

banding. That is, of the original thirteen birds banded in 1925, eleven, or 84.61 per cent, have returned to the same area the succeeding year after banding, and ten of these to the very station where they were banded. In addition to the thirteen returns, nine new Tree Sparrows were banded during this period.

The high percentage of returns, the close agreement of the time they were banded, and the appearance at the station of eleven out of the thirteen birds the following year are the outstanding matters of interest in these records.

Westfield, Mass., January, 1927.

TRAPPING AND BANDING OWLS DURING THEIR MIGRATION

BY ALLAN KENISTON

ON still evenings in October, — yes, even before dusk, — numbers of small Owls flit about batlike on silent wings, now above the tree-tops, now near the ground, alighting from time to time on trees or fence-tops to stand silently watching for a mouse to venture forth in quest of food. A quick dive and a headlong rush to earth as silent as a shadow, a faint squeak, and then as before entire silence.

These Owls — the Short-eared (*Asio flammeus*), Long-eared (*Asio wilsonianus*), and Screech Owl (*Otus a. asio*) — do great good in the meadows and farm lands of Martha's Vineyard, as well as in all localities where migration takes them, in that moles and mice comprise most of their diet. I have taken many walks over the fields of the Heath Hen Reservation in the early evening, my dog scouting ahead, when suddenly a Short-eared or a Long-eared Owl would appear quickly darting down at the dog, at the same time making queer, short, hollow notes and snapping its beak. In a moment several more would appear and all follow the dog, snapping and calling. They soon tired, new ones taking their place or possibly the same ones returned. The dog seemed to pay no attention to them whatever. October of each year migratory Long-eared and Short-eared Owls appear on the island in abundance. I have seen at least ten in the air at once.

In the fall of 1926 I decided to try banding some of these birds. I set up two posts about ten feet high and placed



FIG. 2. TWO VIEWS OF BANDED LONG-EARED OWLS.

on the top of each a small steel trap, an old one, one with weak springs. I wound the jaws of each trap with soft folds of flannel cloth, bunches of the material in the corners of each jaw holding the jaws apart over most of their length, leaving a gap about three-eighths of an inch wide when the trap was sprung. This prevented the leg of the bird from being pinched. No bait was used to attract the birds, dependence being placed on their fondness for such perches from which to watch for prey. A long line extending from the trap to the ground allowed the Owls to come to earth and by visiting the trap every hour or so during the evening, they were removed shortly after being caught. The last time I visited the traps for the night I sprung each one. If an Owl is not caught during the first part of the night, the chance of capturing any during the remainder of the dark hours is poor.

I banded and released the following Owls: —

Screech Owl	No.	208801	on	Oct. 27, 1926	
"	"	208802	"	" 28, 1926	
Long-eared Owl		208803	"	Nov. 5, 1926	(Killed in November at South Sandwich, Mass., and reported)
"	"	208804	"	" 7, 1926	
"	"	208805	"	" 9, 1926	
Screech Owl		208806	"	" 13, 1926	
Long-eared Owl		208807	"	" 18, 1926	
Short-eared Owl		208808	"	" 24, 1926	
Screech Owl		208809	"	Jan. 1, 1927	(This Owl was taken from an unused chimney by E. F. McLeod at his home on the Edgartown -Vineyard Haven Road, Oak Bluffs)
Long-eared Owl		208814	"	Feb. 24, 1927	

I believe that with additional tall posts bearing traps, and an earlier start in the fall, a large number of these birds could be banded as they are very numerous here during migration, and in fact they nest on the island. The method of trapping does not harm the birds if proper care is taken in covering the jaws and if the traps are frequently visited.

Snowy Owls (*Nyctea nyctea*) first appeared on the Vineyard in the fall of 1926 in the early part of November. On November 22nd I caught my first one (see front cover of *Bulletin*). In all, three of this species were trapped on the south side of the island near the ocean. Two posts about five feet high on which the traps were placed were used and they proved very attractive to the birds. For bait a dead rabbit was used.

The second Owl was captured on November 24, and the third on November 26.

Snowy Owls are interesting to watch on account of their fights over food, and their peculiar and laughable poses. They would sit by the hour side by side, and seemed very loving except at meal time. In the evening and at meal-time they uttered a shrill squeal, evidently a fighting-note.

Heath Hen Reservation, Martha's Vineyard, Mass.
February, 1927.

EXPERIENCES WITH NESTING CHIPPING SPARROWS AND TREE SWALLOWS

BY HELEN J. ROBINSON

ACTING upon the invitation of the Editor of the *Bulletin* for information as to the work taking place at banding stations, I am enclosing a report covering the results of my first season's operations as a bird-bander at Brewer, Maine.

My station is equipped with a government trap, placed near my home, and with several handmade nesting-boxes usable as traps. Among the sixty-seven birds banded between April 1 and November 22, comprising eleven species, mostly ground-feeders, there are several Tree Swallows and Phoebes. In connection with my banding work, I was instrumental in dispatching one hundred and fifty-two House Sparrows and two cats.

Three pairs of Tree Swallows (*Iridoprocne bicolor*) waged a war for the possession of boxes 1, 2, 3, and 4, the battles taking place every morning for sixteen days upon the appearance of the birds. Sometimes by 10 or 11 A. M., and invariably by noon of each day during this period, all the Swallows left the premises for the remainder of the day, and this order of events takes place each season. The contests consisted of the birds screaming and flying about the nesting-boxes, creating so much commotion that none of the birds entered. Finally two pairs disappeared, and the banded pair built a nest in box 1, but about the time it was finished a pair of House Sparrows came to box 2, about sixteen feet from box 1.

The presence of the Sparrows was vigorously objected to by the first-comers, and for over a week there were daily battles, the Swallows being the aggressors. Their disapproval of the Sparrows was manifested by screaming and