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North American Bird Bander

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Eastern Regional News

Eastern Bird Banding Association

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1979 Annual Meeting

Mark your calendar now for the 1979 annual meeting 20-22 April at the Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC) in Dingman's Ferry, PA. Plans are now being made for an exciting weekend filled with field trips, banding demonstrations, speakers, and workshops.

PEEC is a 36-acre tract used as a field center for environmental studies. The main lodge of this former vacation resort has meeting rooms, a nature center, natural history library, a heated indoor pool and sauna.

Housing is in cottages of various sizes, each with living and sleeping areas and tiled bath. The cost for room and six meals, Friday night through Sunday noon, will be only about \$32.00 per person.

Registration materials will be mailed to EBBA members. For more information contact Valerie M. Freer, R.D. #1, Box 21G, Ellenville, NY 12428.

Photo contest

One of the special features of this year's meeting will be a photo contest. Entries should be either black-and-white or color prints, at least 5" x 7".

Entries will be judged on their suitability as NABB cover photos. The prize-winning photo (or photos) will be published on NABB's cover.

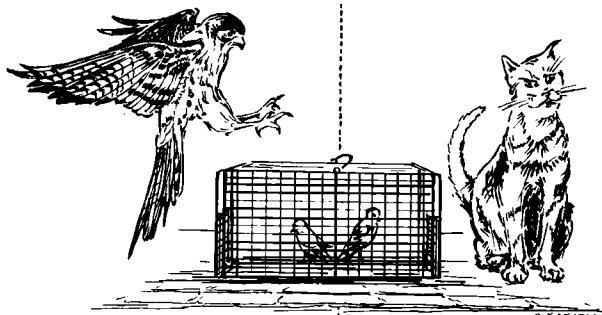
EBBA membership receipt can be had by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Davis Corkran, 154 Lake Ave., Fair Haven, NJ 07701.

Back issues of *North American Bird Bander* are available at \$2.00 per copy ppd from Mrs. Donald Mease, RD 1, Box 436A, Hellertown, PA 18055.

Copies of our former publication, *EBBA News*, are available from Mrs. Roger Foy, Box 164, Ship Bottom, NJ 08008. Write for prices.

Oops!

Mrs. Carl Lubbert (Erana), Maryland, writes that she has been a Life Member of EBBA since 1972. Sorry we missed her name.



In Memorium—S. Leroy Wilcox

9 October 1899—13 August 1978

With the death of Leroy Wilcox, the Eastern Bird Banding Association lost one of its earliest and most active members — one of the few people anywhere who had banded continuously for over fifty years. He was not only an experienced, resourceful and productive bander but also a many-talented naturalist — a man admired and respected by his colleagues, an example and teacher to those younger or less experienced and an effective interpreter of nature to the public. Fortunately, he went painlessly, victim of a sudden final heart attack following several lesser ones in the past few years. He remained active and enthusiastic to the end working on numerous projects and serving in many capacities. He is survived by his wife, two daughters, a son, and by twelve grandchildren.

My acquaintance with him began more than forty years ago. When he was informed, in 1936, that a young fellow living in a nearby village was interested in birds, he immediately came to meet me and took me on the first of many field trips, a visit to the then unspoiled Hempstead Plains. The purpose of the trip was to determine if the Upland Sandpipers still bred there, and we found that they did. We observed five or six adults, admired their flight maneuvers, listened to their mellow call notes and found a pair of downy young which were soon caught and banded. The Plains were full of breeding Bobolinks and Grasshopper Sparrows as well as more familiar species — all contributing to a most memorable day.

In the year or two that followed, Wilcox introduced me to various aspects of bird banding such as how to make and use traps and how to weigh and measure captures, to the Christmas Count, to the journals and to other phases of field ornithology. Although a very busy man, operating a large duck farming operation with little assistance, he always found time to help and encourage younger naturalists as he had been helped by several of his predecessors such as Roy Latham, J.T. Nichols and Dr. Frank Overton.

Roy spent more than fifty years in bird banding and other field work. He took his first Christmas Count in 1926 and continued through this past winter. He became a bird bander in 1927 and joined the Eastern Bird Banding Association soon after. He served at least one term as Councillor. He banded over 132,000 birds in his lifetime.



He was a member of the AOU, NEBBA, WOS, Linnaean Society, the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, to mention a few.

