

1977

## Eastern Regional News

North American Bird Bander

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# Eastern Regional News

## Eastern Bird Banding Association

Founded 1923

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**Second Vice-President** — Valerie M. Freer, RFD 1, Box 21G, Ellenville, NY 12428

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**Back Issues** — Mrs. Roger W. Foy, Box 164, Ship Bottom, NJ 08008

**Historian** — Mrs. Roger W. Foy



Eastern Regional News is published quarterly in *North American Bird Bander* by the Eastern Bird Banding Association. Applications for membership and changes of address should be sent to the Treasurer. The dues: Active Members — \$6.00 per year; Sustaining Members — \$10.00 per year; Student Members — \$3.00 per year; Life Membership — \$125.00. Canadian and foreign memberships add \$2.00. Contributions to the Eastern Bird Banding Association are tax deductible.

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## From the President

There is an increasing concern among banders regarding their "rights" to band, color mark, and handle wild birds. I have been asked to comment on this in one of my messages.

To begin with, as banders we have no "rights" to band any wild birds. Banding is a privilege extended to individuals in order to carry on scientific studies requiring the use of bands. It may also be used to some extent in the fields of education provided the guide lines of the Banding Office are followed.

Bird banding can no longer be carried on as a hobby for a number of reasons. To begin with, each band placed on a bird costs the taxpayer money. An effort is now being made to get a rough idea of this cost. There are many private citizens who do not feel that birds should be banded, particularly by netting and the use of chemicals.

It is up to each bander to justify his study projects and execute them in a manner that will not cause criticism from the public and law enforcement officials. Many banders do not understand some of the Banding Office directives. Almost all of them have a logical reason for existing, even though we may disagree or fail to see the real need.

It is hard for the bander to understand how thousands of blackbirds, of several species, can be deliberately killed and yet have management at Patuxent "clamp down" when a few are released in a different grid from that in which they were banded. The fact of the matter may be that this is only one part of several infractions of the rules that may be involved. Alone it would not have created the problem in the first instance.

There can be no doubt that permits have been called in unjustly in the past — from the permittees' standpoint. It is up to each of us to try to eliminate any possible complaints regarding our methods of operation and record keeping. It is important that each of us thoroughly familiarize ourselves with the directives we receive from the Banding Laboratory. Careless mistakes in our reports can make our records almost useless when fed into the computers and can increase the work load of office personnel.

It is not the function of our Ethics Committee to intervene in the recall of banding permits, but rather to set up guidelines to prevent the recall becoming necessary. Every bander should strive to ethicize his own conduct.

T.A. Beckett, III

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## Frank Frazier, Sr.

It is with deep regret that we note the death of Frank Frazier, Sr., in the past month. Frank was the former editor of *EBBA News* and a past president of the association.

## Color marking authorizations

EBBA will be starting a color marking authorization column in the near future. If you would wish your project listed, contact: Mrs. Peter Polisse, Box 624, Barnegat Light, NJ 08006. Use reporting form as can be found in NABB 2:39.

## Historical Albums

Our 7 Historical Albums disappeared from the display table, 5th floor ballroom, at the conference. Anyone having information, please contact the editor.

## Authors

Two of our EBBA members have recently had books released: Olin S. Pettingill, Jr. has just released an up-dated edition of "A Guide to Bird Finding East of the Mississippi" through Oxford Press for \$15.95. Anyone who has used the first edition is well aware of the need for the up-dating and will be very pleased with this book. I recommend this book for anyone traveling in the east for the directions to good birding localities and the possible sightings offered in an area.

Robert Leberman has released a new writing "The Birds of the Ligonier Valley" through the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Pittsburgh, PA for \$6.30 which is a complete analysis of the birds in this western Penna. area. Bob's writing includes more than a brief species description. Birding areas, history of the area and overall species abundance studies are included. Excellent illustrations by Carol Rudy are found throughout the book. H. Jon Janosik contributed 6 beautiful color plates to round out the writing.

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## EBBA 1977 at Cape May, New Jersey

Hannah B. Suthers

We were torn between setting up a scope at once and casing out those hundreds of ducks at the point, or checking in, eating lunch, and getting on some long underwear against the wind. Hunger won.

