

GENERAL NOTES

A medium-dull White-throated Sparrow in its seventh winter. On March 7, 1957, I trapped a White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) return, No. 138-102953, at my Garden City, N. Y. station. It had been banded on December 3, 1950, had also returned on December 11, 1953, and was now a minimum of 6½ years old, presumably in its seventh winter. But it was still in medium-dull plumage, almost or quite identical with that in 1953 (see Nichols, 1954, *Bird-Banding*, 25 (2) : 60), not having acquired the brightness which I have earlier supposed to be adult winter plumage for both sexes. It was probably the sluggish banded individual seen sitting motionless beside the trap shortly before it was caught; and it bit and squeaked when handled, its behavior contrasting with that of a somewhat brighter bird trapped March 9, which was lively and difficult to hold.

There is considerable variation in the plumage of White-throated Sparrows in fall and winter. They can be roughly classified as dull, medium-dull, medium, medium-bright and bright. What I call high plumage with a great amount of clear white about the head, I have seen only in spring, and assume it is lost before the following winter.

There may or may not be seasonal regression beyond this, or individual White-throated Sparrows that never attain "high plumage." The 1957 return of 138-102953 is worth placing on record, as it may prove helpful in eventually arriving at a more detailed picture of the apparently complicated plumage changes in this species. For further data on the subject see Nichols and Boggs, 1929, *Bull. Northeastern Bird-Banding Assn.*, 5 (3) : 94-97; and Brackbill, 1954, *Bird-Banding*, 25 (4) : 148-149.—J. T. Nichols, The American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th St., New York 24, N. Y.

Winter Territorialism of Gray Shrikes (*Lanius excubitor*). The repeated homing of an adult female of the European race (see review no. 19 in this issue) led me to examine my records of these shrikes banded at our station in West Hartford, Connecticut. An immature banded on December 5, 1953, and released some five miles to the westward, returned on January 30, 1954, but did not return again after being transported some eight miles airline in the same direction. In the two following winters, five more (including one adult) were released at distance of seven or eight miles, mostly in the same westerly direction, and none returned. No major geographic barriers intervene, though a low range of hills may have some effect. As no shrikes were seen around our station other than those captured, it is very doubtful that any of these shrikes returned without being recaptured. My impression, from this limited evidence, would be that homing ability on winter territory may vary with the individual, and is less strong in immature shrikes.—E. Alexander Bergstrom, 37 Old Brook Road, West Hartford 7, Conn.

RECENT LITERATURE

BANDING

(See also numbers 14, 103)

I. The Ring. A quarterly "ornithological bulletin" edited and published by Dr. W. Ryzewski, 1 Altyre Road, Croydon, Surrey, England. Photo-offset. \$2.50 per year. Every bander will want this useful and informative little periodical. It fills a unique and long-empty niche in banding literature, that of sort of an international "trade journal." Its first number, published in October 1954, is devoted largely to a proposed standardization of methods of publishing recovery reports. Discussion in subsequent issues revised, clarified, augmented, and simplified the proposals into the standard format now being adhered to by most of the European banding groups.