

## SPRING MOLT OF THE EVENING GROSBEEK

BY M. J. MAGEE

SOME Evening Grosbeaks (*Hesperiphona v. vespertina*), possibly all, have a very slight spring molt. From April 15, 1928, (my first date for finding a new feather showing) to May 13th, I examined over ninety-three birds of this species, only twenty-four showing any signs of molt. The last one showing any new feathers was on May 3rd. From May 4th to 13th I examined fourteen more, but was unable to find any signs of molt on any of them. The last one banded this spring was on May 13th. A few Grosbeaks came to feed off and on after that date to May 29th, when one male and one female appeared.

They can be found all summer some fifty miles to the west of the Soo, in heavily timbered regions.

Following are the data from my cards on the twenty-four birds, including both sexes, indicating molt:

- 582663—Male, probably a 1927 bird, inner margins of the tertiaries quite black.  
Banded Jan. 18, 1928.  
Repeated Feb. 2, Mar. 1, 2; Apr. 1, 15, 23.  
Apr. 15th, one new feather showing on occiput, three on cervix.  
Apr. 23d, about same, apparently no more new feathers.
- 582803—Male, probably adult, no black or dusky inner margins of tertiaries.  
Banded Apr. 18, 1928.  
One new feather showing on cervix.
- 582804—Female.  
Banded Apr. 20, 1928.  
Two new feathers showing on throat; several on cervix.
- 482110—Female.  
Banded Dec. 25, 1927.  
Repeated Jan. 21, Feb. 7, Mar. 29, Apr. 21.  
Apr. 21st, one new feather showing on cervix.
- 582736—Female.  
Banded Feb. 11, 1928.  
Repeated Feb. 18, Apr. 1, 24.  
Apr. 24th, one new feather on crown.
- 482150—Female.  
Banded Jan. 8, 1928.  
Repeated Jan. 11, Apr. 24.  
Apr. 24th, several new feathers on crown and occiput, one on cervix.

- 482101—Male.  
Probably adult. No black or dusky inner margins to tertiaries.  
Banded Nov. 23, 1927.  
Repeated Jan. 16, Feb. 11, Apr. 24.  
Apr. 24th, one new feather on occiput.
- 582800—Female.  
Banded Apr. 15, 1928.  
Repeated Apr. 17, 25.  
Apr. 25th, one new feather on crown, one on cervix, four on rump.
- 482112—Male, probably a 1927 bird, inner margins of tertiaries dusky.  
Banded Dec. 25, 1927.  
Repeated Jan. 10, 16, 19, Apr. 2, 25.  
Apr. 25th, quite a number of new feathers on crown, occiput, rump, cervix, and sides of neck.
- 582772—Male, probably a 1927 bird, inner margins of tertiaries quite black.  
Banded March 18, 1928.  
Repeated Apr. 4, 15, 25.  
Apr. 25th, a good many new feathers on crown and on occiput.
- 482125—Male, probably adult, no black or dusky inner margins to tertiaries.  
Banded Dec. 27, 1927.  
Repeated Dec. 30, 1927; Feb. 2, Apr. 2, 26, 1928.  
Apr. 26th, could find no new feathers, but some rump feathers were loose, about half a dozen feathers coming out in gathering-cage.
- 582786—Female.  
Banded March 29, 1928.  
Repeated Apr. 15, 26.  
Apr. 26th, one new feather on rump.
- 582802—Male, probably adult. No black or dusky inner margins to tertiaries.  
Banded Apr. 17, 1928.  
Repeated Apr. 18, 22, 26.  
Apr. 26th, one new feather on rump.
- 582754—Male, probably adult. No black or dusky inner margins to tertiaries.  
Banded Feb. 29, 1928.  
Repeated March 21, Apr. 27.  
Apr. 27th, quite a good many new feathers on cervix.
- 482113—Male, probably a 1927 bird. Inner margins of tertiaries heavily black.  
Banded Dec. 25, 1927.  
Repeated Jan. 19, Apr. 27.  
Apr. 27th, quite a good many new feathers on cervix.

- 482147—Female.  
Banded Jan. 8, 1928.  
Repeated Jan. 11, Feb. 3, Apr. 27.  
Apr. 27th, quite a good many new feathers on rump and cervix.
- 582715—Male, probably a 1927 bird. Inner margins of tertiaries heavily black.  
Banded Feb. 5, 1928.  
Repeated Mar. 1, Apr. 28.  
Apr. 28th, three new feathers on cervix.
- 582712—Male, probably a 1927 bird. Inner margins of tertiaries black.  
Banded Feb. 4, 1928.  
Repeated Apr. 28.  
Apr. 28th, quite a number of new feathers on crown, occiput, cervix, and rump.
- 582811—Female.  
Banded May 1, 1928.  
Four new feathers on forehead, three on crown, three on cervix.
- 582812—Female.  
Banded May 1, 1928.  
Two new feathers on cervix.
- 582801—Male, probably adult. No black or dusky on inner margins of tertiaries.  
Banded Apr. 15, 1928.  
Repeated May 2.  
May 2d, several new feathers on cervix.  
Some loose feathers on rump.
- 582659—Male, probably a 1927 bird. Inner margins of tertiaries black.  
Banded Jan. 16, 1928.  
Repeated Jan. 22, Mar. 23, Apr. 15, May 2.  
May 2d, some loose feathers on rump.
- 482102—Male, probably a 1927 bird. Inner margins of tertiaries blackish.  
Banded Dec. 21, 1927.  
Repeated Dec. 27, 1927; Jan. 5, 8, 19; Feb. 2, 5, 23; Mar. 2; April 28; May 2.  
May 2d, one new feather on occiput.
- 345012—Adult Female.  
Banded April 6, 1925.  
Returned May 3, 1928.  
May 3d, five new feathers on rump.  
Repeated May 8th. Apparently no further molt.

Dr. Dwight in his paper "The Sequence of Plumages and Moults of the Passerine Birds of New York" under "First Winter Plumage Male Evening Grosbeaks" says, "The young may be distinguished usually by the dusky inner margins of

the tertiaries but differ very little from adults." You will note that signs of molting in my male birds are not confined to those showing the dark inner edgings; so, if Dr. Dwight is correct, the molt is not confined to young males. I cannot tell as to females, as I do not believe the young ones can be separated from the older with any certainty. The molt is apparently greatest on the nape. It is not very easy to look over live birds as carefully as you would like to do, but on the great majority of my birds I could find no indications of any new feathers.

Among some notes on Evening Grosbeaks sent Dr. John B. May by Mrs. H. G. Pratt, who operates a banding station at West Hartford, Connecticut, Mrs. Pratt reports that the birds begin to lose feathers by March 15th. On March 24th a female showed a light area on the throat, and by March 29th, most females showed this light area. On April 19th, one male had a featherless ring of bare skin encircling the neck. She states that up to May 27th, no evidence had appeared that young Grosbeaks have a spring molt.

Next spring I hope to make another check and will report my findings.

Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

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#### IMPORTANT NOTICE

THERE is an increasing demand for sets of the *Bulletin*. We are, however, unable to supply them. Of No. 1, 1925, (the first number issued) we have but eleven copies, and of No. 3, October, 1926, we are entirely out. It probably will be necessary in the near future to have reprints of these two numbers which will cost about Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00.) In the mean time the Secretary would like to have banders return any duplicate copies they may have of *any* number of the *Bulletin*, and especially of the two numbers mentioned above.

NORTHEASTERN BIRD-BANDING ASSOCIATION,

CHARLES B. FLOYD, *Secretary*.