinkish tint rather than a dead white.

While on this subject, Dr. Wood trapped 6 Grackles on April 20 this year, one of which had brown irides. This bird was certainly not hatched this year and gives added support to his belief held for some time that Grackles with white eyes are all at least two years old. Has any other bander noted this? It may very well be an important key to the age of a banded bird.

### WHAT WILL THE CAT DRAG IN NEXT?

Albert L. Baily III of West Chester, Pa. sends us news of the odd capture of a full-grown hawk, illustrating the help neighbors can be in banding. To explain why such an incident should occur is beyond understanding. He writes:

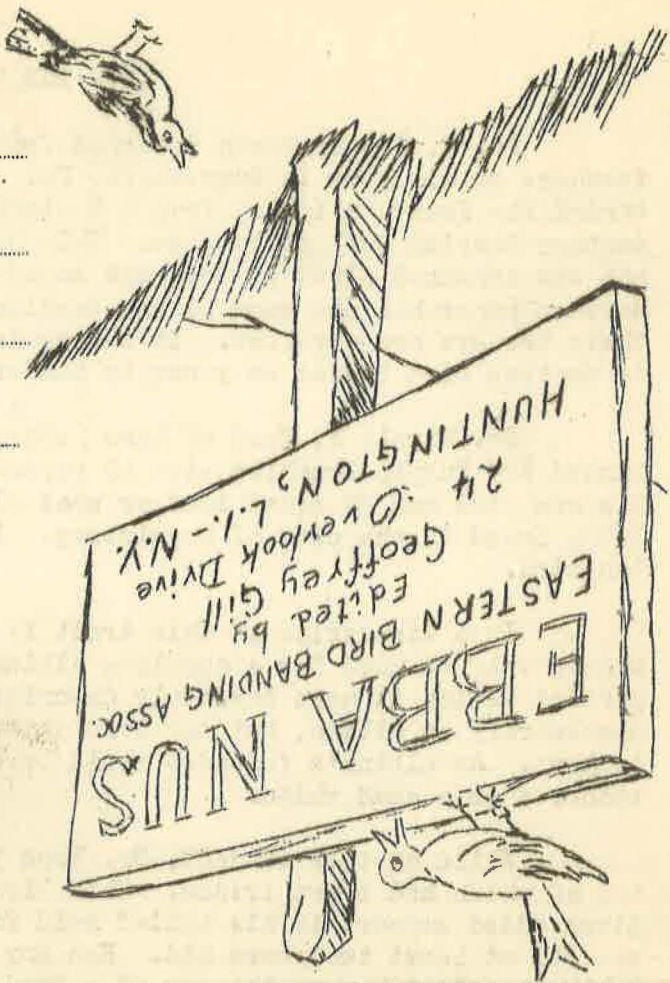
"We have some friends who own a cat. The other day she presented to her admiring public as fine a bunch of kittens as one would want to see. Three days later, Puss, believing that this feat didn't bring forth the acclaim which was her due, decided to adopt a baby rabbit. This resulted in the raising of a supercilious eye-brow but nothing of a furor. The very next day a male Sharp-shinned hawk was found with the brood. How Puss induced this marauder to enter her abode is something her owners can't understand. After finding out that the bird could use its claws, they packed him in a box and sent him over to me to band. I must say that I never have seen a bird that looked so completely evil before."

### HOW TO TRAP ADULT HERRING GULLS

Many banders have asked how they can trap adult Herring Gulls. Here is one way suggested by Malcolm Lerch of Penn Yan, N.Y. "I captured 7 adult Herring Gulls by using steel traps with jaws well wrapped with soft cloth. I also picked traps with weak springs. By this method we caught 5 crows also. In no instance did the birds sustain any injury with the exception of a starling which was too small for the trap and got caught by the neck. I used offal from butchered hogs for bait and put it in the center of an open field. After the birds had found it, we placed traps around it and covered them lightly with snow". Seems as tho a beach might do if the traps were lightly covered with sand.



Albany, NEW YORK  
New York State Museum  
Prof. Dayton Stoner



Sec. 562 P. L. & R.

Report a dead bird wearing a band, when found, to  
FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

"BUY DEFENSE BONDS"