

1988

## Inland Regional News

North American Bird Bander

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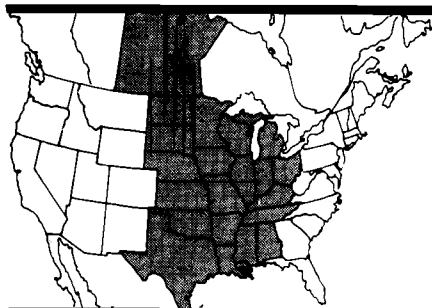
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# Inland Regional News

## Inland Bird Banding Association

Founded 1922

### INFLUX OF CLAY-COLORED SPARROWS A SURPRISE

Since we began banding in 1981, the highest number of individuals banded during any calendar year was 1,961. For the first half of 1988, we have banded 2,558. As exemplified by the following table, the primary reason for the increase has been an unprecedented number of wintering sparrows:

Species	#Banded "81-'87	Largest Annual Total	#Banded 1988
Chipping Sp.	59	25	407
Lincoln's Sp.	497	119	340
Field Sp.	787	147	201
Clay-colored Sp.	37	14	166

The reason for our station suddenly rising in favor with the North American sparrow population is unknown. We used the same amount of seed at the feeder-traps as usual. We did prolong our use because of the large populations around the station. Clay-colored Sparrows carried until May 9, when the last individuals were banded. There were no new net replacements of significance. We had anticipated a large number of Chipping Sparrows at some time, since they winter in irregular and large aggregates about our Central Texas region. Our number, shall we say, finally came up. We were mildly surprised, however, by the sudden jump in the numbers of Lincoln's and Field Sparrows over their erstwhile stable levels. What we have never anticipated, however, was the remarkable influx of Clay-colored Sparrows. We banded only 2 last year and have completely missed them on another year in the past. To suddenly have clouds of buzzing Clay-colored was quite fascinating.

#### Ten most commonly banded species:

1. Chipping Sparrow	407
2. Lincoln's Sparrow	340
3. Field Sparrow	201
4. Clay-colored Sparrow	166
5. Cedar Waxwing	123
6. Northern Cardinal	119
7. Black-chinned Hummingbird	94
8. American Goldfinch	89
9. Least Flycatcher	65
10. Painted Bunting	56

#### New species banded

1. Northern Parula
2. Yellow-throated Warbler

#### New species recorded for the station

1. Osprey
2. Northern Parula
3. Yellow-throated Warbler

Of particular note was the successful rearing of at least three Gray Fox kits this spring. We found their den in the cliff overlooking the "creek" which meanders through the center of the station. While watching three kits playfully tumble over each other, chew on each other's ears (as well as blades of grass in the vicinity), I fully expected Jim Fowler to pop out from behind the nearest juniper. He didn't.

Don Connell, M.D., P. O. Box 39, Driftwood, Texas 78619.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The above is an excerpt from the Driftwood Wildlife Association, Mid-year Report of bird banding at Driftwood, 1/1/88 - 6/30/88.

### DEXTER RECEIVES 50-YEAR CERTIFICATE

Dr. Ralph W. Dexter, Kent, Ohio, was issued a federal bird banding permit, #5789, on December 2, 1938. He is a member of Inland Bird Banding Association, and is, therefore, eligible to receive the 50-year Certificate of Appreciation.

Those of us who know Ralph are familiar with his study of Chimney Swifts which are found in the air shafts of buildings on the Kent State University campus. The study began in 1944 and from that time until 1983, he has banded 2813 Chimney Swifts. Of these 488 (17.5%) returned at least once. The number of returns for an individual ranged from one to thirteen. He has a fourteen-year life history of a Chimney Swift, which is the longevity record for the species.

In addition to the Chimney Swift, Ralph has carried on banding studies of the House Sparrow (He holds the longevity record for it - thirteen years), Evening Grosbeak, Common Nighthawk, and Herring Gull. The total number of birds banded in his 50 years of activity is approximately 9,000 birds of about 100 species.

The data gathered has been shared with others. Dr. Dexter's total number of papers published on the Chimney Swift is 27, his principal paper being published in the *Ohio Journal of Science* 69:193-213, 1969. He has plans to update this paper. Total number of papers published on other banding studies is seventeen. He regularly presents papers at the IBBA annual conferences. Ralph is now busy writing up an account of his 40 years of banding Chimney Swifts, to be published later.

Born in Gloucester, Massachusetts, Dr. Dexter received his B.S. in Zoology at Uni-

versity of Massachusetts in 1934, and his Ph.D. in Zoology at University of Illinois in 1938. He has served on the faculty of Kent State University, Department of Biological Sciences from 1932 until his retirement in 1982. He taught ecology, ornithology, field zoology, and the history of biology.

He became interested in bird banding through his predecessor at Kent State University, Professor Ethel Gowans in 1938.

Dr. Dexter was elected the Outstanding Faculty Member, 1957; received the Kent State University President's Medal for Distinguished Service, 1977.

Ralph told me about an exciting event relating to his banding activities. "Following the 1970 incident when the ROTC building was burned and the National Guard shot four students during a demonstration, the campus was closed for the season, and the police kept a close watch for further trouble. One night they spotted me moving about on the roof of a campus building with a flashlight, setting Chimney Swift traps. Suddenly, I turned around and was faced by a semi-circle of police with drawn revolvers. I was scared, and so were they".

Ralph is not only interested in birds and banding, but also the history of 19th Century American naturalists, especially the students of Louis Agassiz, and he has published 139 papers on the history of science.

