

## BIRD BANDING DEPARTMENT

Under the Direction of Wm. I. Lyon, Waukegan, Ill.

Following is a copy of the minutes of the first activities of the Inland Bird Banding Association.

October 23, 1922.

During the past year I have been corresponding with the Biological Survey in regard to forming a Bird Banding Association in the Mississippi Valley or the Central part of the United States and Canada.

In anticipation of forming such an organization I have written over 100 letters, and have induced at least twenty-five persons to take up bird banding.

As time advanced the logical place to form such Association seemed to be the A. O. U. convention, so I interested Mr. P. B. Coffin, President of the Chicago Ornithological Society to name a committee to promote a dinner for that purpose.

I had letters printed and mailed to about 75 persons who would be interested. I received answers and enough verbal acceptances from the announcement at the A. O. U. meeting so that when dinner time came, 52 were assembled at our first dinner, held at the City Club of Chicago, who signed as follows:—

S. Prentiss Baldwin, Cleveland, Ohio.  
 Leon J. Cole, Madison, Wis.  
 Mr. and Mrs. Wm. I. Lyon, Waukegan, Illinois.  
 Herbert L. Stoddard, Milwaukee, Wis.  
 Mrs. Cosie Clark Miller, Racine, Wis.  
 Dr. Frederick C. Test, Chicago, Ill.  
 P. B. Coffin, Chicago, Ill.  
 Henry B. Ward, Urbana, Ill.  
 Arthur D. Moore, South Haven, Mich.  
 Mrs. Ethel M. Towns, Milwaukee, Wis.  
 F. W. Rapp, Vicksburg, Mich.  
 Lucy V. Baxter Coffin, Chicago, Ill.  
 Harry C. Oberholser, Washington, D. C.  
 Frederick C. Lincoln, Washington, D. C.  
 Walter B. Barrows, East Lansing, Mich.  
 Amos W. Butler, Indianapolis, Ind.  
 Myron H. Swenk, Lincoln, Neb.  
 A. F. Ganier, Nashville, Tenn.  
 T. C. Stephens, Sioux City, Iowa.  
 T. L. Hankinson, Ypsilanti, Mich.  
 E. H. Forbush, Boston, Mass.  
 Lynds Jones, Oberlin, Ohio.  
 Althea R. Sherman, National, via McGregor, Ia.  
 Dr. W. H. Bergtold, Denver, Colo.  
 Theodore G. Ahrens, Ph.D., Baltimore, Ohio.  
 Dr. Wm. C. Herman, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Mrs. Wm. C. Herman, Cincinnati, Ohio.  
 Henry H. Covell, M.D., Rochester, N. Y.  
 Geo. Finlay Simmons, Austin, Texas.  
 Mrs. Alice B. Harrington, Boston, Mass.  
 Dr. A. H. Cordier, Kansas City, Mo.  
 Mr. and Mrs. Herbert W. Brandt, Cleveland, Ohio.  
 Miss Katherine McGregor, Cleveland, Ohio.  
 Edward F. Ford, Grand Rapids, Mich.  
 Arthur A. Allen, Ithaca, N. Y.  
 E. J. Sawyer, Syracuse, N. Y.  
 C. A. Mitchell, Riverside, Ill.  
 Mrs. H. J. Taylor, Sioux City, Iowa.  
 Margaret M. Nice, Norman, Okla.  
 Mrs. C. H. Gleason, Grand Rapids, Mich.  
 John F. McBride, Chicago, Ill.  
 Mrs. William M. Levey, Brookline, Mass.  
 Francis H. Herrick, Cleveland, Ohio.  
 Cheswell J. Hunt, Chicago, Ill.  
 Harry Harris, Kansas City, Mo.  
 Dix Teachenor, Kansas City, Mo.  
 Alfred Lewy, Chicago, Ill.  
 C. W. G. Eifrig, Oak Park, Ill.  
 Flora S. Richardson (Mrs.), Chicago, Ill.  
 W. D. Richardson, Chicago, Ill.

October 24th, 1922.

After the dinner was over, the members of the Wilson Ornithological Club adjourned to the adjoining room for their annual business meeting, and the remainder were called to order by Mr. Percival Brooks Coffin, who extended a welcome to all present, then turned the meeting over to William I. Lyon, who stated the purpose of the meeting, then called on Dr. Harry C. Oberholser who gave the Biological Survey position on banding.

Then Mr. S. Prentiss Baldwin explained the origin of trapping.

Mr. Frederick C. Lincoln explained the present banding situation.

Dr. Leon J. Cole, First President of the American Bird Banding Association gave some early history.

