

net in order to attract the birds into the net. This system has proved to be very successful in capturing dowitchers, semipalmated and western sandpipers and dunlins, as well as a few individuals of other shorebird species.

Decoys used are simply profiles cut from plywood or even pasteboard, with a heavy wire rod attached for sticking into the sand. Our coloring of the decoys has been rather sketchy, but this apparently makes little difference to the birds. The decoys are generally set up in a clustered line about three or four feet from a mist net suspended crosswind by sturdy bamboo poles. It has been our experience that the majority of birds come toward the net from the leeward; therefore the decoys are placed to the windward of the net so that the birds strike it as they approach the decoys at a good rate of speed.

The net and decoys are generally set up in a shallow pond or mud flat frequented by the birds. (Attempts at netting with decoys on the open beach have not been so successful.) If birds are numerous, such as at the peak of migration, we have successfully "chipped off" the ends of resting flocks time after time without disturbing the main group. These flushed birds usually circle the pond or flat, then come in to the decoys and are captured. We took about 35 dowitchers in one afternoon by this method. With smaller flocks at rest, it is often necessary to chase them up from alternate resting spots in the hope that they will then settle down with the decoys. In such a case, we have had a flock of 30 or more dowitchers strike the net at one time, with about half of them captured.

When the birds are not at all numerous or have not yet arrived on the "resting" flats from their feeding forays, it is often profitable to set up the decoys and net on the vacant flat, then settle back to await the arrival of shorebirds a few at the time. If birds are not allowed to settle nearby, incoming shorebirds almost invariably come to the decoys, allowing the capture of singles, or of two or three birds at the time. Through an afternoon, a good number of birds may thus be taken in what seems to be an unpromising situation.

We have been unsuccessful so far in attempts at capturing willets and black-bellied plovers by use of decoys. All of these will approach the decoys, but they veer sharply as they near the net. Dowitchers, easily taken by themselves, are almost impossible to catch when they are flocking with willets, as they apparently follow the willets' lead in turning away from the net at the last moment.—Horace Loftin, Dept. of Biological Sciences, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, and Storrs Olson, Tallahassee, Florida.

Band Retention—During the past five years we have double-banded seven Bald Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and four Great Horned Owls (*Bubo virginianus*). One of the birds, a Bald Eagle, was trapped during migration; the remainder were banded as nestlings. A conventional butt-end band was placed on one leg of each of these birds and a locking-type band on the other leg. The locking bands were of two types formerly issued by the Biological Survey. (A different, and superior, locking band is currently being issued by the Fish and Wildlife Service to some cooperators.)

We have received recoveries on three of the eleven birds. All three were wearing only the locking band when recovered. One of the Bald Eagles lost the butt-end band within 33 days after banding.

The returns are listed below:

#A-712631. A nestling Great Horned Owl banded May 13, 1956 at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was found dead about March 14, 1957 south of Grafton, Wisconsin.

#A-712627. A nestling Bald Eagle banded July 11, 1953 near Lake Tomahawk, Oneida County, Wisconsin, was "found dead . . . May have been shot" on January 2, 1954 at Richland, Wisconsin.

#235651. An immature female Bald Eagle was trapped and banded on October 29, 1954 at Cedar Grove, Wisconsin. We released the bird on October 31, 1954. It was found unable to fly on December 2, 1954 nine miles south of Fairmont, Martin County, Minnesota. The bird was subsequently nursed back to health and released.

We recommend that locking bands be used on all raptors requiring bands of size No. 6 or larger.—Daniel D. Berger, Cedar Grove Ornithological Station, Cedar Grove, Wisconsin, and Helmut C. Mueller, Department of Zoology, University of Wisconsin, Madison 6.

A Hummingbird in Difficulty—On the morning of June 4, 1959, attracted by the barking of my Labrador Retriever, I discovered on the ground, just outside my fenced yard, a male Ruby-throated Hummingbird, *Archilochus colubris*. As I approached, he rose into the air about three feet and flew, with evident difficulty, about five feet, then dropped to the ground again. I could see that something was trailing from him, and upon picking him up, I found a mass of matted spider-web tangled about one foot and hanging from it. Apparently the weight of the filmy web was too much for the Hummer. Although a few strands were lightly attached to the tip of one wing he was able to use his wings, and it seemed to be entirely the weight of the web which was his undoing. I untangled and removed the strands from his foot, whereupon he flew off with normal flight. Unfortunately I was not able to save the torn bits of this web, but a similar-appearing mass of cobweb weighed just under 0.01 gram.

The labels on two male Ruby-throats in the Cornell University collection indicate their weight when collected: one was 2.4 grams, the other 3.5 grams.—Sally F. Hoyt, "Aviana," Etna, New York.

RECENT LITERATURE BANDING

(See also Numbers 21, 26, 47, 52, 59)

1. **The Origin of Winter Visitors to the British Isles.** M. J. Goodacre. 1959. *Bird Study*, 6(2): 37-50. This is the first of a new series of papers, based on analyses of the now quite voluminous data in the B.T.O. and British Birds banding schemes, to determine the source of birds wintering in the British Isles. This first paper, on the Blackbird (*Turdus merula*), analyzes all the recoveries abroad of birds banded in the British Isles during the winter, the winter recoveries in Britain of Blackbirds banded abroad, and all the recoveries of Blackbirds trapped during migration at the British Bird observatories. The raw data are omitted, but the salient features are shown in the series of 16 maps and broken down to show the breeding range of the wintering British Blackbirds and the wintering distribution in Britain of populations from various parts of that breed-