

WINTER RETURNS OF EASTERN TREE
SPARROW (*Spizella arborea arborea*) AT
NORRISTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

By RAYMOND J. MIDDLETON

EASTERN TREE SPARROWS are a fairly common winter resident at Norristown. They appear the last few days of November and remain in small numbers through December. In January and February they reach the maximum numbers. The milder temperatures of late March send most of them moving northward. An occasional individual or two remain the first week in April. In this area they are decidedly birds of the severest part of the winter season.

The following table shows the total number of birds banded in each winter, also the number that returned in later years:

| |
|--|
| 1924-25—9 banded, 2 returned in 1925-26. |
| 1925-26—10 banded, 1 returned in 1928-29. |
| 1926-27—2 banded, no returns. |
| 1927-28—27 banded, no returns. |
| 1928-29—84 banded, 7 returned in 1929-30, 3 returned in 1930-31, 2 returned in 1931-32, 1 returned in 1932-33, 1 returned in 1933-34. |
| 1929-30—36 banded, 8 returned in 1930-31, 5 returned in 1931-32, 1 returned in 1932-33, 2 returned in 1933-34, 2 in 1934-35 and 1935-36. |
| 1930-31—11 banded, 2 returned in 1931-32, 2 returned in 1932-33, 1 returned in 1933-34, 1 returned in 1934-35. |
| 1931-32—37 banded, 4 returned in 1932-33, 3 returned in 1933-34, 2 returned in 1934-35, 3 returned in 1935-36, 1 each in 1936-37 and 1937-38. |
| 1932-33—44 banded, 7 returned in 1933-34, 5 returned in 1934-35, 5 returned in 1935-36, 1 returned in 1936-37. |
| 1933-34—35 banded, 5 returned in 1934-35, 5 returned in 1935-36, 3 returned in 1936-37, 1 returned in 1937-38, 3 each in 1938-39 and 1939-40 and 2 in 1940-41. |
| 1934-35—36 banded, 6 returned in 1935-36, 3 returned in 1936-37, 2 returned in 1938-39. |
| 1935-36—174 banded, 3 returned in 1936-37, 1 returned in 1938-39. |
| 1936-37—20 banded, 1 returned in 1937-38, 2 returned in 1938-39, 3 returned in 1939-40, 3 returned in 1940-41. |
| 1937-38—21 banded, no return. |
| 1938-39—27 banded, 4 returned in 1939-40, 4 returned in 1940-41, 2 returned in 1941-42. |
| 1939-40—23 banded, 3 returned in 1940-41, 3 returned in 1941-42. |
| 1940-41—28 banded, 3 returned in 1941-42. |

In the seventeen years 604 were banded and seventy-seven individuals returned to the station in later years or a return percentage

of 12.75, it should be kept in mind that those banded during the past three or four winters will probably yield a number of returns in the coming three or four winters so that the return percentages as given do not constitute a final figure.

The seventy-seven birds that returned once also came back in subsequent winters to a total of sixty-nine times, by adding the returned birds that were present each winter to the newly banded individuals and using this figure to compare the total of 146 actual returns they produced, we find we have a return percentage of 24.17.

There were nine birds that were present at the station for five winters, their individual records are as follows:

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| A122862—banded, | February 12, 1929 |
| returned, | January 20, 1930 |
| “ | March 21, 1931 |
| “ | February 22, 1932 |
| “ | January 13, 1933 |
| “ | February 1, 1934 |
| A161367—banded, | January 11, 1930 |
| returned, | December 15, 1930 |
| “ | December 5, 1931 |
| “ | December 21, 1932 |
| “ | December 10, 1933 |
| “ | December 22, 1934 |
| “ | December 20, 1935 |
| B170305—banded, | February 19, 1932 |
| returned, | January 10, 1933 |
| “ | February 6, 1934 |
| “ | January 25, 1935 |
| “ | December 23, 1935 |
| B170312—banded, | February 21, 1932 |
| returned, | February 6, 1933 |
| “ | March 23, 1934 |
| “ | January 23, 1936 |
| “ | February 18, 1937 |
| “ | December 1, 1938 |
| B170375—banded, | March 29, 1932 |
| returned, | November 28, 1932 |
| “ | December 12, 1933 |
| “ | January 24, 1935 |
| “ | December 23, 1935 |
| H67934—banded, | January 15, 1933 |
| returned, | December 10, 1933 |
| “ | December 5, 1934 |
| “ | January 6, 1936 |
| “ | February 5, 1937 |
| L53964—banded, | December 28, 1933 |
| returned, | December 9, 1934 |
| “ | December 24, 1935 |
| “ | February 5, 1937 |
| “ | November 28, 1938 |
| “ | January 6, 1940 |

