

# EBBA NEWS

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

"Let Us Band Together"

Reaching Over 375 Banders Every Month

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## A MERRY, MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

EBBA wishes all our many members a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. In an endeavor to do this a little differently, we decided to take a bird's eye-view of the whole affair. EBBA doesn't agree with some people that human traits and understanding can be ascribed to birds either individually or as a whole. There are times when it is a "handy" or "nice" manner of explaining their actions. We are going to base our thoughts on the fact that "there just ain't no Santa Claus" in the bird world.

To the birds, the Christmas season may appear to be just another period when there are more mortals, poking around in the woods and fields, prying into their daily lives with field glasses, taking a Christmas census, but outside of that, just another day, similiar to yesterday and probably much like the morrow ... another battle of wits and courage, the constant foraging to fill an empty void, referred to politely by humans, sometimes, as "the bread basket".

A great deal of happiness can be found in making others happy and with EBBA's Christmas wishes, we would like to include the wish that all members will do their utmost to prove to bird boarders, regularly feeding at their feeding or banding station, that the Christmas season can be a special time for the birds too. Put twice as much food out as usual, scrape out the peanut butter jar, -- it is getting dry anyway and peanut butter is not rationed. A dish of water; a 10¢ box of millet; a dab of that frying fat you have been hoarding. There is no better gift for birds than food.

In our busy preparations to assure a merry Christmas for the members of our family and our friends, don't forget that there are lean days ahead for our friends of the feathered family. Let's make it a merry Christmas for the birds, too.

## "THOSE HARD TO TELL" BIRDS

Comments under a similiar heading last month have brought in a flood of interesting letters. Mr. Fuller of Winterton, N. Y. chides EBBA for being too certain that he had found the key to sex identification in Juncos and modestly denies all credit for his trail-breaking. Mr. Bowdish of Demarest, N. J. then picks up the ball and keeps it rolling with some interesting notes for a page and a half. Prof. O. A. Stevens, of Fargo, N. D. joins the chorus applying the brakes and citing several plumage mistakes in accepted color plates and so it goes with a letter from Dr. Wood as a climax, stating that he has proof that the color of the tail feathers in Juncos definitely denote the age of the birds. "Ye Ed" is confused, amused and definitely interested. The members will be interested too, it is felt, when these comments appear in the January issue. Please send your dues in so that you will surely get this coming number.

## DATA ON TEXAS RECOVERIES OF CHIMNEY SWIFTS SOUGHT

Ben B. Coffey, Jr., 141-27 79th Avenue, Flushing, L. I., N. Y. would appreciate details of Chimney Swift recoveries from all banders, except data already supplied to him or A. F. Ganier. He is particularly interested in recoveries from the Rio Grande Valley, especially in May, 1944. Names and addresses of parties reporting the recoveries are desired.

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While on the subject of banded Swifts and their recoveries, EBBA cannot resist the temptation to indulge in a word of praise for THE MIGRANT, and in particular, the September issue, devoted as it is to Swift banding and illustrated by several fine maps. Congratulations are most certainly in order for its editor, A. F. Ganier and all who had part in the preparation of this number.

EBBA has always been anxious to have all banders subscribe to BIRD BANDING and will always continue to further this aim. The current issue of our official quarterly is packed with much informative data and is a very fine number. However, while our loyalty belongs first to BIRD BANDING, we see no reason to close our eyes to the worth of other periodicals.

THE MIGRANT is a quarterly, primarily published for the bird-lovers and banders of the grand old state of Tennessee. (Pardon the political phraseology). Annual subscriptions are \$1. and such are accepted from outside the state. In a round-about way, EBBA has learned that a few extra copies of the September Swift issue were printed and can be purchased for 25¢ each. If EBBA members do not wish to subscribe, "Ye Ed" heartily recommends to any bander whether they have every banded Swifts or not, that they write to A. F. Ganier, 2112 Woodlawn Drive, Nashville, Tennessee and enclose a quarter for this Swift issue.

