

as it is now relatively inaccessible to a very large proportion of serious bird students who would otherwise have been able to use it. This, however, is another matter and one on which the paper cannot be judged.

CORRESPONDENCE

VALUE OF COLORED BANDS

Editor of *Bird-Banding*: The unquestioned value of colored bands in bird-banding investigations was clearly demonstrated yesterday at our station in Glenolden, Pennsylvania. We had been keenly anticipating the return of White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) 578074, which has wintered with us for the past five consecutive years, but up to January 10, 1934, she had not put in an appearance, and we had about decided her days of usefulness were over. We had been experiencing rather severe winter weather for this region—many cold rains, one heavy snowfall followed by a bad freeze—during which time the birds must have suffered from lack of food, and we felt sure that this bird would have been trapped or observed, had she been in the vicinity, as she wears a bright pink band on the left leg. Last winter she was a "sight return" on November 13, 1932, but it was nearly a month later that she was actually trapped, on December 10th, at which time she still wore the very dull, streaked plumage of immaturity.¹ Confined at home with gripe on January 10th, I spent a good part of the day at a sunny window watching the birds feed at the traps, which were not set at the time. Cardinals, Tits, White- and Red-breasted Nuthatches, Black-capped Chickadees, Downies, Song Sparrows, White-throats, Starlings, and English Sparrows fed continually all day, and while about ninety-five per cent of the birds wore bands, I looked in vain for our old female White-throat, who wears a bright pink band. (No other White-throat we have banded wears a celluloid band of this color.) The afternoon was well spent and the light was beginning to fade, when a dingy female White-throat hopped into view some thirty feet distant. With the naked eye I could discern that she wore a band on each leg. With an eight-power binocular a pink band on the left leg showed plainly. Mrs. Gillespie was hastily summoned to confirm the observation, and we were both well satisfied that 578074 had returned to our station for the *sixth consecutive year*, our best White-throat record to date. Almost a month passed before she was seen again—on February 4th and also on the following day. In spite of a heavy snowfall on February 1st and an unprecedented sub-zero cold spell of ten days from this date, she failed to enter the traps. But, for some unknown reason, on February 11th and 13th, with the snow practically gone and the thermometer in the thirties, she was captured in the trap that she first entered February 22, 1929.—JOHN A. GILLESPIE, Glenolden, Pennsylvania, January 14, 1934.

¹Mr. Gillespie in the next issue of *Bird-Banding* plans to describe more fully this abnormal occurrence which appears to be that of a White-throat in first winter plumage. Editor.