

Of the 36 birds-of-the-year (including two of doubtful age) banded in 1929, 11 returned in 1930, or 30.55 per cent, a very high returning ratio for birds of this age.

From the foregoing it appears probable that the unusual number of returns in 1930 (48 out of 114 birds banded) is due to three factors,—(1) to the large number of adult and immature birds banded in 1929; (2) to the surprising number of returning birds-of-the-year; and (3) to the fact that so many of the returns when banded were *nesting* birds. This latter aspect of the matter is particularly important in that nesting birds are more likely to return to their nesting area of the previous year than an equal number of birds visiting the station during their migrations, or as the result of the well-known habit of this species to wander about the country throughout much of the year. Not only so, but their resulting frequent visits to the traps increase the opportunities to record their presence many-fold. This was shown in 1930 by the fact that many of the birds repeated during June and July, as was also the case in 1929. It is a question in the light of this latter consideration if we should not modify our estimate of the average life of the Purple Finch by separately appraising the importance of returning ratios based on an exhaustive series of returning nesting birds.—CHARLES L. WHITTLE.

Common Tern Recovered in Guadeloupe.—Another Common Tern from the colony at Tern Island, Chatham, Massachusetts, has been recaptured in the West Indies. The individual in question, A365745, was banded July 5, 1930, by Charles B. Floyd. It was captured by a fisherman at Pointe Noire, Guadeloupe, October 1, 1930.

This case has several points of interest, some of which are not lacking in humor. It was first reported to the Biological Survey by Professor Robert Poncy, of Geneva, Switzerland, who transmitted a clipping from the French paper "Le Chasseur Français" giving the details of the bird's capture. In translating the account, the word "épervier" was read correctly as "Sparrow Hawk," so it was assumed that the fisherman owned one of the European Sparrow Hawks (closely allied to the American Sharp-shinned Hawk) trained to pursue and capture birds, and it was so reported by the writer, at the annual meeting of the Northeastern Bird-Banding Association in Boston, on January 16, 1931. However, a second letter from Professor Poncy replying to the Bureau's advice to him of the details of banding, revealed an error in translation, for, while "épervier" does mean "Sparrow Hawk," it also is the name of a floating net in the shape of a cone that is cast from a boat. Accordingly, A365745, instead of being caught by a trained falcon, was ignominiously hauled into a boat after a chance cast of a fish-net probably made at a time when the tern had itself plunged into the water in pursuit of a fish.

Curiously enough, the notice in "Le Chasseur Français" contains an odd typographical error, as the fisherman, instead of being called "marin pêcheur," that is, a fishing seaman, or deep-sea fisherman, is called "marin pêcheur," or kingfisher.

The case of this banded tern also was reported to the Survey by Mr. Peter Skovgaard, of Viborg, Denmark, who had noticed the statement of capture in "Le Chasseur Français."—FREDERICK C. LYCOLN, Biological Survey, Washington, D. C.