

## GENERAL NOTES

**Dickcissels in Trinidad.**—In January, 1959, Richard and Margaret French began trapping some of the vast wintering flock of Dickcissels (*Spiza americana*) in the south of Trinidad, West Indies. By mid-April, when the flock began to leave the island, 436 individuals had been banded.

When large numbers appeared in the same area in January, 1960, trapping was resumed, with a catch of over 500 birds through early March. On February 20th, an individual banded on March 8, 1959 was retaken.

The birds are all taken in mist nets as they fly in to roost between 5 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. in a large canefield. The numbers are impossible to estimate accurately, but run into many thousands. As the migrating habits of this species are somewhat obscure, banders are asked to keep a special lookout for Dickcissels. Any relevant information, apart from details of recovery, would be welcomed by us.—Richard French, St. Peter's School, Texaco Trinidad, Inc., Pointe a Pierre, Trinidad, W.I.

**Predation on a Diseased Mourning Dove.**—In view of the scarcity of records on the removal of sick animals from a population by predation, the following observation is recorded.

On March 28, 1955, a female sparrow hawk, *Falco sparverius*, was observed struggling with prey on a ditch bank that bisects a crop field on the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. The hawk was watched through 8 x 30 glasses from about 200 feet. She was seen to cover her prey and heard to "mew," as a male sparrow hawk dropped to the ground beside her. This "covering" action apparently was due to the presence of the male, which tried to reach for the prey with his bill. The prey struggled a little and was still.

The prey was found to be a female mourning dove, *Zenaidura macroura*. The dove's throat was clogged with a white, cheese-like material. The cause was diagnosed as trichomoniasis by Archibald B. Cowan, then on the disease investigation staff at Patuxent.

This observation shows the possibility of the spread of trichomonads from prey to predator. Stabler and Shelanski (1936) reported that one of Stabler's sparrow hawks died from an accidental trichomonad infection. Stabler (1941) examined 41 raptorial birds of 13 species for trichomoniasis, ". . . of which only two—a pair of nestling Duck Hawks—were found naturally infected with *T. gallinae*."

## REFERENCES

- STABLER, ROBERT M., and HERMAN A. SHELANSKI. 1936. Trichomonas columbae as a cause of death in the hawk. *J. Parasit.*, **22**: 339-540.  
 STABLER, ROBERT M. 1941. Further studies on trichomoniasis in birds. *Auk*, **58**: 558-562.—Frederick C. Schmid, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, Maryland.

**Some Mourning Dove Banding Results**—A limited study of the movements of mourning doves (*Zenaidura macroura*) was made on a 10 mile section of State Highway #95 between Shiner and Moulton, Lavaca County, Texas in 1950. As part of a highway beautification program, liveoak trees (*Quercus virginiana*) had been planted along the highway right-of-way. A large number of mourning doves were raised in these trees each year. Fifty nestling birds were banded. Many more were successfully raised in the trees but I was not able to make regular visits to the area to band all of the birds.

The land resource area is the Blackland prairie. General agriculture of the area is small family farms. Cotton, corn and grain sorghum are the principal field crops. Crop residues and field weeds produce large amounts of dove food. Pastures are small, with buffalo and Bermuda grass the principal forage grasses.

*Results and Movement*

All birds were banded as nestlings between 7 and 12 days old. Of the fifty birds banded, five, or ten percent, were returned. Three were returned in the same year as banded, none the next year, and two the second year.

The general feeling of people in the area is that in the autumn all locally raised mourning doves move to southern Texas and Mexico and are replaced by