

Eastern

Regional

News

Eastern Bird Banding Association

Founded 1923

President Valerie M. Freer
RFD 1, Box 21G
Ellenville, NY 12428

1st Vice President Hannah Suthers
4 View Point Drive
Hopewell, NJ 08525

Secretary Margaret Donnal
11501 S. Glen Rd.
Potomac, MD 20854

2nd Vice President Walter Protzman
4 View Point Drive
Hopewell, NJ 08525

Treasurer Donald Mease
RD #1, Box 436A
Hellertown, PA 18055

3rd Vice President Frederick S. Schaeffer
84-55 Daniels St., Apt. 4f
Jamaica, NY 11435

Editor

Nadia M. Mutchler
RD 1, Box 212X, Monticello, NY 12701
Ph: 914-856-6444

Councillors

Barbara Belanger
Robert Merritt
Sarah Ruppert
Jeffrey Spendelow
Terms expire 1984

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Charl Warburton
Robert Yunick
Terms expire 1983

Kathleen Anderson
Mary Clench
Clare Nicolls
Robert Pantle
Frances Pope
Terms expire 1982

Advertising Manager: Jolan Truan, 3314 W. Glenn Dr., Phoenix, AZ 85021

Atlantic Flyway Editor: Donald Clark, RFD Hicks Rd., Franklinville, NY 14737

Periodical Reviews: Noel Cutright

Illustrations Editor: Barbara Petorak, 923 W. Walnut St., Shamokin, PA 17872

Historian: Harriet Marsi

Back Issues: Mrs. Donald Mease, RD 1, Box 436A, Hellertown, PA 18055

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President's Message

Have you filled out the questionnaire from Point Reyes Bird Observatory? Their new project, that of establishing a banding data analysis service, may be an important beginning to a new era in banding in this country. It can mean an end to the loss of valuable banding data on the retirement or death of a bander, a great increase in the amount learned from every band placed on a bird, a way for the back-yard bander to contribute to large organized studies, and a way for any bander to obtain statistical data on his banding results. (If you don't know what I'm talking about, read the letter you received from Point Reyes along with the latest additions to the Banding Manual and MTAB-45.) The deadline for return of the questionnaire is long past, but Point Reyes will still accept yours. Don't be intimidated by the proposed high cost; that may change. Let them know what you think of the idea!

There is a major new article of great interest to eastern bird banders in a recent *Wilson Bulletin* (Vol. 93, No. 2, 164-188). The title is "Age ratios and their possible use in determining autumn routes of passerine migrants", written by C. John Ralph. Many banders have steadfastly been banding fall migrants in spite of criticism (from the Banding Lab and others) that there is little value in the banding of migrants. It is true that there is little hope of a distant recovery, but there remains a

great deal to be learned about birds from fall banding, as Ralph's paper proves.

Ralph proposes an important theory that provides us, for the first time, a framework in which to place our age-ratio data. Briefly, his hypothesis is that "high percentages of young denote the periphery of a species' migration route." He regards a station to be in the mainstream of a species' route if, compared to other stations: (1) adults of that species were more abundant (i.e., the percentage of young was lower), and (2) the species made up a higher percentage of the total catch of passerine birds. Using data from several banding stations, he proposes five main patterns of fall migration in the eastern United States.

This work should encourage banders to continue to collect accurate data on age ratios, and to look at their information to see if Ralph's theory is supported. I hope that future "Atlantic Flyway Review" reports will include comparisons with the data in this paper.

If you are unable to obtain a copy of Ralph's paper, send \$1.50 (for copying and postage) to the editor, Nadia M. Mutchler, Box 212X, RD 1, Monticello, NY 12701.

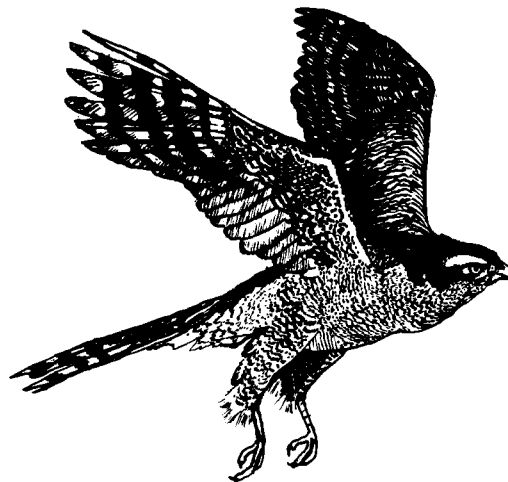
Valerie Freer

In Memoriam

As the approach of the fall migration/banding season nears we feel that the absence of our Bander-In-Charge must be noted. On November 11, 1980 Thom Mark Mutchler son of our editor, was killed in an auto accident returning from a day of raptor banding at Little Gap, PA. At 28 years old, he was continuing the banding study of raptor migration on the Kittatinny Ridge of the Appalachian Mountains started by his father some 10 years ago, before Tom & Mickie moved to New York in a change of profession.