The Golden Eagle Motor Lodge was opening especially for us. "Are you in Room 108?" the maid asked. "It's not quite ready." No, we were going to the room above. The facilities were all together in one spot at this large motel. Quite handy. I set up my exhibit in the 5th floor ballroom, overheated by the glaring afternoon sun. I checked the free hand-outs — happy closet cleaning, Kathy! Downstairs, the Pantles and their Registration Committee were well prepared. Two goodies were for sale: Tom Mutchler's Banders Information Resource Data Manual, and Fred Schaeffer's Index of EBBA News, Vols. 31-39. I went to the meeting of Committee Chairpersons, short and precise, thanks to Ted Beckett. Then I enjoyed greeting friends as they arrived, and never got back to the ducks at the point.

Seafood — but of course! — for dinner. Ted Beckett, our President, welcomed us formally. Then we were transported via Bill Clark, Cape May Bird Observatory Director, to Greenland and falcon banding. One can't help but sense the machismo of raptor banding versus "dicky bird" banding.

A ghost watched TV in Room 108 until I got up at 2:30 AM, went to the main desk and asked to have it turned off.

The weather was a disaster on Saturday, or was it, really? The ocean can be wildly beautiful under a storm. Through the glass windows we reviewed the Red-throated Loons passing south, the Bonaparte's Gull hovering by the jetty, and Common Scoters traveling north. Some saw a Purple Sandpiper on the jetty.

Time now for the Panel Discussion, "Banding with a Purpose." That's a lot of listening to do, perhaps all the easier because most of us had gone back to bed for a couple of hours after looking out the window at 6 A.M.



Chan Robbins, on "Planning a Banding Study," gave us new ideas for projects and guidelines on standardizing our methods among members of a group, from year to year. An important question was clarified on holding birds for educational purposes — that is, keeping them in gathering cages so that there would be birds to show when a scheduled group arrived to see. We are advised to ask the State for written permission to hold birds for Educational Purposes, and to contact our friendly local Conservation Agent. Birds shouldn't be held during the breeding season, nor should they be banded so close to dusk that they may not get back to the nest. Breeding birds should be banded at the net rather than taken away to a station. These guidelines are to minimize disruption of the care of the young, which can be quite critical.

Margaret Donald, on "Carrying Out a Banding Study," told of a cooperative endeavor between a college, Park Service, and local club, in three different habitats. She cites a Mt. Everest purpose: "We do it because it's there." College students, park rangers, and teens are trained. A good piece of advice is to get the local newspaper editor interested!

Trevor Lloyd-Evans, on "Banding at a Bird Observatory," pointed out that banding is only a tool for larger biological projects. He observed that there will be a conflict of educational and research goals, which usually ends up as survival. Yet someone must train the new, university-sponsored bander



heading for Pernambuco. The observatory requires a coordinator to standardize operations, schedule the volunteers, be in charge of the quality of work, and constantly update techniques.

Kathy Klimkiewicz, on "Setting Up a Banding Group," asked the soul searching question: Why band? She came up with several suggestions for projects that a small group could carry out, such as molt, variability of wing length in selected species, movements of color-banded flocks, recoveries, and comparative age and sex ratios of migrants. The best method of taking wing measurements was discussed. She studied cord versus flattened (British standard) versus maximum cord (museum skins), and finds that because people flatten wings differently, the flattened measurement is therefore more variable, and the wing cord is still the best method.

Bob Yunick, in response to Kathy's apology for topic snatching, quipped "As in the sewage plant, good luck to the people downstream." Actually the panelists down stream benefitted; with certain topics already covered, they could go on to other things. "Backyard Opportunities" could include the habitat and entire spectrum of life from arrival, breeding, post breeding, dispersal, fall departure, and wintering of the Blue-tailed Dicky Bird, or the Orange-tailed Dicky Bird. What an opportunity housewives have! We can follow published techniques for working with our most common species.

Yeah, Starlings!

Jay Sheppard emphasized "Updating Quality of Data" because our conclusions depend on it. We should standardize our data gathering so that data can be compared with data taken across the country. Don't overlook the possible age-sex differentials, for example, in wintering over or migration. Full data on 10 birds can be more useful than 10,000 birds not aged and sexed. Full information and photographs are useful, for example, on the Blue-tailed Dicky Bird. Or the Orange-tailed Dickey-Bird — we need more species . . .

To which Bob replied, "That's up to the AOU."

Hannah Suthers, on "Publishing Results," described the stages of labor and aids in bringing forth a brain child, including family planning or writing out the new project on paper before the banding work begins. (Ed. note: To be published in NABB next issue).

