

1987

Eastern Regional News

North American Bird Bander

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Eastern Regional News

Eastern Bird Banding Association

Founded 1923

President's Message

(1) NORTH AMERICAN BIRD BANDER's current publisher/ coordinator, The Eagle Foundation, will discontinue their business relationship with the three banding associations at the end of the current publication year. In the interim, the three presidents are hard at work trying to find a replacement, be it an individual or an organization. Toward that end, the EBBA Council, at the May meeting, has appointed a Liaison Committee consisting of Fred Schaeffer (Chair), Bob Pantle, Bob Yunick and Jeff Spendelow, and has charged this committee with the task of finding a suitable replacement for coordinator, publisher and printer/typesetter. Further, the Council has set a deadline of September 1987, by which time the committee must report back to Council by mail or by telephone. Council will then vote yes or no on the decisions reached by the committee. Unfortunately, it is more complicated than that because the final decision has to be approved by a majority vote of the three associations, EBBA, WBBA, and IBBA. While I will keep you informed as soon as possible of the decisions that will be reached, the most fitting solution will be one that is hardly noticed by our readers. In other words, we're looking for a smooth transition and no publishing delays!

(2) All except one committee will continue as in 1986/87. The exception is the Conservation Committee. The chairmanship to this committee has been offered to someone, and I am awaiting confirmation of acceptance.

(3) *President's Messages and Net Pricing.* It is almost impossible to write a time-effective President's Message because of the long lead times required. Often four months go by before a message gets into print. This dilemma also affects the Net Committee. Gale Smith (Chairperson) advised the

Council that wholesale net prices have really skyrocketed, largely as a result of the unending fluctuations in the dollar-yen exchange rate. Such cost increases hit us *after* an order has been placed with Japan, since the Japanese firm adjusts their net prices in accordance with prevailing exchange rates. Gale must then increase net prices in order to prevent a loss to EBBA (we're not marking up these prices by much), but it takes 4-5 months to get a new ad printed. End result is that we lose money anyway. There is no easy solution to this. We could stop publishing prices in NABB and have prospective purchasers send a SASE to Gale asking for the latest price sheet, but that causes much additional work for him. He already spends about 20 hours per week on this project. Another possibility is to publish a small newsletter jointly between EBBA and the EBBA Net Committee, quarterly or when needed. That would have to be financed by a markup of net costs and that's not fair to net purchasers. I will ask Council to look into this; but meanwhile, dear readers, please put your thinking caps on, and let me have some suggestions how we might solve this thorny problem. Thanks!

The fall banding season is closeby, and I know many, probably most, of you will be gearing up again to start banding after the summer draws to a close. Certainly in my own case, I will start banding small birds in early August and concentrate on raptors from mid-September on. As you are engaged in these various programs, please keep in mind that NABB needs your input by way of papers and notes.

Good banding!

Fred S. Schaeffer, President
1650 14th Avenue
Vero Beach, FL 32960

Eastern Bird Banding Association continued.

NORTH AMERICAN BLUEBIRD SOCIETY RESEARCH GRANTS

The North American Bluebird Society announces the fourth annual grants in aid for ornithological research directed toward cavity nesting species of North America with emphasis on the genus *Sialia*. Presently three annual grants of single or multiple awards totalling \$7,500.00 are awarded and include:

J.L. Williams Memorial Bluebird Research Grant - Available to student, professional or individual researchers for a suitable research project focused on any of the three species of bluebird from the genus *Sialia*.

General Research Grant - Available to student, professional and individual researchers for a suitable research project focused on a North American cavity nesting species.

Student Research Grant - Available to full-time college or university students for a suitable research project focused on a North American cavity nesting species.

Further guidelines and application materials are available upon request from Theodore W. Gutzke, Research Committee Chairman, P.O. Box 121, Kenmare, North Dakota 58746. Completed applications must be received by December 1, 1987; decisions will be announced by January 15, 1988.

EBBA's Annual Meeting - 1988

The Pocono Environmental Education Center at Dingman's Ferry, Pennsylvania, will host EBBA's 1988 annual meeting on April 22-24. Please mark this date on your calendar and plan not only to attend but to give a paper or sponsor a workshop/display.

We are seeking suggestions for a banquet speaker for this meeting. Please send suggestions (topic plus speaker name, address, and daytime phone number) to:

M. Kathleen Klimkiewicz
Bird Banding Laboratory
Laurel, MD 20707
Phone: 301-498-0403

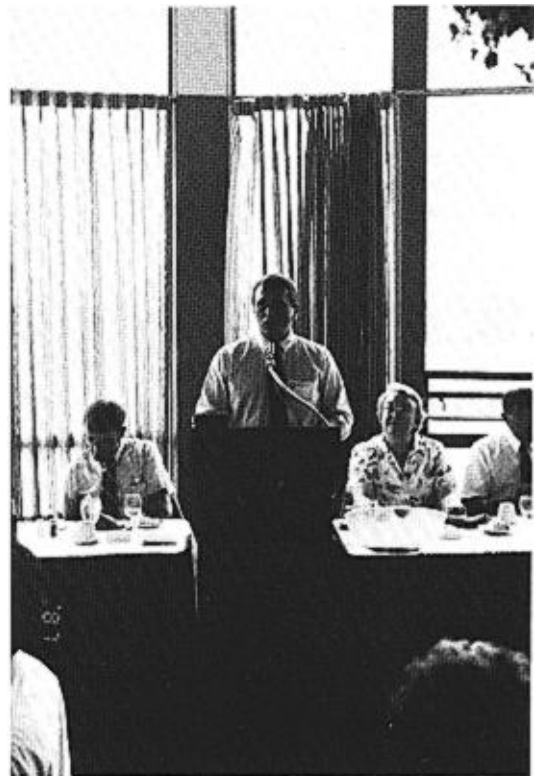
EBBA's Annual Meeting - 1987

EBBA's annual meeting was held May 28-31, 1987, at Utica College of Syracuse University, in Utica, New York. It was a joint meeting with the Wilson Ornithological Society.