### NEWSPAPER STORIES ON BANDING

Through the years it would seem that banders from every point of the compass have written of their disappointment and disgust over what some news writer or reporter did, or failed to do, with a perfectly good bird banding story. "Ye Ed" does sympathize. Opportunities are missed and many points are not properly brought out in many examples we have seen. In the majority of "squawks", the reporter is given all the blame. In fairness to the individual, doing his or her best to live up to the title of "feature writer", it isn't always their fault. In a short 30 minute interview, he cannot grasp many of the points you take for granted after years of study. He should be loaned some text books for reference, or you should write out the points you desire emphasized. Even such a procedure is not fool-proof. Remember, after the writer has put the story on paper, it must be set in type and "corrected" by a proofreader, to say nothing about the editor, short of space, and what he may do with his blue pencil.

To illustrate this thought, an article in the "Rod and Gun" column of the N. Y. Herald-Tribune recently offered some amazing information. The "yarn" is too long to quote, but it went into detail for a number of paragraphs concerning the migratory trends of ducks and geese. It told how the flights were moving and spoke of the prospects for duck hunting. The writer, Don Stillman, then probably inserted a printed release from the Wildlife Service, which we can assume was correct. After it got through the Linotype operator and the proofreader, it came out like this in print.

"The Fish and Wildlife Service asks all hunters to report all bands on ducks other than migratory birds. Be sure and report the complete date found on every band." .....

Change "other than" to "and other" and "date" to "data" and it would probably read as it was intended.

OLD AGE-RECORDS OF BANDED BIRDS - 9TH LIST

To complete 1944, EBBA submits another list of age records of birds bringing the number of species to 64 for the year. It will be noted that changes of established records are more numerous than the new species listed. Many records are received each month, but most of them are not better than the record already posted in former lists. Never-the-less, EBBA is happy to see these records as they prove that the individual bird listed is not just a freak of its kind, but only a little more fortunate than others of the same feather.

CHANGES IN AGE-RECORDS

<u>Species &amp; Place</u>	<u>Bander</u>	<u>Banded</u>	<u>Return</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Age</u>
CHIPPING SPARROW					
Summerville, S.C.	Dr.W.P.Wharton	3/27/28	3/3/36	Same	8 yrs. 6 mos
Beltsville, Md.	W.M.Davidson	4/25/35	5/10/41	"	6 yrs. 11mos
YELLOW WARBLER					
North Eastham, Mass.	John M.Conkey	5/28/31	8/6/37	Same	7 yrs. 2 mos
Nashville, Tenn.	Mrs.A.R.Laskey	6/16/37	5/30/41	"	4 yrs. 11mos
CRADINAL					
Nashville, Tenn.	A.F.Ganier	2/12/24	11/20/36	Same	13 yrs. 5mos
Glenolden, Pa.(AD)	J.A.Gillespie	1/4/28	1/31/36	"	8 yrs. 7 mos
Blue Island, Ill.	A.H.Reeve, Jr.	1/1/37	1/15/43	"	6 yrs 7 mos.
HOUSE WREN					
Glenolden, Pa.(IM)*	J.A.Gillespie	7/1/39	5/16/43	Same	3 yrs. 11mos.
Blue Island, Ill.	A.H.Reeves, Jr.	8/2/36	7/31/39	"	3 yrs. 1 mo.
WHITE THR. SPARROW					
Glenolden, Pa.(IM.)**	J.A.Gillespie	2/22/29	5/14/34	Same	5 yrs. 11mos.
Nashville, Tenn.	Mrs.A.R.Laskey	12/31/34	2/3/40	"	5 yrs. 8 mos

\* - "This bird, (with us for 5 consecutive summers, - who can beat that record?) was trapped as an immature and returned the next 4 summers and nested in the same 2 boxes for the first and second broods, with a different mate each year, of course. While this wren was divorced, (or separated) 3 times, it remained constant to its mate, at least, for each summer and was responsible for 48 offsprings."

John A. Gillespie, Glenolden, Pa.

\*\* - "While at the time of banding this White-throat was called an immature, due to its very dull streaked plumage, greenish lores and small throat patch, it might well have been an adult, since it maintained this dull plumage on each of the 6 consecutive winters it spent with us and showed not the slightest brightening of plumage with increasing age." John A. Gillespie, Glenolden, Pa.

