

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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*Box 141, Canaan, Conn.*

## 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

juvenile, and recorded on August 1, 1953, at an age of more than 28 years and 13 days, which would appear to establish a new longevity record for any species in the wild. Details were not given, except the band number (Viborg D 701).]—E. Alexander Bergstrom, 37 Old Brook Road, West Hartford 7, Conn.

## RECENT LITERATURE

### BANDING

(See also Numbers 25, 26, 27, 30, 58, 61, 62, 63)

**1. Banding of Various Species of Birds (in Norway), 1953 and 1954.**—(Ringmerking av Forskjellige Fuglearter. Ringmerkingresultater VIII.) M. Martinsen and A. Wildhagen. 1955. Published by Statens Viltundersøkelser. 50 pp. During 1953 and 1954 a total of 15,820 birds were banded under the Statens Viltundersøkelsers scheme. Species banded in greatest numbers were the Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*) 2,841; Redwing (*Turdus musicus*) 503; Common Gull (*Larus canus*) 653; and Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*) 1,404. Included in the report are the records of 226 recoveries from 1953 and 265 from 1954. Among the interesting foreign recoveries are those of three Pied Flycatchers (*Muscicapa hypoleuca*) banded as young and recovered in Portugal, a Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) banded as a young bird and recovered in Yugoslavia, and a Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) banded in Norway as a young bird in June and recovered in Ireland during the following November.—D. S. Farner.

**2. Bird-Banding in Norway 1954.**—Holger Holgersen. 1955. *Stavanger Museum* No. 21. 40 pp. This report includes the banding effected by the Stavanger Museum (20,644 birds banded), Statens Viltundersøkelser (8,534) and the University of Oslo (166) during 1954. Since the beginning of banding in Norway, bands have been placed on 194,985 birds. Species banded in greatest numbers during 1954 were the Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) 2,229; Great Tit (*Parus major*) 1,407; Pied Flycatcher (*Muscicapa hypoleuca*) 2,750; Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*) 4,390; Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) 1,531; Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*) 2,284; Common Gull (*Larus canus*) 1,952. Of great interest is the banding of 525 Pinkfooted Geese (*Anser brachyrhynchos*), 73 Pale-breasted Brent Geese (*Branta bernicla*), and 23 Barnacle Geese (*Branta leucopsis*) by Russel Webbe on Spitzbergen. A selected list of recoveries is included. Among the interesting records is that of a Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*) banded in Norway as a chick in 1937 and recovered 17.5 years later in Germany.—D. S. Farner.

**3. Report on Bird-Ringing for 1954.**—Robert Spencer. 1955. *British Birds*, 48(11): 461-498. A total of 102,858 birds, 36,621 of them being nestlings or chicks, were ringed in Great Britain in 1954. Maps are given showing recoveries of Teal (*Anas crecca*), Blackbird (*Turdus merula*), and Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*). Wintering Blackbirds were retaken in Norway, Sweden and Germany. The recovery in Holland on 9 August 1954 of a Starling banded in the nest in Lincolnshire on 16 June 1954 is most unusual. "Of five birds ringed on passage at Smith's Knoll Light Vessel (52° 43' N. 2° 18' E.) between 17th October and 7th November 1953, 3 were recovered in Holland (11.3.54, 21.4.54 and 24.4.54), one in France (31.1.54) and one in Denmark (16.4.54)." Interesting age records are given. Of Barn Swallows (*Hirundo rustica*) "re-trapped where ringed, two were first caught in 1949 (one as an adult), two were in 1952 and five in 1953." The 58 Lapwings (*Vanellus vanellus*) (practically all ringed as chicks) "recovered during 1954 had been ringed as follows:—1945 (1), 1947 (1), 1949 (2), 1950 (4), 1951 (6), 1952 (8), 1953 (22), and 1954 (14)." They were taken in Denmark, France, Portugal, Spain and Morocco. Arctic Terns (*Sterna macrura*) were captured and released at their birthplaces (Farne Islands) 15, 18 and 19 years after ringing. A Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) was found decapitated beside a nest containing eggs 15 miles northwest of its birthplace where it had been ringed 25 years before. "This is the oldest bird so far recorded by the British ringing scheme." (p. 486.)—M. M. Nice.