Since EBBA's President Fred Schaeffer was unable to attend, First Vice-President Donald Schwab presided over EBBA's council meeting and business meeting.

The photographs below are (1) Don Schwab speaking at the annual banquet; (2) Kathy Klimkiewicz from the Bird Banding Laboratory explaining her workshop bird skin display to Gale Smith, Net Committee Chairman; (3) Dr. Robert Yunick at his molt workshop; (4) Dr. Robert Merritt receiving his honorary EBBA membership. Bob served as EBBA's net committee chairperson for many years.

1)



2)



3)



4)



THE MEMORIAL GRANT FUND

Over 25 years ago, EBBA established a Memorial Grant Fund to recognize departed members and friends. Income from that endowment has been used annually to make student awards for ornithological research projects which use bird banding as part of the study. Income has grown so that up to \$500 has been designated by Council for distribution by the Memorial Grant Committee in 1988.

If you want to remember a departed bander or birder friend, or simply wish to contribute to the support of student research in ornithology, send your tax-deductible check to EBBA's treasurer, Donald Mease. Added income from the Fund will be used in the future to increase the number or amount of these competitive awards.

Red Knots on West Coast of Florida

Stanley and Annette Stedman
1156 Casey Key Road
Nokomis, Florida 33555

We met up with Red Knots (*Calidris canutus*) on the west coast of Florida in January 1979, tallying some 6500+ on the 23rd after several days of severe northwest winds (*Florida Field Naturalist* 8(1):20-21, 1980). They were present for several days by the thousands. Red Knots are a unique shorebird in their habit of feeding and resting in a close knit group, moving like a moving carpet, making them relatively easy to count.

According to Brian Harrington of Manomet Bird Observatory, Manomet, MA, pioneer in Red Knot research, the Florida birds are a relict population and little understood. In January 1981, the Manomet team (International Shorebird Surveys) came to Florida to study this population and we were privileged to work with them on Longboat Key (Sarasota County). The loafing site of the Knots was located after two days of scanning the gulf coast from Naples to Crystal River by air, flying at low levels.

Cannon rocket nets were used and were put in place on the selected site in the early morning of January 5th, before the Knots assembled at their habitual loafing area at low tide. The Knots came but were not within rocket range, finally dispersing to feed by midafternoon — try again tomorrow.

On the 6th, all set again. About midday, Brian Harrington "walked" the Knots within range of the net (40 × 60 ft) and the charge was set off. With a loud boom the net was sprung and we had some 250 Knots, a few Sanderlings, Black Skimmers, and one Black-bellied Plover. Then the team and volunteers (7 members) got down on hands and knees in the sand, reaching under the net, and began carefully removing the birds. Large cardboard boxes holding about 15 birds each were set up to contain them until processed. One of our captured Knots was wearing a band and was useful in correctly evaluating plumage changes in ageing. The work van was loaded with the boxes of birds and driven to a shady place on the beach where our assembly line was formed.

Stan removed the bird from the box and passed it to me. I placed the band on the left tibia just above the heel. Then a narrow band of red plastic sticking

tape was placed around the band leaving streamers about ½" long to form a flag. Stainless steel bands were used, being more resistant to corrosion than the regulation U.S. Fish & Wildlife band. They were more difficult to apply than the standard band we always use, necessitating an extra step to make the final closing with another type of pliers.

The bird was then passed to Brian Harrington or his assistant, whoever was open and ready, simultaneously calling out the band number. They measured tarsus, bill, wing; made note of stage of molt of certain feathers, and weighed the bird, talking this information into a recorder. The bird was then passed to the photographer who photographed certain areas of plumage for future study. The next step was to paint specific areas with a yellow picric dye, after which the bird was placed in a cardboard box until the dye had time to set. When sufficient time had elapsed, the box was carried to the gulf beach and the birds were released. During the banding operation, Brian Harrington detailed the full scope of the program (which has taken him and his crew from James Bay to Tierra del Fuego) to a reporter for the local newspaper.

Time ran out and darkness overcame our primitive lighting facilities so some of the procedures were dropped. The final birds were banded, dyed, and released. At about 7 p.m., Stan and I staggered to our car and drove the twenty-five miles home. The rest of the crew had the equipment to round up and pack after we departed.

The third rocket shot was launched on 10 January. A miscue resulted in a small catch, only 25-30 birds. There were some 900 Knots in place but Brian wanted to "cut out" part of the flock, as such a large number could never be processed by our crew. One "yellow" bird was recaptured. The same procedure was followed as on 6 January.

Another shot was planned for the 12th but some unknown condition caused the Knots to bypass their usual loafing site and they flew by in huge flocks, offshore and high in the sky. We waited until 5:30 p.m. but did not capture any. A great deal was learned on this project.