

banded male Purple Finch came to my window feeding-shelf at Natick, Massachusetts. By watching through the window at a distance of about a foot, I finally made out the number on the band as 122109. I also made out something like Bu. Biol. Surv. above the number." The Biological Survey supplied the information that this Purple Finch was banded by Mrs. Jean E. Carth at Wellesley, Massachusetts, an adjoining town on the east, May 5, 1926.—C. L. W

Collecting Birds' Nests for Entomological Study.—Mr. Charles W. Johnson has already published two excellent entomological papers in the *Bulletin*, the material from which these papers were largely prepared being sent him by bird-banders. His studies show the enormous mortality among Bluebirds caused by parasitism of the larvæ of the common fly *Protocalliphora splendida*, form *sialia*. It is desirable that this investigation be continued in order to learn the extent of this fly's depredations as affecting the Bluebird and other species, and also to determine the area of the fly's activities, whether local or covering the entire nesting-range of the species.

Not all our banders band Bluebirds, but many of them have an opportunity to collect their nests and to note the presence or absence of dead young therein at the time the nests are collected. Banders are accordingly asked to do this—to collect not only Bluebirds' nests, but nests of all other species of birds as well. Such nests should be collected within ten days after the young birds have flown, and care should be exercised to take the entire nest, including the foundation. Each nest should be placed in a separate strong paper-bag, the opening being carefully closed after enclosing therein (or sending in a letter) a full description of the nest, the name of the bird, when collected and by whom, the date the nest became empty if known, notes on the history of the former occupants (parents and young), etc. Larvæ (maggots) when collected should be packed in damp moss and sent immediately to Mr. Johnson with the appropriate accompanying notes, and the nest as well should be sent him as soon as secured. Parasitic flies of all kinds, as well as lice (*Mallophaga*), found on parent birds or young, should also be collected and sent him, after being enclosed in a small vial. Regarding flies, my experience is that if the birds are handled inside the house in front of and close to a window the flies will fly to the window-panes and very likely they will return to the birds a moment afterwards. When on the window-pane, they may be collected by placing over them an empty vial (or tumbler) and then sliding a card between the vial and the pane.

All material should be sent to Charles W. Johnson, Boston Society of Natural History, corner Boylston and Berkeley Streets, Boston, Massachusetts.—C. L. W.

Pulmonary Mycosis in the White-crowned Sparrow.—White-crowned Sparrows have not been as numerous as usual at my station this spring. This is in marked contrast to conditions elsewhere in New England as reported in *Items of Interest* for May, issued by the Division of Ornithology of the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture, for they have been estimated to be almost as numerous as the White-throated Sparrow in many localities. At Wells River a smaller number have been banded than

in the spring migration of 1925, 1926, or 1927, and the species has been relatively even less common in the field.

On May 27th we found a White-crowned Sparrow seriously ill. The bird, a male, was unable to fly and offered little resistance to capture. It was breathing heavily and felt hot to the hand. We placed it in a cage at first, but as it seemed discontented, we gave it the range of the room. After hopping about on a tour of inspection, it returned to the cage, and, pulling a piece of bread from the cage, proceeded to eat part of it. The bird remained in that place for several hours but that evening was found dead in a corner of the room under a bureau.

We sent the bird to Dr. E. E. Tyzzer, of the Harvard Medical School, for examination, and received the following report: "Bird shows marked emaciation and feathers matted with white, chalky material posteriorly. There is massive, rather dry cheesy exudate over the surface of the heart from which there is a growth of mould. There is also a thick layer of similar material between gizzard and the body wall. Both lungs are largely replaced with firm, dry material. The diagnosis is pulmonary mycosis with extension to pericardium and abdominal cavity."

We dare not venture the opinion that herein lies the explanation of the scarcity of the species at Wells River during the past season, in view of its abundance elsewhere. We should like to know the status of the species as regards abundance or scarcity on its nesting-grounds.

During the week or ten days preceding the finding of this individual, we had been having much rainy weather, a condition favorable to the growth of fungi.—WENDELL P. SMITH, Wells River, Vermont, June 8, 1928.

A White-breasted Nuthatch Age-Record.—Miss Rachel Caughey, of Antrim, New Hampshire, reports the following captures of a White-breasted Nuthatch at her banding station: banded May 14, 1923, repeating twice in 1924, five times in 1925, once in 1926, and once in 1928. As the bird must have been at least about a year old when banded, it was approximately six years old when last taken, May 5, 1928.

Purple Finch Returns.—M. J. Magee writes from Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, that during last May (1928) he was just about "swamped" with Purple Finches. During this month he banded over 800 of this species and had about 150 returns.

A Return-4 Junco.—It is always of interest to secure information as to the persistency with which any migrating bird returns either to its nesting-area or to its wintering residence, as these habits are of biological significance. Such records also will determine the average age of different species. The above Junco (*Junco h. hyemalis*) was banded by L. B. Fletcher in Cohasset, Massachusetts, January 25, 1923, the returning dates being February 4, 1924; January 30, 1925; March 25, 1926; and January 10, 1928. The bird was accordingly at least five and one half years old.

Purple Finch No. A6111.—An example of the seemingly erratic habit of the Purple Finch of wandering about at random is found in No. A6111,