

1984

## Emerson A Stoner 1892-1983

North American Bird Bander

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/nabb>

---

### Recommended Citation

North American Bird Bander (1984) "Emerson A Stoner 1892-1983," *North American Bird Bander*. Vol. 9 : Iss. 2 , Article 13.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/nabb/vol9/iss2/13>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by the Searchable Ornithological Research Archive at Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. It has been accepted for inclusion in North American Bird Bander by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@usf.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@usf.edu).

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	-j	k	l	m	m	n
Total Days	68	97	199	283	102	45	50	90	90	28	50	29	25	20	44
Nets—Number	8–15	1–3	2–4	20	2+		8–10	1–8	1–10	3–10	8	5–15	20–26	17–21	
hours		1695	2587	33,376	717		2250	3488		1309	1966	1404	2128	1599	
Birds/100 hrs		69.4	58.0	11.3			74.8	49.6		66.2	96.3	60.6	108.5	77.0	
Traps—Number			2		3	18				0–2					1–6
Largest daily catch	101	103	83	56	64	155	94	105	39	81	104	55	145	154	20
no. banded 1982	2767	801	1502	4145*	979	1883	1362	1730	600	729	1466	568	1447	982	199
no. encountered 1982	± 2800	1180	1726	6781*	1219	4008	1684	± 2680		875	1893	851	2309	1232	222
no. species 1982	91	45	43	85*	115	16	48	66	4	58	33	39	41	54	17

\*Includes traps and nets.

## EMERSON A. STONER

### 1892–1983

Emerson A. Stoner, Charter Member of the Western Bird Banding Association (1926) and its President from 1953 to 1957, died in his 90th year on 9 March 1983, just 22 days after Myrtle E. Stoner, his wife of 65 years, died in her 87th year. Emerson was born in Toledo, Iowa 27 June 1892, spent his boyhood, and went to school in Des Moines. He moved to Oakland, California in 1914 and attended Heald Business College. Because of pressures of World War I, Emerson set aside plans to continue his studies at the University of California at Berkeley and moved to Benecia in 1917 to take a job at the Benecia Arsenal. Myrtle, a native of Oakland, came to join him in marriage in 1918. Both were very active in community affairs. Their many friends were always welcome in their lovely home at 285 East "L" Street in Benecia. Emerson and Myrtle are survived by two daughters, Jean Osborn of Benecia and Marjorie Elmore of San Jose, their son Donald Stoner of Benecia, ten grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

In 1957, Emerson retired from the Benecia Arsenal as its Chief Fiscal Officer. Heeding the call, he became Point Reyes Bird Observatory's first Treasurer in 1965. He served the Observatory well for eight years—until at Myrtle's urging he retired again in 1973. He was then elected to PRBO's Advisory Board where he served until his death.

Emerson frequently said that he had been interested in birds as long as he could remember. He once related that as a child he became interested in a pair of bluebirds nesting in an old woodpecker nest cavity in a hickory tree. He used books from the Des Moines public library to learn about birds, including how to do taxidermy and how to blow eggs for an egg collection.

He continued his bird studies in California and in 1921 began sixty years of bird banding as one of the early Bird Banding Cooperators of the old U.S. Biological Survey. He banded hundreds to several thousand birds a year on their large double residential lot in Benecia. Over the years, hundreds of his banded birds have been recovered in distant places from Canada to Florida and Mexico. His daughter, Marjorie Elmore of San Jose, shared her father's interests in natural history and is today a Federal Bird Banding Cooperator and member of the WBBA.

A self-taught natural scientist, Emerson early in the century acquired the necessary State of California and Federal permits and over the years made beautifully curated oological and scientific bird and mammal study skin collections. In the late 1970's he donated selected portions of nearly all of his collections and much of his fine natural history library to local schools, to Point Reyes Bird Observatory, and to the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology in Los Angeles. A pick-up truck load of eggs and skins we delivered to the WFVZ in 1978 included 94 sets of Scrub Jay eggs, representing just a portion of probably the largest collection of Scrub Jay eggs ever made by one collector.

Emerson Stone joined the Cooper Ornithological Society in 1918 and the American Ornithologists' Union in 1922. Over the years he published more than 225 scholarly articles in more than 20 regional and national publications. These included no fewer than 60 in *The Condor*, 34 in *The Oologist*, 11 in *The Auk*, 56 in *The Gull*, 34 in *American Birds*, and 2 in *Le Gerfaut* (Belgian). He is frequently cited in Arthur Cleveland Bent's *Life Histories of North American Birds* and in hundreds of other papers on birds.

Although most of Emerson's writings were technical or distributional in nature, I note that he wrote (in part) in *The Auk* (1948) 65:450-451 "House Finches 'drinking' peaches . . . From a distance of seven or eight feet I watched her every motion as she sat on a horizontal limb on a level with my eye, feasting with apparent relish on an Elberta directly in front of her. The peaches were firm, just ripening, and not yet advanced to what might be called the juicy stage. Each bit of peach which she removed from the fruit was pressed rapidly and intermittently between her mandibles. Her throat muscles indicated the drinking process. After desiccating each piece of pulp or skin, she discarded the residue with a shake of the head . . . My berries and apricots have suffered much each season by depredation of House Finches. In fairness to the multitude of English Sparrows which frequent my yard, I should state that I have never observed them feeding on my fruit."

L. Richard Mewaldt