A memorial fund was set up at Hawk Mountain where it is expected to be used to build flight pens for rehabilitated raptors, an activity close to the heart of the family. Father Tom was instrumental in starting the surgical rehabilitation of raptors on the East Coast in 1973-74 and is considered to be the father of hope for injured hawks and owls on the East Coast.

Typical of Thom and his family, he donated organs & body to the Humanity's Gift Registry so that through his death some other human being might regain sight or life. No greater gift can be given than to help ones fellow man.



Sketch by Barb Petorak

Tom & Mickie are to be congratulated and condoled, firstly for instilling love of the out-doors and fellow man, secondly for their great loss.

The Little Gap Banding Group
Gerald Lahr, New BIC

Who Is . . . ?

. . . Donald Mease our treasurer. It would be difficult to write about Don without including his wife, Elaine, for they work as a team. Elaine is our back issues chairperson. Both Don and Elaine were born and raised on farms in the Springtown, PA area where they still reside with their 2 children. Don was a lead programmer and systems analyst for 10 years before taking over the family business — retail butchering dealing with Pa. Dutch pork products. He has a degree in Accounting.

They became banders as a spin-off of the Audubon Christmas Bird Count which they now co-compile. They are both very active in local bird groups, Breeding Bird Census in spring, and lecture to local groups throughout the Lehigh Valley, using Don's photography as a method of introducing the local bird life to educate local school children as well as adults as to what they can

see right in their backyards. They are especially interested in teaching the benefits of birdlife and try to influence people not to shoot the birdlife.

Don and Elaine are interested in both raptors and small birds. They run a series of nest boxes for the American Kestrel and the Barn Owl. They have been studying and banding them for 5 years. They also run a backyard mist netting AFR station and their reports can be found in AFR Review II. They mist net and Potter trap year round in their study of migration and House Finch distribution. The Meases have had a spectacular year banding Pine Siskins — 549 at last report (6 May 1981).

Their hobbies include birds, photography and travel. Elaine has her own horse and usually does her part of the Christmas Bird Count from horseback.

History of Eastern Bird Banding Association

by Mrs. Roger W. Foy



1939

President: Dr. Carleton M. Herman

Vice President: Mrs. Marie V. Beals

Secretary: Dr. C. Brooke Worth

Treasurer: William Pepper, Jr.

Publication: *EBBA Nus*: Vol. 1, #3 January; Vol. 2, #1 March;

Vol. 2 #2 September; Vol. 2, #3 December

Editor: Dr. C.M. Herman

Annual Meetings: 24, 25, 26 February. 24 February meeting was for Officers and Councillors at the Downtown YMCA. 25 and 26 February meeting was held at the Academy of Natural Sciences, Phila. Executive Council meeting held in Phila., 18 November.

Dr. Herman is in Africa on an expedition for the New York Zoological Society and Dr. C. Brooke Worth chaired the Annual Meeting. The meeting was a great success with numerous displays being set up in the hall outside the auditorium. These included: The Latest Type Traps; Healed Bird Bones; A Bluebird Housing Project; Newspaper Publicity of Banders; Drawings of Song Bird (Sparrow) Breast Markings; Pictures of Berries and Shrubs Preferred by Birds; A Summary of the Work at Birdwood — Mr. and Mrs. Beal's station; and a variety of ornithological literature.

Dr. Witmer Stone was elected an Honorary Member. William Pepper, Jr. Treasurer, made his report and John A. Gillespie of the Auditing Committee reported the books in order.

Associate Editor and Circulation Manager for *EBBA Nus*:

Mrs. Marie V. Beals; Advertising Mgr.: Dr. Robert M. Stabler. The local committee for the annual meeting in New York in Feb. 1940 was as follows: Dr. Carlton M. Herman, Chairman; Mrs. Marie V. Beals, J.J. Hickey, Thomas Imhof, John T. Nichols, Miss E. Grace Stewart, Hobart M. Van Deusen, Donald Wylie and R.M. Youngs.