Dr. Frederick C. Test told of interesting Boy Scout Masters.

Dr. Lynds Jones spoke on publicity.

Edward H. Forbush, President of the New England Bird Banding Association, explained their progress.

The Chairman called for suggestions for organizing, and on motion, appointed the following nominating committee: Dr. Harry C. Oberholser, Percival Brooks Coffin, Frederick C. Lincoln, who adjourned to an adjoining room, and soon brought in the following nominations:—

President—S. Prentiss Baldwin, Cleveland, Ohio.

Vice-President—Dr. Leon J. Cole, Madison, Wis.

Secretary—William I. Lyon, Waukegan, Ill.

Treasurer—Herbert L. Stoddard, Milwaukee, Wis.

For Councilors—M. J. Magee, Mrs. H. C. Miller, P. B. Coffin, Dr. F. C. Test, Dr. H. B. Ward.

It was moved that those assembled proceed with election, and the entire ticket was unanimously elected by acclamation.

The newly elected President, S. Prentiss Baldwin, took the chair.

It was moved and seconded that the dues should be \$1.00 a year, and that the constitution and by-laws be left for a committee to form. Carried. A number of those present signed as members.

Then followed a general open discussion on Bird Banding until the meeting closed.

October 25th, 1922.

A directors meeting of the officers was called by the President during the noon recess of the A. O. U. Convention.

Present were Baldwin, Cole, Lyon, Stoddard, Mrs. Miller, Coffin, Test, and Ward.

Inland Bird Banding Association was adopted as the name of the organization.

The Secretary was authorized to purchase stationary and such other supplies as needed.

Methods of arranging funds were discussed, also plans for the future.

Wednesday evening at the banquet, the Bird Banders were again much pleased to find more evidence of their popularity in that wonderful occasional journal, *The Auklet*. On page 13, under New England Migration notes, they accuse Forbush of changing his motto to "A bird without a band is worth nothing in the bush."

On page 15 there appeared the following interesting news item — "Bandmaster Baldwin is said to be Lyon low Forbushes in which Lincoln's Sparrows may be trapped."

#### INTRODUCTION TO THE OFFICERS OF THE INLAND BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION

President,—

Mr. S. Prentiss Baldwin, the Williamson Bldg., Cleveland, Ohio. Mr. Baldwin needs no introduction to those who are interested in birds, as his name will go down in history as the man who proved that systematic trapping would bring the best results in Bird banding.

Vice-President,—

Dr. Leon J. Cole, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis. Dr. Cole is in charge of the Department of Genetics of the University of Wisconsin. He was the first president of the American Bird Banding Association, and his pioneer work is too well known for further comment.

Secretary,—

Mr. William I. Lyon, 124 Washington Street, Waukegan, Ill. Mr. Lyon is a real estate broker. He was one of the main promoters of

this organization, has invented new forms of successful traps, and holds the world's record for handling birds in the past year.

Treasurer,—

Mr. Herbert L. Stoddard, Public Museum, Milwaukee, Wis. Mr. Stoddard is connected with the Public Museum of Milwaukee. He was formerly with the Field Museum of Chicago, is one of the most active and best bird men of this district, and recently placed over two hundred bands on young Gannets at Bonaventure Island.

The Councilors,—

Mr. M. J. Magee, Sault Ste Marie, Mich. Mr. Magee is vice-president of the Sault Savings Bank, a leader of the bird work in his city, and his work with the Evening Grosbeaks is well known.

Mrs. H. C. Miller, 1110 Main Street, Racine, Wis. Mrs. Miller was formerly an active worker in the Massachusetts Audubon Society and the Brookline Bird Club, is now one of the leaders of Racine Bird and Nature Club.

Mrs. Miller is doing active work to secure more members for the Inland Bird Banding Association along Lake Michigan.

Percival Brooks Coffin, 39 South LaSalle Street, Chicago, Ill. Mr. Coffin is a Bond Broker and President of the Chicago Ornithological Society and a leader in all bird work about Chicago.

Dr. F. C. Test, 30 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Ill. Dr. Test is a Physician, and Vice-President of the Chicago Ornithological Society. Dr. Test has been very active in inducing people to become interested in Bird Banding.

Dr. H. B. Ward, University of Illinois, Urbana, Ill. Dr. Ward is the head of the Department of Zoölogy in University of Illinois. He spent the summer of 1922 in Yellowstone National Park placing bands and making observations on Pelicans.