| | | | |
|----------------|----------|----------|----------|
| | " | January | 27, 1941 |
| L53984—banded, | January | 21, 1934 | |
| returned, | January | 27, 1936 | |
| | " | December | 2, 1938 |
| | " | February | 21, 1940 |
| | " | December | 6, 1940 |
| L53985—banded, | January | 21, 1934 | |
| returned, | February | 7, 1935 | |
| | " | January | 31, 1936 |
| | " | March | 17, 1937 |
| | " | January | 26, 1938 |
| | " | January | 18, 1940 |

The following table lists the total number of birds banded in each of the months for the period from July, 1924 to July, 1941, it also lists the number of returns taken from each of the monthly totals as well as the months that the returned birds came back in:

| | <i>Total Banded</i> | <i>Total Returns</i> | <i>Monthly Returns</i> | <i>Returns Percentage</i> |
|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| November..... | 11 | 2 | 11 | 18 |
| December..... | 66 | 7 | 43 | 10.6 |
| January..... | 194 | 30 | 46 | 15.5 |
| February..... | 260 | 28 | 28 | 10.8 |
| March..... | 73 | 10 | 8 | 13.7 |

It seems rather doubtful if any of the Tree Sparrows banded here migrate farther south, those taken early repeat consistently later on and often times the first one taken is a returned bird from a previous winter's banding, we have three individuals that were present over 105 days: November 29 to March 16 or 108 days; November 28 to March 16 or 109 days; December 10 to April 1 or 112 days; all of these records being taken on returned birds.

Of the seventy-seven birds that returned in later years we find a number of them did not return in the next year after the winter in which they were banded, their record is as follows: twelve did not return until two years later; five did not return until three years later; one did not return until four years later; one did not return until six years later.

The data on the last two are: A161384, banded January 26, 1930, returned January 25, 1936. 36-44381, banded February 26, 1937, returned January 28, 1941.

During the years only one was trapped that had been banded elsewhere and only one of our birds caught away: 125869, banded at Cornell University by Miles Pirnie on February 29, 1924, recovered here on January 31, 1925. A161410, banded February 16, 1930, caught in a store at Kutztown (near Reading), Pennsyl-

vania on January 15, 1932.

The only bait used in any of the traps during the period that this species is present at the station is small grains such as fine chick feed, millet or canary seed, they repeat more often than any other and the total number of repeats taken from the 604 banded is 3,355.

—Those individuals that have once returned to the station give a much higher rate of return in subsequent years than newly banded birds; here are the figures: seventy-seven returned one year, of these thirty-eight came back a second or 50%; of the thirty-eight that returned for the second, fifteen came back the next year or 40%; of the fifteen that returned the third year, nine came back the fourth year or 60%; of the nine that returned the fourth year, five came back the fifth year or 55.5%; of the five that returned the fifth year, two came back the sixth year or 40%.

Of the original 604 banded:

| | |
|----|----------------------------------|
| 77 | lived to be at least 2 years old |
| 38 | " " " " " 3 " " |
| 15 | " " " " " 4 " " |
| 9 | " " " " " 5 " " |
| 5 | " " " " " 6 " " |
| 2 | " " " " " 7 " " |

Norristown, Pennsylvania

RETURNS FROM BANDED BIRDS: SOME MISCELLANEOUS RECOVERIES OF INTEREST

By MAY THACHER COOKE

WHEN checking return record cards preparatory to filing them, it has become a habit to put aside records that seemed to hold more than ordinary interest. That these records are interesting is not necessarily because the birds have done unusual things. In fact many records have been chosen because they demonstrated that individual birds had really made the migrations that were expected of them. Others have been selected because the species have not been frequently reported; some because they indicate a rather long span of life; some because of the distance traveled or the speed or direction of migration.

It was thought that it would be well to publish some of these