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I've Got Your Bird Now What?

Charles T. Collins

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I've got your bird. . . Now what?

Charles T. Collins

As amply demonstrated by Elliott McClure in his interesting article on band recoveries (NABB, 1:120-126) most banders involved in a long-term banding program will accumulate a wealth of interesting communiques. Perhaps I can be allowed to share one prize letter from my collection; both it and the answer are self-explanatory.

June 24, 1964

Gentlemen:

A fisherman friend of mine found one of your birds in his boat about two weeks ago. The bird carries the number 723-88177.

This friend is keeping the bird well-fed with sardines and has it in a cage; but he takes it out to the ocean for at least half an hour every day.

He asked me to write to you to find out what he is supposed to do next. Please write to:

Carlos de Cuba
San Nicolas, Aruba, Neth. Antilles

Mr. Carlos de Cuba
San Nicolas, Aruba
Netherlands Antilles

Dear Mr. de Cuba:

Thank you for your informative letter of June 24 concerning our Band Number 723-88177. The band was used on a flightless young Noddy Tern on June 16, 1963 at Soldato Rock, Trinidad. It was banded by Mr. Charles T. Collins, University of Florida.

Your friend who is caring for the bird quite well is to be commended for his efforts but I hope that he will release the bird with the band attached to the leg.

Sincerely yours,
Allen J. Duvall, Chief
Bird Banding Laboratory

Unfortunately nothing more has been heard concerning the fate of the captive.

Department of Biology, California State University, Long Beach, CA 90840.

Four "unusuals"

Shirley S. Spittler

When Kim (my 16-year-old daughter) and I analyzed our 1975 banding records, we found we had four wanderers that were unusual enough for our area to merit further study.

We net in the yard of our home at Yuma Proving Ground, three miles east of Imperial Dam just outside the river marshes at the edge of the desert. It is an oasis of sorts with food, water, and cover that attract many of the birds that migrate along the river. Our nets are strung adjacent to 12-foot-high oleanders and close to a water fountain that runs daily.

Bright and early one morning last spring (0700, 03-11-75), two adult male Lawrence Goldfinches were in the net, less than two feet apart. This species had been reported this spring at Parker Dam, 80 miles north of us (*American Birds*, 29:911). Gale Monson (*Birds of Arizona*) lists them as seen irregularly along the Colorado River. And, could there be a connection with the record numbers

reported in central Arizona in the fall and winter of 1974 (*American Birds*, 29: Nos. 1 and 3)?

Our autumn pair was even more strange — a female Red-breasted Nuthatch and a male Golden-crowned Kinglet. Again, both were in the net at the same time, just inches apart, in the late afternoon of October 26. There are no records for the nuthatch for this immediate area, although they have been seen on the river north of here (*Birds of Arizona*) and unusually large numbers were reported on the 1973 Christmas Count in south-central Arizona. The kinglet, also a rare visitor along the river, was sighted in December 1974 in Needles (*American Birds*, 29:No. 3). First winter records since 1969-70 were in 1974-75 in several central Arizona areas.

At the risk of sounding self-chiding, we also noted that our two highest net-hour months of the year yielded our unusuals.

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