#### GRACKLES ATTACK JUNCO

On November 22, there were about two hundred Bronzed Grackles that stopped for rest in their migration in our yard while we were doing our morning trapping. A Junco had been trapped in one of the flat traps, and was hopping about trying to find an opening, when suddenly a Grackle made a dive from a nearby tree and tried his best to catch the Junco; then more followed until there were about twenty-five on the trap, all trying hard to catch the one poor little Junco. One of the Grackles was successful in pulling out some of its feathers just as reinforcements arrived in the shape of a club thrown at the flock.

We believe if they had not been noticed they would have killed the Junco, as it was becoming tired from the constant dodging, and surely the Grackles tried hard enough.

During the nesting season this year the Grackles spoiled nearly all the eggs of the Robins in our yard.

WM. I. LYON.

## BIRD CHARACTERS AND DISPOSITIONS

In the March issue of this Bulletin you were told about the White-throated Sparrows of 1921. This fall has brought some additional facts that are worth mentioning.

Number 17042 has shown an unusual disposition for tameness, and simply squats down and lets you pick it up to read its number, and is very quiet all the time it is held in the hand. Recently, when released from the trap she flew to a bush within six feet of the trap and stayed there quietly and watched while four new birds were taken out of the trap and banded, then, with a few twittering notes, flew to the ground in search of more food.

Number 17070 is a fighter of unusual ability and proclaims it in a very loud voice. As soon as the hand is put into the trap he starts his challenging, and when the hand gets near he advances to attack, and springs on the hand, pecking with all his might, and never gives up a single instant while being examined in the hand, and after release flies to the nearest branch to sulk and scold.

The White-throats are acting just the same as last year; about a dozen staying around like regular boarders, and we expect we will have to feed them until a good storm comes and moves them southward.

## OWL KIDNAPS YOUNG FLICKERS

A pair of Flickers made a hole in a dead tree close to our house, and on June 20, 1920, the three young Flickers that were raised there were banded. During the following winter the squirrels enlarged the hole and filled it with leaves. The next Spring a pair of Flickers came to the same hole and scolded for a while, then started a new hole about five feet lower down the tree. By making a folding perch just below the hole, they were trapped and banded as a mated pair, and on June 2, 1921, their four young were also banded.

In 1922 the Flickers came there about the middle of April and scolded as before, but finally started a new hole a little to one side of the tree, and about an equal distance from each of the old holes.

On May 2nd a Blue Jay was observed making considerable fuss about the lower hole, which aroused suspicions, and with the aid of a ladder we reached the hole, and found a Screech Owl there. On removal we discovered she was sitting on five eggs which were all pipped ready to hatch, but fearing she would interfere with our Flicker family, we robbed the nest, banded the Owl and took her quite a distance from the tree before releasing her.

We had to be absent from home for about four weeks, and soon after our return we were ready to band the Flickers. We had observed that the old female wore a band but could not capture her to get the number, but the male kept his legs so well covered we were unable to see if he was banded.

On June 11th we started to band the young Flickers. Before we got our ladder, we watched the old Flickers feeding the young, and observed that the young were so old that the old birds did not enter

the nest, just going to the hole and calling the young up for food, so there was no chance of capturing the old birds to see their numbers, so we climbed the ladder, and as we passed the lower hole, noticed four owl eggs, of a second sitting, were in the hole, but all broken.

It was necessary to saw out a piece of the tree to get our hand into the hole, and as we opened the hole, out came an owl. We were surprised and annoyed, and took out the four young Flickers and examined them very carefully, but they were not harmed in any way, so they were banded and replaced in the nest. Our curiosity was aroused about the owl. The next morning, the 12th, we watched the old Flickers feeding the same as ever, but finally decided to see if the owl was around. On reaching in the hole there was the owl, and we promptly threw her out. On examining the young Flickers, found they were unharmed. On the 13th, everything happened just the same as on the 12th. On the 14th the same thing was repeated, but on examining the young Flickers we found about half of some small bird which apparently the owl had attempted to feed the young Flickers, and after putting the young back in the nest they were so far advanced that two objected to such treatment, and left the nest.

On the 15th the old Flickers were feeding the same as ever, and investigation showed the old Owl still brooding the young Flickers, but the remaining two also objected to the irregularities, and left. For the next ten days we looked into all the holes, but the owl and the Flickers had all left. We have examined the holes occasionally since then, but have not found a trace of the Owl.

In our experience with animals we have known cats and dogs taking other young when their own had been taken away from them, and have known chickens to hover most anything they could find, but this was the first experience with wild birds. W. I. LYON.

