

hungry, the young rarely called for food except when they could see their parents flying past, or when they came to the nest.

When seventeen days old the nestlings began to try flapping their wings, while standing on the rim of the nest. They did not leave the nest until they flew away and never returned. My handling them did not induce their flight. When nineteen days old the older bird suddenly flew from my hand out the window and made its first flight 548 feet to an apple tree, to which it was followed by its mother. That evening the other bird left the nest. The family was seen to keep together until it left presumably on its southern migration, August 13th.

GENERAL NOTES

Alligators Interfere with Duck-Banding.—During the early days of September, 1936, an unusual number of migratory wild fowl were using my ponds at Avery Island, Louisiana, coming early in the fall migration, so I decided to begin banding more than a month earlier than usual.

Having baited trap No. 1 in my rest pond, using broken rice for this purpose, I set the trap on the afternoon of September 9th at four o'clock, and the ducks were taken out of it at seven o'clock on the morning of September 10th.

I expected a catch of at least one hundred and fifty ducks, as there was a large number of ducks of various species in the pond. On nearing the traps that morning, I was disappointed to see comparatively few ducks in it. The reason was soon apparent. The trap contained two alligators. One of them—a male eight feet three inches in length—had gone into the receiving pen and filled himself up on the ducks he found there. The other, a four-feet-two-inches alligator, was still in the main trap, and the ducks did not seem to pay much attention to it.

After getting the ducks out of the traps and banding them, I found there were 37 Blue-winged Teals (*Querquedula discors*)

37 Wood Ducks (*Aix sponsa*)

7 Fulvous Tree-ducks (*Dendrocygna bicolor helva*)

11 Mottled Ducks (*Anas fulvigula maculosa*)

8 Pintails (*Dafila acuta izit:ihoa*)

There were four dead ducks in the trap, killed by the alligators, and on skinning the alligators, we found the stomach of the large one to contain four Wood Ducks and three Blue-winged Teals. The small alligator had swallowed two Blue-winged Teals, and had killed two Wood Ducks, but they were too large to swallow. One of the Wood Ducks taken from the large alligator wore band number 35-514126. One of the Blue-winged Teals swallowed by the small alligator wore band number 34-551995. All of the ducks were swallowed whole, feathers and all. This is the first time in all my duck-banding experiences that I have ever taken alligators in a duck-trap, probably because my traps for migratory wild fowl are not set until the middle or latter part of October each year, and at that time of the year alligators have ceased feeding and have either gone to their winter dens or are preparing to den up for the winter. Normally alligators take no food from early October until late March, during which time they hibernate. So, generally speaking, they are not a menace to migratory wildfowl.

On Saturday, September 18, 1936, as there were quite a number of ducks in pond No. 3, I had prepared and set a large trap which I have in that pond for catching birds for banding. In this trap I annually take a great number of migratory wildfowl. The birds using this pond at this time are principally Blue-winged Teals, Pintails and Gadwalls (*Chaulelasmus streperus*). This trap has in it a decoy pen, six feet by eight, in which I had placed ten of the domestic Mallards

usually known as the English call duck, which are commonly used for decoys. These ducks are smaller than the wild Mallard (*Anas p. platyrhynchos*) and considerably more noisy. The trap was set in the afternoon of the 18th and visited the morning of the 19th.

Sometime during the night an alligator, which must have been a very large one, went into the trap through the "V" (the "V" being two lines of wire extending from an opening eight feet wide in the side of the trap, ten feet inside, and having an opening only one foot wide into the trap), completely destroyed the decoy pen, which was built of new two-inch mesh poultry wire and covered, and ate six of the English call ducks, and killed two others. It then tore a hole fully six feet long through the two-inch poultry-netting in the side of the trap, escaping in this way. As there was water in the trap and all around it, there was nothing by which the size of the alligator could be judged, but from the strength exhibited it must have been a large, heavy one, probably ten feet or more in length.

In all my duck-banding experience, these are the only two instances in which alligators have ever interfered with my trapping.—EDWARD A. McILHENNY, Avery Island, Louisiana.

A CORRECTION

In an article which appeared in the last issue of *Bird-Banding* (Vol. VII, No. 4) on page 163 the second line of the fourth paragraph should read: "which has *not* been authentically reported from mammals."

CARLTON M. HERMAN

RECENT LITERATURE

(Reviews by Margaret M. Nice and Thomas T. McCabe)

The articles have been selected and arranged under subjects of importance to students of the living bird, and also for the purpose of suggesting problems, or aspects of problems, to those banders who wish to make the most of their unique opportunities.

Headings in quotation marks are the exact titles of articles or literal translations of such titles. Except in the case of books, which are always reviewed under their titles, headings not in quotation marks refer to general subjects, or are abbreviated from titles in foreign languages. References to periodicals are given in italics. Reviews by Mr. McCabe are signed with his initials.

BANDING AND MIGRATION

Banding in North America.¹—On June 30, 1936, the list of coöperators numbered 2077, while the number of birds banded during the previous twelve months reached 274,695, making a grand total since 1920 of 2,181,150. The ten species that were banded in greatest numbers during the year were: Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) 23,429; Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) 19,298; Junco (*Junco hyemalis* and *oreganus*) 18,054; White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) 15,344; Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) 14,526; Chimney Swift (*Chætura pelagica*) 14,432; Pintail (*Dafila acuta*) 11,894; Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) 9,891; Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) 6,912; Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*) 6,670.

Longevity records are: Mallard twelve and a half years; Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*) 10; Herring Gull 11; Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) 11; Blue Jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*) ten and a half; and Chimney Swift 9 years. A Pintail was banded in California March 6, 1935, and shipped to Hawaii; it was shot in California, December 4, 1935.

Banding in Belgium.²—In 1935, 628 recoveries of birds ringed in Belgium were reported. Bramblings (*Fringilla montifringilla*) sometimes winter in the