

A Concentrated Banding Station.—The cover illustration of my banding station at Cobasset, Mass., (Plate III) is reproduced below with coordinate letters and figures added, in order to make possible a comprehensible description of this station with its concentration of traps and feeding-places within a very short distance of our house and occupying a very limited area.

Such a station is likely to yield results along certain lines quite different from a station using automatic traps placed farther away and out of sight of the operator. This difference is due in part to the opportunities afforded in the first instance of having the birds under frequent observation at close quarters.

The equipment of the station is concentrated in an area 18 feet by 20 feet, with one edge just below the lower windows shown in picture. G-3 is planted to flowers, and G-2 is a bed of bee-balm (*Monarda didyma*) for Hummers. The two posts in the foreground are each 7 feet high, and have a diameter of about 8 inches, (they would be more serviceable if 10 inches in diameter), firmly sunk in the ground. A small wire is stretched fairly tight from one to the other, as indicated, and at the middle a hanging feeder is placed, at which four birds are content to feed at the same time. Larger ones might prove better. The feeder (F-1) is suspended by two

Plate III



screw-hooks, and holds about one quart of seed. It is cat- and squirrel-proof. Irregularities in the bark and shallow holes, bored with a one-inch bit, are kept filled with suet, on which Chickadees, Downies, Brown Creepers, Nuthatches, and Juncos feed. These pillars, or posts, afford an artificial, but suitable, location for the tree traps shown in Mr. Harding's plate in this number. They are of prime importance in the absence of trees, in furnishing natural places of a kind much frequented by winter birds in search of food. They also afford excellent opportunity for getting certain species in a position to be photographed with the minimum of effort. H-2 is a 14-inch flower-pot-saucer bath on a standard approximately 30 inches high. B-2 is a 34-inch by 34-inch New England pull-string trap with string running along the ground through a screw-eye on the sill and then up and through the sash of the left-hand window. E-1 is a one-foot by 5-foot window-shelf with one end under a syringa bush and the other end roofed over, and has an 8-inch x 8-inch x 10-inch wire trap (C-1) having a 3/16-inch coiled spring closing a 5-inch x 5-inch door held open by a string running through the middle sash. D-1 is a 12-inch x 12-inch feeding-tray with raised edges on a 4-foot upright. A-5 is a 30-inch x 30-inch x 10-inch weather-proof feeding place, termed the "pagoda," containing a New England pull-string and having a zinc pyramid (A-4) to prevent squirrels from ascending. Alighting perches (not shown in picture) are placed conveniently about for visiting birds as they come to the station, and they are much appreciated.

Banding and note-taking are all done at a table inside the house, facing the left-hand window. Active banding, however, is not done every day, but elaborate note-taking (with the birds usually in sight at the time) is practised each day. All the traps are non-automatic and more than four birds are seldom trapped at once in a single trap. This policy of intermittent trapping is believed, at this type of station, to yield more natural observational results (the birds being little disturbed) than would be the case with daily trapping, and it is probable that quite as many are banded. When trapping is the order of the day, seeds are removed from the hanging feeder, the tray, and the pagoda, but are retained in the little shelf trap and the New England pull-string on the ground, which are operated. This ground trap is shown on the cover of the April Bulletin of 1925.—C. L. W.

A Phoebe Returns.—On account of the fact, perhaps, that so small a number of Phoebes (*Sayornis phoebe*) are trapped and banded, few if any returns of this species have been recorded. This being so, the following note should be of interest:

On May 8, 1924, I banded one of a pair of Phoebes having a nest on a beam in the cellar of my barn in Topsfield, Mass. Two broods of young were raised, of which I banded one each. This year on May 10th I again took the same bird in the same nest. The trap was operated by a string which pulled the wire door shut, and in some way when the bird was away from the nest the string was pulled by a workman on the place by mistake, and not knowing what he had done, the trap door was left closed with her eggs inside. This condition remained for one week, when I arrived on the scene, and raised the trap door, whereupon the Phoebe returned, and the following day the eggs were gone. The following week when I returned again a new set of eggs occupied the nest, but I was unable to band any of the young, owing to absence from home.—ROBERT W. MEANS, Topsfield, Mass., September 1925.