

flying, the Swallows remained in the nest. After the Swallows had left for the season, one brood having been raised, the Chippies again settled down for their second nesting.

Brewer Maine, March 1, 1927.

A RECOMMEDATION TO BIRD-BANDERS

BY C. L. WHITTLE

IN New England in the winter-time, if we are much afield, we note about us little groups of Chickadees (*Penthestes a. atricapillus*) and Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta c. cristata*), which as species nest here, but which are also partially migratory. We have not ascertained, however, whether or not such little groups, numbering on the average say four or five individuals, are birds which nested about us or birds which are here only as migrants.

Another unknown problem regarding these little groups awaits solution; namely, are they purely accidental gettings-together of birds in no way related, or are they organized, that is, are they families consisting of birds-of-the-year, with or without their parents?

The solution of both these problems awaits systematic investigation by banding methods, and I recommend that those of our members who are fortunately situated should undertake the work. By "fortunately situated" is meant having opportunity to band whole families of fledgling Chickadees and Blue Jays together with their parents when possible.

In order to study these problems most effectively, resort must be had to the use of colored bands, which are now easily procurable.

In order that colored bands may be used to the best advantage, it is suggested that the most easily recognized colors be employed, namely red (as near spectrum red as possible) and light blue ("baby-blue"). These colors are readily obtainable. This combination of colored bands will serve to band two families of any species, first by placing red bands on the *right* tarsi of a family of young birds and baby-blue bands on the right tarsi of their parents; and, second, by placing all blue bands on the *left* tarsi of the young birds and the red ones on the left tarsi of the adults. Of course this plan of using colored bands may be greatly extended by using colored enamels of yellow, light pink, etc.

With several families of Blue Jays and Chickadees banded in this manner during the nesting-season, the little groups of these species seen about the bander's station during the ensuing months take on a new interest. With good luck one may be able to determine (1) to what extent such wintering groups are made up of birds nesting in the vicinity which have not migrated, and (2) to what extent if any a given group is made up of birds from a single resident family. In case no banded birds of either species wearing colored bands are seen the following winter, after all wintering flocks about the station have been investigated, the probability has been established that the nesting families have moved to other winter quarters where perhaps some of the birds may be recovered by other banders. Little progress in studying groups can be made by occasionally trapping individuals wearing colored bands. To obtain the needed information, the complexion of groups as a whole must be determined largely by observation. The use of good low-power bird-glasses greatly increases the chances of detecting colored bands in the field, and even when such birds come to feeding-shelves or nearby traps, magnifiers are of value.

The ability to recognize members of a family at sight also renders it possible to determine if inbreeding takes place; and, if we band each member of a family with a different-colored band, we may learn, by good fortune, without handling a bird, whether permanent mating occurs.

A n n o u n c e m e n t

From many sources, both within and without the territory of this Association, requests have come to the Editors asking them to open the pages of the *Bulletin* to papers of wider ornithological interest than those now being published.

Although the Editors feel that the *Bulletin* is essentially a journal of bird-banding and hesitate to enter a wider field, yet, recognizing the close relationship between bird-banding and general ornithology, they will be glad to consider any articles or notes that seem likely to interest bird-banders even though not based on actual banding experiences. Migration and moult, for instance, are two subjects in which banders should be interested and any new light on the problems connected with them would be welcome, while, on the other hand papers and notes dealing with subjects in no way connected with bird-banding activities would more appropriately appear in journals devoted to general ornithology.