

GENERAL NOTES

Georgia-Banded Chimney Swift Nests in Ontario.—On October 11, 1936, I banded 6,025 Chimney Swifts from one chimney of a school building in Atlanta. Among the 44 returns received from these birds, the most interesting is that of number 37-30249, which was caught on June 24, 1937, and again on June 3, 1938, by Roy B. Wilson on his farm near Sundridge, Ontario (about 140 miles directly north of Toronto). Mr. Wilson reported that this bird nested inside his granary in 1937 and inside his woodshed in 1938. He could not find it during the summer of 1939. Other farmers in the same locality report that a few Swifts nest in unused chimneys each summer.

Chimney Swift number 37-32898 from the same banding lot at Atlanta was reported as nesting in a chimney at Dawsonville, Georgia, (about 50 miles northward from Atlanta) on June 9, 1939, by T. H. George. Other returns indicate that some of the 6,025 Swifts nested in almost all the intervening States between these most northerly and most southerly localities.—HAROLD S. PETERS, U. S. Biological Survey, Charleston, S. C.

A Warning to Chimney Swift Banders.—On August 31, 1939, I set a trap for Chimney Swifts on a church at Chester, Pa. The trap was made according to specifications on pages 54 to 57 in the *Manual for Bird Banders* (Lincoln and Baldwin, U. S. Dept. Agriculture, Misc. Publ. No. 58, Nov., 1929). The gathering cage was 2 feet high and about 15 inches square, which slightly exceeds the prescribed dimensions.

When I arrived in Chester the next morning about 9 o'clock, I found that I had trapped a large flock of birds and that a number of individuals had been smothered by the weight of those above them in the cage. It is the purpose of this note to explain how I could have avoided causing these fatalities, in the hope that other bird banders, working with large numbers of Swifts, may profit by my unhappy experience.

In the *Manual* Lincoln and Baldwin say: "Guard carefully against overcrowding in the cages, as this may smother many birds."

Harold S. Peters, in his article on "Chimney Swift Banding in Alabama During the Fall of 1936" (*Bird Banding*, 8: 16-24) says:

"The flow of birds was shut off by the simple process of throwing a blanket over the screen on the top of the trap thereby darkening the chimney and keeping the other birds quiet until the blanket was removed and the birds were again started by pounding on the chimney. During the handling of 6,025 birds at Atlanta we filled our large gathering cage four times by this method and experienced no difficulty with birds smothering in the cage. In earlier banding before this technique was developed we had some difficulty with the birds coming out in too large numbers."

The gathering cages he used were 4½ feet high, 3 feet wide, and 2 feet deep, that is, they had a volume of 27 cubic feet and a side-wall area, for clinging birds, of 45 square feet. In these spacious compartments he successfully handled 1500 birds at one time.

My gathering cage has a volume of 3½ cubic feet and a side-wall clinging area of ten square feet, and in the past I have successfully handled up to 200 birds in it, with every reason to suppose that many more could have been accommodated safely.

I believe that no bander with the minimum standard size gathering cage, as given in the *Manual* (volume two cubic feet; side-wall area eight square feet), need be afraid of trapping 350 to 400 birds at a time in it, for although there is not enough side-wall clinging area for this large a number, the birds reaching the cage after the walls are covered will cling to the backs of those already there, forming tiers several birds deep. This seems not to injure or inconvenience any of them.

But after the birds are about three deep against the walls of the cage, a further influx becomes serious. The newcomers still attempt to cling to the backs of other