

## GENERAL NOTES

**Predator Value.**—Much has been said by conservationists of the value of predators in eliminating the unfit. The following observations tend to support that view and we offer them as isolated instances; certain in one case, with quite a degree of probability in the other.

One August day in 1923 a boy brought us a tame crow which he had removed from the nest earlier in the season. Finding the bird less attractive as it grew older, he was going to release it but wanted it banded. On August 10, 1923, we affixed band number 209173. About three weeks later, while passing along a woodland border, we were surprised to see a crow coming toward us, uttering hungry cries. As it permitted itself to be picked up, we noted the band and identified the individual banded on August 10th. It was badly emaciated although it was a season of food abundance for the species, but this young crow had missed the training that would fit it to cope with its environment. On September 12, 1923, in this same locality, a Red-shouldered Hawk was seen swiftly approaching. A second after it disappeared in the trees, an agonized cry from a crow was heard. Almost at once a flock of crows appeared and the hawk was driven away. A brief search disclosed No. 209173 dead with talon marks in its head and neck. Thus terminated what would have ended by starvation had not some other predator intervened meanwhile.

On October 30, 1943, we drove a Northern Shrike from our banding station. Returning, we noted near a trap the body of a chickadee, hanging from the fork of a bush. Examining it, we recognized band No. 37-58843. This bird was banded on April 19, 1938, and was at least nearly a year old. When killed by the shrike, this individual was well along in its seventh year and may have been older. The age of six years is rather advanced for chickadees. The locality was favorable for a chickadee's escape because of a thick growth of Canada plums and choke cherries, almost impenetrable to a bird as large as a shrike but offering shelter to one of chickadee size. There were at least six or eight other chickadees around. We do not know their age but of the returns taken that season no other was more than three years old, and of the 16 banded, none showed evidence of old age. It seems likely that No. 37-58843 fell a victim because of age making the bird a little less agile than its companions, and, if so, again one has an example of the elimination of a failing individual before the environment could do its worst.—WENDELL P. SMITH, Wells River, Vermont.

**A Red-breasted Nuthatch Recovery.**—Red-breasted Nuthatch, adult, No. 140-47131, banded March 28, 1942, was retaken on April 20, 1944, and again on October 15, 1945. This individual was at least in its fifth year.

The Red-breasted Nuthatch is more common as a migrant in Wells River although a small number breed and a smaller number winter. The seasons when this individual was taken may or may not determine its status as a migrant. Like many of the data accumulated at a banding station, they stimulate curiosity which can be both satisfied and stimulated by more facts.—WENDELL P. SMITH, Wells River, Vermont.

**Behavior of Cardinals Toward a Newly-banded Female of the Same Species.**—On a rainy afternoon in late April, 1946, I took a wet and rather bedraggled female cardinal (*Richmondia cardinalis*) from one of my traps, applied a band in the usual manner, and released the bird. It had been in the trap less than half an hour. This bird was one of two females which had been consorting with a male cardinal for approximately three weeks preceding this incident. After the bird was banded she flew into a nearby tree and proceeded to preen her feathers. Presently, the other female and the male appeared, and the rival female began to peck vigorously at the new band. This continued for several minutes. Finally the unbanded female boldly attacked the other, pecking her

repeatedly on the head until she flew away in desperation. The male took no part in the controversy, but showed considerable excitement and gave his repeated "chip" call. In my eighteen years' experience as a bird bander I have often seen newly-banded cardinals peck at the band, but this is the first time I have observed cardinals peck at a band on another individual and drive it away.—FLOYD B. CHAPMAN, Columbus, Ohio.

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## RECENT LITERATURE

Reviews by Donald S. Farner and others

### BANDING

**1. Results of Banding the Pied Flycatcher in Silesia.** (Ergebnisse einer Planberingung des Trauerfliegenfängers (*Muscicapa hypoleuca* Pallas) in Schlesien.) W. Trettau and F. Merkel. 1943. *Vogelzug*, 14: 77-90. During eight years 1277 nestling Pied Flycatchers, 59 adult males and 136 adult females were banded in nest boxes; 71 of the young (6 per cent) were later trapped as breeding birds. Three members of one brood were found in later years, a male 100 meters from his birth place, two sisters 750 and 2700 meters distant. Of 74 captures of birds banded as nestlings 38 per cent were one year old, 32 per cent 2 years old, 17 per cent 3 years old, 8 per cent 4 years and 3.5 per cent 5 years. The high percentage of two year old birds leads the authors to think that not all birds breed at one year. In three cases old females were not found one year, but reappeared the next; there were always plenty of extra boxes. Only once were mates found together in a subsequent year; four times birds had taken other mates. Many birds returned to the same or nearby boxes, while others settled farther away, one as far as 1300 meters. Many data are given on color types of the males.—M. M. NICE.

**2. Bird Banding Activities in Belgium in 1943.** (Oeuvre du baguage des oiseaux en Belgique. Exercice 1943.) Ch. Dupond. 1944. *Le Gerfaut*, 34(3/4): 83-84. "Bird banding in Belgium having been suspended during the war, the following few records only are to be reported." The author gives records of twelve birds recovered after banding. Among the more interesting is that of a Stock Dove, *Columba oenas oenas* L., banded at Beernem, West Flanders, 3 October 1936 and recovered at Sainte-Croix lez-Bruges (15 kilometers north of banding locality) 1 June 1943. A Blue Tit, *Parus caeruleus caeruleus* L., was banded at Dudelange, Luxembourg, 22 May 1937 and recovered at Rumelange, Luxembourg (10 kilometers east of banding locality) 7 March 1943.—D. S. F.

**3. Bird Banding Activities in Belgium in 1944.** (Oeuvre du baguage des oiseaux en Belgique. Exercice 1944.) Ch. Dupond. 1945. *Le Gerfaut*, 35(3): 101-102. This is a list of 24 returns and recoveries mostly recorded in 1944.—D. S. F.

**4. Birds Banded in Foreign Countries and Recovered in Belgium.** (Oiseaux bagués à l'étranger et retrouvés en Belgique.) Ch. Dupond. 1944. *Le Gerfaut*, 34(3/4): 85-87. Twenty-seven records of birds banded elsewhere and recovered in Belgium are given. Included are five records of Starlings, *Sturnus vulgaris vulgaris* L., banded in Sweden or Germany during the summer and recovered in October or November in Belgium. A Mistle-Thrush, *Turdus viscivorus*