The papers session, conducted by Will Merritt, was going smoothly when those who were "cutting class" at the ocean end of the ballroom got a little noisy. Would someone ask them to keep it down? Gannets! Any wonder! A real bonus from the weather and the on-shore wind. The large birds were being blown close enough to shore to be seen, flying just above the water, passing northward, in singles, pairs, adults and immature.

Oh Yes, back to the papers session. Dr. Charles Leck spoke on "Banding North American Migrants in the Tropics;" Bob Pantle on the "Factors Affecting Breeding Success of a Tree Swallow Colony in South-central New York State;" then Kathy Klimkiewicz on "Continental Color Marking Plan for Purple Martins" and, with Paul Jung, "Evidence of Use of Glass by Purple Martins;" Bob Yunick on "The Balance at the Feeder;" Val Freer on "An Analysis of Bank Swallow Returns;" and Jay Sheppard with "The Report From the Banding Laboratory." This seemed to be the year of the swallow family.

Mystery of the papers session: Why do Purple Martins feed bits of old glass to their young?



The EBBA Annual Meeting was easy to sit, thanks to Ted Beckett's wit and charm. Our Editor was called up for a word. It was heartwarming that WBBA sent their Editor, Eleanor Radke, to be with us. The other half of a very successful endeavor, she was applauded with vigor and length. Our Editor availed herself for members' comments, ideas, criticisms, to learn of the "poison ivy among the roses." Changes in the article and section placement of some bylaws were made. New Coun-

cillors were elected: Claire Gottschall, Jo Kixmiller, Hannah Suthers, Bob Yunick. No more opening night socializing for these people! Meeting adjourned.



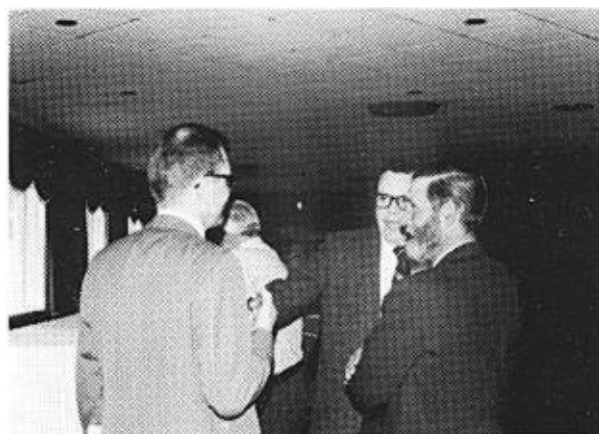
Okay, back to the Gannets! What was the count now? Over 300? The storm is lifting; let's go to the point! But how is one to survive until the 8 P.M. dinner?

Finally! It's Banquet time. Here we are, people from diverse walks of life, brought together by a unifying interest, guided by hard working officers, and operating on a lot of good will. We gave a round of applause to those who planned this very successful weekend. Dr. Jeffrey Lincer, Director of the National Wildlife Federation Raptor Information Center gave an excellent presentation on "Past Raptor Research and Present Needs."



Sunday was a good day. Our flexible leaders arranged for us field-trip-eager people to see both local birds, and the Raptor Station or Brigantine.

Did the weekend seem to go so well only because I was an involved old timer? There was more to it than that, as seen in the impressions of Pete Polisse, a first timer.



*Photos by Isabel Tipton*

## **A new bander's impressions**

*Pete Polisse*

Being a new bander, the 1977 EBBA meeting was the first I have been privileged to attend. Therefore, I am unable to draw comparisons between this and past meetings. In my inexperience, I have undoubtedly been greatly impressed by things which the seasoned bander scarcely notices, and on the other hand, I am sure that some of the more subtle points presented at the meeting went completely over my head.

There were, however, several things that could not go unnoticed. I think the most wonderful thing about the entire three days is the fact that everyone spoke the same language — BIRDS! They spoke, not as birders or listers, but as serious banders confident in the value of their work.

The qualifications of the banders present were overshadowed only by their dedication. Hours of research, field work, and typewriter pounding went into each paper that was presented. We may agree or disagree, as the case may be, with the findings of these studies, but none of us can deny the amount of hard work that went into their preparation. After speaking with other banders present, it became apparent that this expertise did not begin or end with the people who presented papers at the meeting. Everyone I spoke with was well versed and greatly interested in their own specialty. I'm only sorry there was not more time available to meet and talk with more of the members.

It is almost impossible to present a program as lengthy as the Annual Meeting and still keep everyone on the edge of their seats throughout. What interests me might bore you and vice versa, but I can honestly say I found the entire program interesting and informative.