Committee to investigate a fee for life membership: Mr. Horace Groskin, Chairman.

Dr. Gordon M. Meade, Assistant Director, Strong Memorial Hospital University of Rochester, Rochester, New York announced his desire to cooperate in the Disease Study Project of the Eastern Bird Banding Association.

Banded birds killed by cats: from 1928 to 1939 Mrs. Beals' Station at Elmhurst N.Y. reported that 22 of the birds she banded were reported killed by cats!

At the Executive Business Meeting, 18 November (Zoological Lab of the School of Zoology, University of Pennsylvania. The following topics were discussed and were tentatively approved: 1) The next annual meeting shall be on the last Saturday in Feb. 1940 in New York. 2) The 1941 meeting will probably be in the South, the exact city uncertain. There were only 18 members south of D.C. at that time. 3) The 1940 meeting was set up tentatively, so far as business sessions, papers to be read, field trips, etc.

1939 Councillors: Verdi Burtch, Harold Peters, B.S. Bowdish, R.J. Middleton, Geoffrey Gill, Albert Conway, Harold S. Peters.

Siskins by the hundreds

Elaine & Donald Mease

The 1980-81 invasion of the Pine Siskin (*Carduelis pinus*) at our winter feeding station (403-0752 lat.-long.) was phenomenal. We checked the surrounding Christmas Bird Counts and found that our feeders had the only reported siskins. These birds usually keep moving around all winter in our area, not staying long in any one place. However, this year the siskins behaved much differently in that they stayed with us all winter.

The first siskins were mist-netted on 22 October 1980. From 11 November to 5 May banding was done with the use of two 3-celled Potter traps on a window feeder.

Although the majority of the siskins left by 15 May 1981, 3 remained in our immediate vicinity (as of 11 June). One of these siskins was banded but efforts to band the other 2 failed. These birds were observed in courtship displays and picking up nesting materials.

Between 22 October 1980 and 5 May 1981 a total of 549 siskins were banded, with 162 re-encounters. There were no foreign retraps.

Many birds were handled more than one time; ie, of 34 birds banded on 15 and 18 December, 22 returned on 16 of 38 days of trapping between 15 December and 30 April. Several birds repeated throughout the entire season: a siskin banded 6 November was recaptured 26

Table 1. Summary of siskin banding

Month	Days Banding	Total Birds	Number of birds retrapped in:							
			Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
October	1	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
November	9	163	—	25	1	—	1	—	—	—
December	10	65	—	—	1	5	9	6	11	—
January	4	69	—	—	—	1	19	9	16	1
February	10	95	—	—	—	—	9	14	22	1
March	9	35	—	—	—	—	—	8	5	—
April	16	99	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
May	1	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

February; another banded 6 December was recaptured on 1 January & 21 April. Two recaptures on 5 May had been banded on 29 January and 1 February. The following chart shows the general pattern of our recaptures:

We would be interested in hearing from anyone who has had similar experiences.

RD 1 Box 436A, Hellertown, PA 18055

(Ed note: 23 June 1981 - Two siskins were still being seen. They were courting and carrying nesting materials.)

And still they come

Tom & Mickie Mutchler

The number of Black-capped Chickadees (*Parus atricapillus*) and Red-breasted Nuthatches (*Sitta canadensis*) banded in the winter of 1980-81 was somewhat amazing.

We are located 15 miles northeast of the junction of the state lines of NY-NJ-PA (lat.-long. 413-0744). Banding was done using only Potter traps on second story window feeders (see NABB 3:107) on 16 scattered days between 1 December 1980 and 15 April 1981.



We thought that by 15 April we had banded all the chickadees and red-breasted in our area - 136 and 14 respectively. These captures, along with the recaptures from previous years of 26 chickadees and 3 red-breasted gave us a wintering population of at least 162 Black-capped Chickadees and 17 Red-breasted Nuthatches.

But from 16 to 24 April, in 10 continuous days of banding, we were continually surprised: an additional 13 Black-capped Chickadees and 4 Red-breasted Nuthatches were caught.

Dr. Robert Yunick (pers. comm.) reported the same type of occurrence at his mist-netting operation at Jenny Lake, NY approximately 125 miles NE of our location.

Did this explosion occur all through the northeast?

RD 1 Box 212X, Monticello, NY 12701