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## Some Starling Notes

*Mabel Warburton*

Regarding returns, repeats and recoveries of Starlings, some banders report that Starlings "seldom return": Bell (*EBBA NEWS* 32(4):174) and Fisk (*EBBA NEWS* 17(5):5-6). My Starling figures from my Woodhaven Bird Banding Station are as follows: *Birds banded*: 2747; *Returns*: 105; *Recoveries*: 67; *Repeats*: 56. This is better than an 8% return-repeat-recovery showing on the above Starlings. Burt reported (*EBBA NEWS* 31(6):286) that only 12 Starlings out of 24,784 banded, returned, and had only 119 repeats from 8,736 birds banded.

Concerning repeats, I have had two Starlings that repeated four times each. Foreign retraps of Starlings were not plentiful, numbering 7. Detweiler reported (*EBBA NEWS* 18(4):52-53) that his foreign retraps were from north and east of his banding station at Salem, New Jersey, while his birds migrated clockwise to the west, northwest, and then north.

Three of my retraps of Starlings were from Dr. Fluck's banding station at Washington Crossing Park, which is north and slightly west from my Woodhaven station. One retrap was a Dickerson Starling from Spotswood, New Jersey, which is northeast of my station, and two were from Detweiler's Salem station, south and west from me. Thus three of my retrapped Starlings came from the northwest, one from the northeast, and three from the southwest.

Recoveries of Starlings banded by me show that my birds moved mostly northeast, to New York, Vermont, Maine and New Brunswick, Canada. While some near-local recoveries were northwest, only one long-flight recovery showed northwest movement into Wisconsin.

It has been suggested that Starlings follow rivers; my station, Dr. Fluck's station, and the Rev. Detweiler's station were all on, or very close to the Delaware River.

Connie Katholi reported (*EBBA NEWS* 29(4):173) on a cross-billed Starling. On 2 January 1958 we banded Starling No. 552-32288 which had a bill with each mandible curling into a different direction and extremely long. While the bird did not appear to be suffering from malnutrition, it ate with a sideways shoveling motion, scooping the food into the side of the bill rather than picking it up. After three more repeats in our trap, we took the bird and had its bill trimmed back to a more normal size, although this did not eliminate the curves. One month later the Starling repeated again and seemed in good condition. This made 4 repeats for this bird; having an eating problem, no doubt a well-filled trap would entice this special bird to repeat more than a normal bird.

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