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## Who Is...?

### **Kathy Klimkiewicz**

Our third vice-president, Mary Kathleen Klimkiewicz, of Laurel, Maryland, has been a 7th grade science teacher for the past seven years. Kathy became a full time wildlife biologist with the Bird Banding Laboratory in June. She originally came from Fairfax, Virginia, and co-founded the Mid-Atlantic Bird Banding Group. She also organized and carried out the first North American Breeding Bird Atlas for two counties in Maryland. Her main banding interests involve the migration, distribution and behavior of Purple Martins, winter flock dispersal of American Goldfinches, and ageing and sexing techniques in general for all species. Kathy has several hobbies — a youth birding group, leisure birding, state listing, growing plants, reading, and sharing experiences with others.



### **Life Member** **Robert Gammell**

Robert T. Gammell was born in Madison, Minnesota and graduated from the University of Minnesota Medical School in 1933. He has been a general practitioner in Kenmare, North Dakota since 1934 and is a past President of the North Dakota Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Dr. Gammell is a member of A.O.U., Wilson Ornithological Society, Cooper Ornithological Society, I.B.B.A., W.B.B.A., N.E.B.B.A., and E.B.B.A., as well as several state ornithological organizations.

He became interested in birding and, later, banding through his friendship with the late Seth Low, one time a manager of the Des Lacs National Wildlife Refuge in Kenmare. He and Mrs. Gammell have banded more than 180,000 birds since 1957.

The Gammells were named "North Dakota Conservationists of the Year" in December 1973 by the North Dakota Wildlife Federation.

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## Life Member

### Arthur J. Wiseman



Mr. Wiseman and his wife are pharmacists who operated a retail pharmacy in Cincinnati, Ohio from 1949 to 1973. In 1960, a simple bird feeder sparked their interest in birds. In 1965, Mr. Wiseman served as president of the Cincinnati Bird Club; in 1966-1972, on the Board of Trustees of the Cincinnati Nature Center; and is now compiler of two Christmas Counts (Cincinnati and Western Hamilton County) and three Breeding Bird Surveys.

The Wisemans learned to band from Dr. Franklin McCamey at the Cincinnati Nature Center in 1967. They spent each weekend banding there for 5 years and banded 8,200 birds of 91 species at the Nature Center. At a second station in Ft. Thomas, Kentucky, they banded 2,400 birds from 1968 to 1972.

In 1972, they discontinued their banding so that Mr. Wiseman could work on the results of their banding studies. He computerized and analyzed 2,200 weights to publish "Changes in Body Weight of American Goldfinches" in the *Wilson Bulletin*, 1975. For this work, he was granted the Margaret M. Nice Award and the Ernest P. Edwards Prize by the Wilson Ornithological Society. His major interest is in the nearly 3,000 banded Cardinals, the most common bird in his area. He is preparing a paper on the molts and plumages of juvenile Cardinals to be published next year.

In 1974, the Wisemans were appointed Honorary Curators of Birds at the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History and have since cataloged the 12,000-skin collection. They created a "Bird Skinners Club" and taught enthusiastic birders to prepare bird skins from roadside and window kills for the museum's collection. The sixteen members of this unique club are teenagers, school teachers, and college professors who volunteer their services.

Mr. Wiseman is a member of the A.O.U., Wilson Ornithological Society, NEBBA, EBBA, IBBA, and WBBA as well as Audubon and related conservation groups.

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## Annual Meeting sites

EBBA is lining up potential sites for its Annual Meeting for the next few years. We need facilities within EBBA territory which can provide lodging and meals for 200 persons. In addition, workshop and paper session rooms and banquet facilities are required. Nearby areas of interest for field trips are desirable. The cooperation of a host group is important in contributing to the success of the meeting.

If your bird club or other group would like to host a meeting, please contact Valerie M. Freer, RD 1, Box 21G, Ellenville, NY 12428.

## Back issues

Back issues of *EBBA News* and other bird magazines. Write for price list to: Mabel Warburton, 15 S. Bell, Yardley, PA 19067. Profits go to EBBA.

## Index to *EBBA News*:

Vols. 31-39 now available

Interested members and other persons may obtain a copy by sending \$1.60 ppd (3rd class mail) to Mrs. Roger W. Foy, Box 164, Ship Bottom, NJ 08008. Please get your orders in soon, as this is a limited printing and the last Index to *EBBA News* — 1968-1976.

Check or money orders should be made payable to Eastern Bird Banding Association.