

The arrangement of down patches shows similarities between members of the same family or genus. Any great difference between members of the same family, such as is the case of the Yellow-breasted Chat, should call for a careful study and possible readjustment of classification.

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## GENERAL NOTES

**Unstable Migratory Behavior in a Mockingbird.**—A female Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*) that I color-banded in Baltimore stayed continuously in her nesting territory for three summers and the two intervening winters, but then migrated the third winter, returning the following spring. Nice (1937. *Trans. Linn. Soc. N. Y.*, **6**: 33) has reported similar behavior by some Song Sparrows (*Melospiza melodia*) of both sexes.

My Mockingbird was color-banded April 20, 1952, was present through October 10, 1954, then disappeared—during her absence I several times saw an unbanded Mockingbird in the heart of her territory—and was next identified April 15, 1955, although a bird that I glimpsed with her mate on March 15 presumably was she. She was still present in late May of 1955, when my observations in her part of the city ceased.

That bird's mate, color-banded in 1953, was a summer resident; I saw him: 1953, April 1 (banded) to September 26; 1954, March 27 to October 17; 1955, March 11 to May 26 (when observations ended).

Of 23 other Mockingbirds that I have color-banded, only 5 have yielded clear records more than one season in length. Two males were permanent residents for 16 and 22 months after being banded, another male was a winter resident for 4 successive seasons, a bird of unknown sex was a spring migrant in 2 years, and an apparent female was either a winter resident or a spring migrant for 2 years.

The 18 others were divided: spring migrants, 2 males (that is, singers), 3 apparent females, 2 of unknown sex; winter residents, 2 males, 4 unknown; summer resident, 1 nesting female; fall migrant, 1 of unknown sex; status uncertain, 2 males, 1 female.—Hervey Brackbill, 2620 Poplar Drive, Baltimore 7, Maryland.

**Extreme Old Age in Birds.**—In *Bird-Banding*, **27**: 86, Bender refers to an Oystercatcher, *Haematopus o. ostralegus*, attaining the age of 27 years in the wild. Since the oldest bird reliably recorded in the wild was thought to be an Arctic Tern, *Sterna paradisica*, that also attained the age of 27 (*Bird-Banding*, **23**: 72-73), a further word may be of interest. The Oystercatcher had been banded as a chick in the nesting colony on the island of Mellum on June 12, 1926, and was recorded during six seasons before it was found nesting there in 1953. The original band had been replaced. (*Die Vogelwarte*, **17**: 43, January, 1954, note by Bernt Linzen). While the last day on which the bird was seen in 1953 is not stated, it is probable that this bird showed a life span at least a few days or weeks longer than the Arctic Tern referred to above, as the tern was found dead beside its nest.

In England a Common Tern, *Sterna hirundo*, was banded as a chick in Lancashire on June 29, 1929 and found dead at its nest, about 15 miles N.W. of its birthplace, on June 13, 1954 (*British Birds*, **48**: 486; referred to by Mrs. Nice in Review No. 3 in this issue). This is the oldest bird so far recorded by the British ringing scheme and the oldest Common Tern recorded anywhere. The band (presumably the original one) was fully legible.

[After this issue was in proof, I note in *The Ring* for February, 1956, p. 116, a Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) banded in Denmark on July 18, 1925 as a