NEW AGE RECORDS

(All birds banded by Mr. & Mrs. J. A. Gillespie)

<u>Species &amp; Place</u>	<u>Banded</u>	<u>Return or Recovery</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Age</u>
HERRING GULL				
Muskeget Is., Mass.(IM)	7/13/32	11/15/40	Chatham, Mass.	8 yrs. 4 mos
BLACK SKIMMER				
Brigantine, N. J.(IM)	8/3/30	8/14/38	Brigantine, N.J.	8 yrs. 2 mos
CRESTED FLYCATCHER				
Glenolden, Pa.(AD)	6/28/25	5/18/29	Glenolden, Pa.	4 yrs. 11mos.
MEADOWLARK				
Ridley Park, Pa.(IM)	6/14/26	2/16/35	Beaufort, N.C.	8 yrs. 8mos.

## NEWS FOR THE BIRD BANDERS

Willet Randall of North Creek, N. Y. had a fine article in the November "Rural New-Yorker". While the story stresses the importance of feeding birds in the winter months, it also mentions banding and his experience with the hobby. Unfortunately Mr. Randall doesn't inform his readers on what they should do if a banded bird is found.

Prof. O. A. Stevens of Fargo, N. D. sends "Ye Ed" a gentle reprimand reporting that the White-throat at his station on Sept. 17 mentioned as an early arrival in last month's issue was incorrect. Prof. Stevens writes that this arrival date is the latest "first" one he has ever had. He also writes, "If you heard we had a blizzard, it did not reach us here. We had lettuce and beets from the garden today" (Nov. 19) --- "Ye Ed" blushes for his ignorance concerning the arrival of White-throats in North Dakota, but the added comment about blizzards and beets, certainly teaches him to play in his own backyard.

Some of our members have ordered a subscription to EBBA NEWS to be sent as a Christmas gift to banders they know, now in the armed services. This is a very nice idea. It keeps former handers informed as to what other banders are doing at home. While only a news-letter, it does carry with it, EBBA hopes a "homey" atmosphere of previous associations, 12 months in the year. Copies are already crossing both the Atlantic and the Pacific, following our boys. A few more would be no trouble at all and EBBA will gladly underwrite the small extra postal costs. ALL EBBA asks is that the serviceman's address be given completely and correctly. --- "Remember, if you don't write, you're wrong."

The November issue of "Science Digest" carries a paper by Frank W. Lane, F.Z.S. Dr. Lane is the naturalist in England who has expressed his interest in the list of old age-records EBBA is publishing.

"The Sunday News" of Ridgewood, N. J. (Circ. 10,000) carried a well-written article on Nov. 5th, describing Mrs. Betty Carnes' banding and banding station at Tenafly, N. J. This story does inform the reader what to do if they find a dead bird wearing a band.

Some of the data submitted for age-record listing, do not achieve the distinction of being better than records already listed or sent in by other banders, yet they are of more than passing interest. Among these in the mail bag recently are a number of recoveries as follows:

Robin, (Ad) banded by R.J. Middleton, Norristown, Pa., on June 27, '33, caught at Raleigh, N. C. in January, '38.

Robin, (Im) banded by the above bander at the same place on August 22, '36, killed at Nashville, N. C. in March, '43.

Black Skimmer, (Im) banded by J. A. Gillespie at Brant Beach, N. J. on July 14, '29, was recovered at St. Petersburg, Fla. on May 2, '35.

Herring Gull (Im) banded by the above bander at Muskeget Is., Mass. on July 13, '32 was recovered at Folkstone, Ga. on October 15, '37.

By this time, all members have received a notice through the mails in regard to the annual dues for 1945. To assist the Association and our Treasurer "Bob" Ungemah, please attend to this matter as soon as you can. The amount due is small and individually, it may seem a trifling matter. Yet, like all other small matters, when multiplied by hundreds, it grows in importance. It is not a small matter to our treasurer. He has his Christmas "problems", just as varied as we all have. He'll appreciate it and EBBA will appreciate it, if members will send in dues promptly. Second notices and reminders are a drain on the treasury, already suffering by increased war costs. Please renew your membership and do it now.

## BANDING IN ONTARIO

By Ross S. Baker

Two years ago today, October 12, 1942, I started banding. My first catch was 2 House Sparrows and a Starling, caught under window screens used as droptrap traps....rather shallow. Only 1 Junco was seen, and trapped, after that date in 1942. Today my catch was, 1 Hermit Thrush, 4 White-throats, 2 Juncos and a Ruby Crowned Kinglet. These birds bring my 2 year total to 1,604 birds of 61 species banded. 44 species were banded in 1943 and 17 have been added to my list this year. I have been using 30 traps during most of this year, mainly of the Potter type. I'm told that my catch is fairly good for my city location and my station is only 20 by 50 ft. square.