#### WOODPECKERS SLEEP SOUNDLY

While banding birds there are many opportunities to study their habits. One interesting fact has developed from keeping birds indoors at night. In the shorter days of the winter months we are unable to be home before dark, but must visit the traps as soon as possible, for leaving birds in traps all night invites many disasters from storms, cats, rats, weasels, owls, etc.

On such nights, when the birds have been gathered from the traps and taken to the house to read the numbers of repeats, and band the new ones, it would be cruel to turn them out into the dark when they cannot find a roost, so they are sorted, separating the sizes to prevent fights and crowding in the small cages. On such occasions the birds are kept in our basement, where it is cool, and when we have occasion to go to the basement later, on turning on the lights, the Sparrows and Finches are always awake in an instant, but the Downy Woodpeckers all seem to sleep so soundly that we have walked past them to the next room, shaken the furnace, put the coal in, then pass them again without their awakening. It aroused our curiosity and we watched them very carefully, and they slept soundly.

Brown Creepers are even better sleepers than the Downys, and can be touched lightly without awakening them.

One or two cases of the Red headed Woodpecker showed the same tendency. The White-breasted Nuthatch is another sound sleeper, but the Chickadee outdoes them all, and when they are touched to awaken them, they are generally mad and most of them scold.

Lately we had two Hairy Woodpeckers, and we watched them very closely, to see what they would do, but could not catch them, even asleep.

We had a few Flickers, but they were not sound sleepers, and the one Yellow-bellied Sapsucker that was trapped, slept through having the lights turned on in the room near his cage.

These observations make us believe that the birds that sleep in protected places sleep more soundly than those that perch in the more open places.

#### HOW FAR DO BIRDS GO WHEN THEY FLY SOUTH?

The marking of migratory water-fowl, as practiced by the collaborators of the Biological Survey, United States Department of Agriculture, has given evidence that it will be a most interesting and important investigation. Although the work has been in progress for only two years, notable results have already been secured.

The ducks and other birds, whose movements are being studied by this method, are caught, mainly by the use of special traps, light aluminum bands placed on one leg, and then released. Every band bears a serial number and the legend, "Biol. Surv., Wash., D. C." In the Washington office of the Biological Survey, these banded birds are card indexed so that when a hunter secures a duck bearing one of these bands and reports the data connected with its capture, by referring to the card file, the route covered by the bird in question can be easily ascertained. When such records are received, the hunter is advised where the bird was banded, while the person who attached the band is informed where it was secured.

During the fall shooting seasons for the last few years, a large number of mallards and black ducks, with a few blue-winged teal and other species, have been banded at a small lake about twenty miles north of Toronto, Ontario, and many interesting returns have been received.

#### *Long Range Record*

The best "long range" record for these Canadian ducks is that of a blue-winged teal, banded September 24, 1920, and killed two months and seven days later, in the Caroni Swamp, near Port of Spain, on the island of Trinidad, just off the coast of Venezuela. The shortest flight that this bird could have made would be over 3,000 miles. It is a well-known fact that blue-winged teals and certain other ducks that breed in North America spend the winter season in South America, but it was rather a surprise to learn that those individuals that had bred in Canada would make the long flight to South America, because the species also winters in small numbers in the Gulf region, and it is to that area that the more northern birds might be expected to go.

The return records of ducks of other species, banded near Toronto,

have afforded valuable data relative to their migration. The lake where the banding was done, Lake Scugog, is surrounded by marshes and thus offers excellent opportunities for the ducks to feed and rest before starting the long flight to the south. The trapping and banding was carried on continuously through the autumn, so that by the time the big southward movement began several hundred birds had been marked. At this time the season was open from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico and the migrating birds had to run a veritable gauntlet of sportsmen. A large number of "return records" were therefore received.

*Mallards and Black Ducks*

In tracing the route of these birds it seemed apparent that the mallards and black ducks traveled together and their course from Lake Scugog was southwestward along the shores of Lake Erie by way of the St. Clair flats. Here the route divided, the majority continuing toward the southwest, cross-country to the Ohio River, hence to the Mississippi Valley, where many of them spent the winter. The second group, that parted from their fellows in the vicinity of Lake Erie, took a southeasterly route, crossing the Alleghenies and reaching the Atlantic coast by way of Chesapeake and Delaware Bays. It is interesting to note that although both of these ducks are present and the black duck is plentiful along the coast of New England, none of the birds marked at Lake Scugog were taken in that region. The question that naturally arises is: Where do those ducks come from? So far we only know that some breed in that area, but we do not know just where the migrating birds come from that use that route. Bird banding will probably supply the answer when it has been applied more intensively at a larger number of stations.

U. S. BIOL. SURV.