

GENERAL NOTES

Grackle Return Records. In a brief note in *Bird-Banding*, (1931, 2 : 129), Horace D. McCann of Paoli, Pennsylvania, states that out of 305 Purple Grackles, (*Quiscalus q. quiscula*), he has had only four returns, two immature and two adults, and that, "this small number of returns, (1.31 per cent) appears to indicate that birds of this race do not possess in a strong degree the habit so common with many species of returning to the place of hatching or where they have previously nested."

In his article Mr. McCann states that of 305 grackles banded, only 23 were adults. Considering these adults separately, his two returns represent a return percentage of about eight per cent.

Marie Andrews Commons in "The Log of Tanager Hill" records the banding of 650 Bronzed Grackles, (*Quiscalus q. aeneus*) in eight years which brought 47 individual returns or a return percentage of about seven per cent. The grackles banded by Mr. and Mrs. Commons consisted of 528 adults, 17 immatures and 108 fledglings, showing that 80 per cent of the banding was confined to adult birds. Unfortunately, the birds that returned are not classified as to their age when banded, but birds banded in April and May, presumably adults, predominate in the list of returns.

Of 451 Purple Grackles banded at Huntington, Long Island, New York, in six years previous to the spring of 1938, eight were found dead previous to the spring of the following year in which they were banded, so that only 443 could be potential returns. Of this number of birds, 20 (or 4.51 per cent) returned. Of this group of grackles banded at this station, 350 (about 77 per cent) were adults and 101 were immatures. Of the returns, 15 were adults when banded and five were immatures.

From the entire number of grackles banded here, there have been 18 recoveries. Nine of these recoveries have been found within two miles of the place of banding in succeeding summers, proving that they returned to the same locality and may have even visited the station, although not trapped, before they were shot or found dead.

If these nine recoveries found within two miles of the station here, could be added to the number of station returns, then the percentage of Huntington returns would more closely parallel the results of the other two stations, being almost seven per cent.

Grackles have been noted by other banders as being very shy of traps once they have been captured. This is in accord with experiences at this station, as grackles wearing dull bands are often seen around the traps early in the spring, but are seldom caught. Station returns show a tendency to skip a year and point to a long memory in this species concerning traps.

Of the 47 grackles that returned to the Commons' banding station, 12 of them were trapped two years after banding and five more three years after banding. The returns at this station have been as follows:

Trapped first year after banding—4 adults, 2 immatures.

Trapped second year after banding but never before—9 adults, 2 immatures.

Trapped third year after banding but never before—1 adult.

Trapped fourth year after banding but never before—1 adult, 1 immature.

Christian J. Goetz of Cincinnati, Ohio, (*Bird-Banding*, 1938, 9 : 200), reports an almost perfect example of this skip tendency with Bronzed Grackles. An adult male—A416864 banded in 1931 returned in 1933, 1935, 1937 and 1938. Four other grackles banded at the same station show a similar tendency. Many other records in *Bird-Banding*, in the past several years can be found to support this skip return theory.—GEOFFREY GILL, 24 Overlook Drive, Huntington, Long Island, New York.