

## AN APPEAL TO BIRD BANDERS

IN our studies on ticks at the Rocky Mountain Laboratory we have become aware that there is relatively little known about the kinds that occur on birds. We have a few records from miscellaneous birds and some from game birds, but most species of birds are protected and few people ever get close enough to see or capture the ticks. One bird bander, Mrs. Rowland Thomas, North Little Rock, Arkansas, has been sending very interesting ticks taken from trapped birds and has even examined the nests of some species after the fledglings have left.

It would be of much assistance if Mrs. Thomas' practice could become general and made to cover all parts of the United States. Some bird banders may not be able easily to recognize the ticks among the other parasites they may find. Ticks feed only on the blood of their hosts and have three stages of development—larva, nymph, and adult, all of which resemble each other, but the very small larva has three pairs of legs while the nymph and adult have four. When unfed they are thin and flat but when fully fed they are much swollen. However, any persons who wish to assist in this venture will not find it necessary to distinguish between the ticks and other parasites. All may be sent in and the other parasites—mainly lice and fleas—will be preserved and will be of much interest and value to parasitologists.

The ticks will usually be found either attached to the bird or loose in the nest. The barbed mouth parts are of particular value in identifying the species and to avoid breaking, care should be taken in removing the tick from the host. Small forceps are an aid but not necessary. When removed, specimens should be put into a vial of 70% alcohol and name of bird, date, locality (State, county and town), and name of collector should accompany all sendings. Specimens without collection data are of very little value. They only exasperate the specialist.

It would be of great assistance to the undersigned if bird banders would express by letter their willingness to assist. Mailing franks, vials and blanks will be sent, thus making it easy for the cooperator and avoiding expense of postage on packages.

Credit will be gladly given individually to all persons who cooperate and in any publications which may grow out of information secured from bird banders.

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