I made some personal bands from sheet aluminum with my name stamped on them and my address written on with a dull pointed stylus. I used these on 170 Starlings between October 12, 1942 and March 8th, when I started banding with Herbert Southam. I also used 170 similiar bands, but smaller, on House Sparrows, and still do, once in a while, although now I'd much rather destroy them. 93 House Sparrows have chased their last song bird out of my yard since this past July.

I've had more "returns" from Cowbirds than I have had from the 170 Starlings. I banded only 1 Cowbird and it returned this Spring. No "personal" banded Starlings have ever returned and of the 740 Starlings banded to date, only 8 have been recovered. Five of these wore F & W bands and 3 wore my own manufactured bands. I have never caught a bird banded by anyone else at this station so I guess the Starlings here, have never visited Lawrence Hicks' banding Station.

Southam, my wife and I banded 200 Ring-billed Gulls at Georgian Bay on Lake Huron in June this year. Previous to our visit a storm had taken many of the young. In previous years we banded 750 and twice as many have been banded at this spot in years before my time. We continued along the shore from a place near Penitang, Ont., northward to North Bay and then east to a farm in the neighborhood of Mattawa. Here, in the nesting area of many of the birds we only see during migrations, we collected specimens of about 50 birds for the museum and a few small mammals. We were there only 10 days but managed to band 70 birds of several species.

Recently I have sent 4 bird flys to Dr. Ford-Walker of the University of Toronto, found on White-throats; a tick from the neck of a Black Polled Warbler to the Dept. of Zoology, Royal Ontario Museum and a skunk to the Riverdale Zoo, which is making a collection of small Canadian animals for a new zoo in Australia. The skunk was taken in a box trap without "difficulties."

.....Ross S. Baker, 5 Bain Ave., Toronto, Canada.

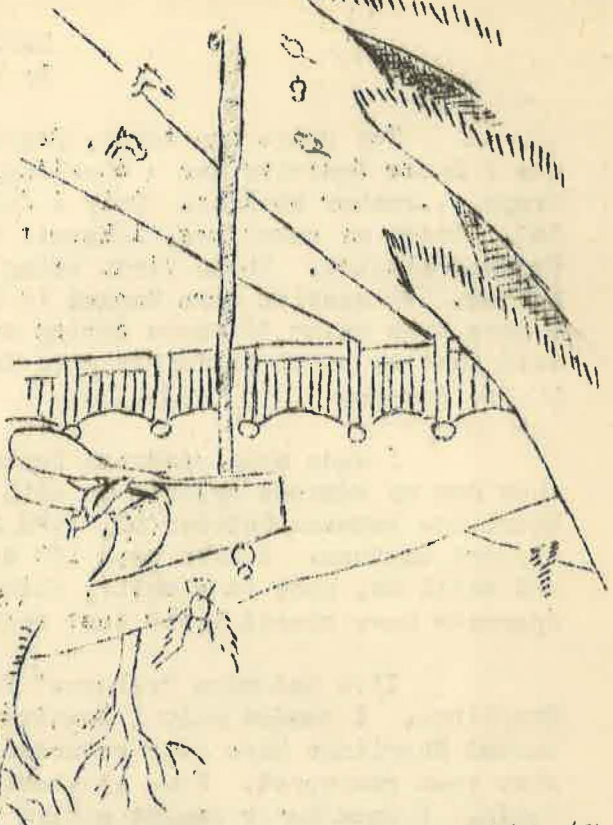
### 1943 - 1944 BANDING TOTALS

Frederick Lincoln in a letter to Dr. Wood, reports that 162,418 birds were banded in the fiscal year 1943-44 of 349 species. The grand total since 1920 up to June 30, 1944 now stands at 4,690,873 birds banded with a total of 331,480 returns.

### SWIFT STORY RELEASED TO PRESS

The Information Service of the Dept. of the Interior released an article on the recovery of the banded Chimney Swifts in Peru, to all Sunday newspapers of November 12th. The advance copy of this release is very good but we wish mention had been made of how to report a banded bird when found.

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