

CORRESPONDENCE

ECTOPARASITES

To the Editor of *Bird-Banding*: In the April issue of *Bird-Banding* appeared an article by Mrs. M. M. Nice, "The Opportunity of Bird-Banding," which mentioned a number of interesting and important problems which could be studied very effectively by banders. There was no mention made, however, of one very important phase of banding work, that relating to the external parasites found on birds. It seems to us that one of the most interesting opportunities which banders have is the chance to study the behavior of the birds as influenced by their external parasites. We know that parasites greatly affect domestic poultry, especially egg-laying, meat-production, and general well-being of the birds. Wild birds must react more or less the same to parasites. During our work in the past eight or ten years we have learned that practically every individual bird of practically every species has one or more (often as many as five or six or more) species of external parasites. When we remember that a parasite must exist at the expense of its host, we realize a bird cannot possibly react the same to its environment when infested with a number of ectoparasites. I believe they must affect the size, weight, health, color, habits, etc., of the bird as well as its migration dates and route. Banders making intensive studies of life-histories of certain species should certainly take this into consideration. From our continually increasing correspondence with banders we are obtaining an enormous number of interesting and valuable records of parasites and their relation to the bird and we appreciate their help in our work. The statements made in the first paragraph of my article in the April, 1930, issue of *Bird-Banding* are still borne out by our work during the four years elapsed since it was printed. In the article in the April, 1933, issue of *Bird-Banding*¹ there were a large number of records of parasites which had been collected and sent to us by banders. Quite a few additional records have accumulated since this was printed, and it is my hope that I shall be able to bring the list up to date in the not too far distant future. I hope banders will continue to observe and collect parasites from birds they handle and will correlate their presence and abundance with unusual and peculiar actions or appearances of the birds. We are very much interested in this study and shall be glad to do all we can to assist in this work.—HAROLD S. PETERS, Bureau of Entomology, Washington, D. C.

¹ Full references to these issues of *Bird-Banding* are Vol. I, No. 2, pp. 51-60, April, 1930 and Vol. IV, No. 2, pp. 68-75, April 1933.

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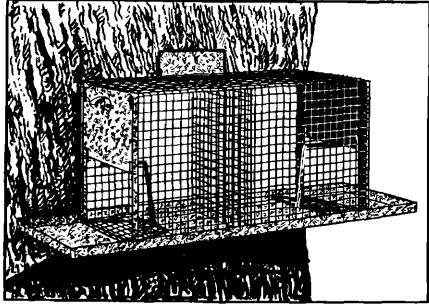
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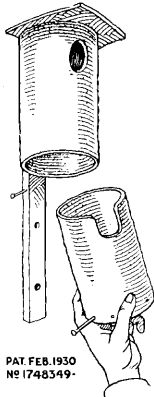
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