He was a charter member of the Moriches Bay Audubon Society and guided the chapter from a small group of novices to the large and effective society of today. Until his last year, he served continuously as field trip leader and, in this position, instructed, entertained and motivated hundreds of people who followed him on the monthly trips. He was also a member of the Nature Conservancy and a steadfast supporter of conservation.

His early interests centered on the Osprey and the Common Tern and for many years he banded in the formerly magnificent Osprey colonies on Gardiner's Island and Orient Point. Many years were devoted to a study of the breeding biology of the Piping Plover during which he banded 1723 individual birds between 1937 and 1957, all on the south shore of Long Island. He captured 1172 adults on their nests and obtained 425 returns of banded birds. The results of this study were published in *The Auk* in 1959. When the American Oystercatcher and later the Willet extended their breeding ranges to Long Island, he shifted his emphasis to these species. His Willet data have been submitted for publication. The extensive data he gathered on the Oystercatcher have not been published, but one of his outstanding experiences in 1978 was to retrap for the tenth year a nesting Oystercatcher he had banded as a chick in 1962.

Although a complete bibliography of his writings has not been compiled, they were numerous and appeared in many journals including *The Auk*, *The Kingbird*, *Bird-Banding*, *EBBA News*, the publication of the Linnaean Society and others. However, Roy's interests in nature were not confined to birds but extended to all aspects of the environment. He studied botany, insects, fish, mammals and other forms of life with the same intensity as he displayed in his ornithological

studies. He was an excellent photographer and his numerous slides were often shown to instill an appreciation of nature into diverse audiences.

Some of Roy's most evident qualities were his enthusiasm, his persistence, his integrity and his helpfulness to others. No one who came into contact with him could fail to notice his excitement and pleasure at some new discovery. Those who knew him best marvelled at his determination, his commitment to complete some task or reach some goal he had set for himself. Examples are his life-long studies of shorebirds, his desire to band as many birds as possible, his long years of historical and genealogical research and his, unfortunately,

not quite finished study of the natural history of Southampton Town.

As the final service was being held in the Eastport Cemetery, a Song Sparrow sang its lovely song several times, leaving those assembled there with the feeling that the world of nature was expressing its appreciation of his life even as we were. Although we all mourn his passing and miss his presence, we prefer to be thankful for his long and useful life with its many accomplishments and to remember, with appreciation, the many years he spent among us.

Gilbert S. Raynor Manorville, Long Island, NY

In Memorium—Lydia Elzey Barrett

Lydia Elzey Barrett, friend and teacher to many, was active in banding for many years in Michigan, in Pennsylvania, in Florida and later, in retirement years, in North Carolina. Lydia passed away suddenly on 27 April 1978 at her home in Sherwood Forest near Brevard, North Carolina, where she and her husband Paul had lived since 1973.

Lydia began sharing her thoughtful enthusiasm for Biology and Natural History as a teacher in the Detroit grade and high schools. Later, she taught Natural Science and Biology at Michigan State University and at Pennsylvania State University. Her calm and patient manner were undoubtedly of great benefit during her teaching days and her dry wit and lively mind must have enlivened the classrooms then as surely as they later did garden club gatherings, banding meetings, and social times with friends.

Lydia's contributions to birding were of various kinds. She kept detailed feeder records; she prepared a collection of study skins of forty local (North Carolina) species which was recently donated to the biology department of Brevard College, Brevard, North Carolina; she participated in and sparked area bird counts; and she designed and carried out banding studies in Michigan, in Sarasota, Florida, and in North Carolina. Her most recent endeavor was to initiate a study of the population dynamics of six species resident in the Sherwood Forest area through the use of color bands which permitted individual birds to be spotted and their movements recorded and studied. Carolina Chickadees, Carolina Wrens, Tufted Titmice, Cardinals, Eastern Bluebirds, and White-breasted Nuthatches were marked with



various combinations of color bands to enable individuals to be identified and located in the area at various times of the year.

To all these activities she brought thoughtfulness, enthusiasm, intellect, and humor—high human virtues that Lydia possessed in good measure and made her friendship so highly valued, her teaching so meaningful and effective. She will be missed.

She is survived by her husband, Paul, two brothers, Paul and John Elzey, two step-sons, David and Robert, and several step-grandchildren.

Ironically, the last bird that Lydia banded, an AHY female Evening Grosbeak, was recovered in Brevard, North Carolina, the day after her death.

Lynn Heller McLean, VA