Dexter has two children, five grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. His wife Jean Westwater of Danville, Illinois passed away in 1984.

Ralph has always been an active member of IBBA, having served as vice-president 1954-1963. He is also a member of Ohio Bird Banding Association, American Ornithologists' Union, Wilson Ornithological Society, Association of Field Ornithology, and many other organizations.

Few Members have contributed such a wealth of bird banding data to the study of ornithology as Dr. Ralph W. Dexter. We are proud to present to him a 50-year Certificate of Appreciation.

Willettta Lueshen

## NEWS ABOUT MEMBERS

DR. NORMAN F. SLOAN remains hospitalized following a stroke in February, 1986. Correspondence, which is greatly appreciated, may be sent to him at Room 350, Houghton County Medical Care Facility, Hancock, Michigan 49930.

JAMES TATE, Life Member, IBBA, is now a member of the branch of the Listing and Recovery in the Division of Endangered species and Habitat Conservation of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C.

DAN VARLAND, IBBA member, is a doctoral student at Iowa State University, Ames. He will be studying post-fledging movements and parental investment of American Kestrels along interstate highways. Varland will be using nest boxes in Story and Hamilton Counties as the focus of his study which will encompass the next three field seasons. We wish him well in his endeavor.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Have you volunteered to assist with the Project FeederWatch, which was launched by Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and Long Point Bird Observatory, and sponsored by *Bird Watcher's Digest*?

It's easy and lots of fun. Computer-readable data forms with instructions are sent to all who enroll. The annual fee is \$9.00. All participants will receive *Feeder-Watch News*, which is published biannually.

To obtain meaningful counts, more observers are needed, especially in the central states. For example, less than half of the number needed in Nebraska have enrolled.

The first year count has resulted in some excellent data. The bird species most abundant at North American feeders during the winter of 1987-88 are listed below, along with the percentage of feeders visited: Dark-eyed Junco - 87; Pine Siskin - 65; House Sparrow - 64; Black-capped Chickadee - 57; American Goldfinch - 56; Downy Woodpecker - 52.

Will the numbers be similar in 1988-89? What species will be most frequently seen at feeders ten years from now? In 2025? Obviously it will be several years before trends can be identified. As Project Feeder-Watch continues, a data base will be built that can be used to answer numerous questions.

The greater the number of participants the more accurate the data will be. Send your registration fee (\$9.00) to Project FeederWatch, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850.

## CANADA TO HAVE CAPTIVE WHOOPING CRANES

The United States recovery team for the Whooping Crane approved draft criteria for establishing a captive whooping crane flock within Canada. All birds and eggs will remain the property of the Canadian and U. S. Governments, which will be responsible for use or disposition of the birds. The site must be funded by non-Federal money. Groups that might be interested in housing the flock will be canvassed and invited to apply.

Objectives of the facility will be to increase the numbers of birds and eggs for release into the wild, reduce the chance of an epizootic destroying the captive breeding program, afford Canadians an opportunity to view Whooping Cranes, and allow Canada to participate more actively in the captive propagation program. The goal is to have the first Whooping Crane on site by 1990.

## LINGLE CHOSEN NACWG CHIEF

Gary A. Lingle, Grand Island, Nebraska, IBBA member, has been chosen as Chief Executive Officer of the newly formed North American Crane Working Group (NACWG). NACWG is an organization of professional biologists, aviculturists, land managers, and other interested parties dedicated to the conservation of cranes and their habitats in North America. Gary is also the editor of the NACWG's newsletter, *The Unison Call*. An annual contribution of \$5.00 will place you on the membership list to receive the newsletter. Make your check payable to NACWG, and send to Gary at 2550 N. Diers Ave., Suite H, Grand Island, Nebraska 68803. The premier issue is due out in the fall of 1988. Gary will welcome items for the newsletter.

## PUBLICATIONS PERUSALS

*Waterfowl in Winter.* Milton W. Weller, Editor. 1988. University of Minnesota Press, 2037 University Avenue, S.E., Minneapolis, MN 55414. 624pp. \$19.95 paper; \$49.50 cloth.

This volume - the result of a symposium held in Galveston, Texas in 1985 - offers ample evidence of the knowledge gained through research concerning migratory and wintering activities of waterfowl. Waterfowl biologists, 105 in number, have contributed 47 chapters on many subjects. They include productive and social behavior, community and feeding ecology, weights, molts, habitat selection and population status. Literature cited at the close of each chapter is extensive. Numerous graphs, charts, and tables, accompany the reports. Names and addresses of the more than 100 contributors are listed.

*Hummingbirds.* Photographs by Tony Keppelman. Forward by Roger Tory Peterson. 1988. New York Geographic Society Books, Little Brown and Company, 205 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 19916. 12"x12". 88pp. 34 color illustrations. \$40.00.

With the use of a strobe light Keppelman shows hummingbirds frozen in flight in a wide range of positions. His excellent photographs reveal a new dimension of the birds. Thirty-three full-page photographs in color show numerous poses of several species. Species included are Black-chinned, Black-throated, Broad-billed, Broad-tailed, Rivoli, Ruby-throated, and Violet-crowned Hummingbirds. The reproduction of their vibrant colors is very good.

*The Life of Birds.* Fourth Edition. By Joel Carl Welty and Luis Baptista. 1988. (1982, 1975, 1962) Saunders College Publishing, Washington Square, Philadelphia, PA 19105. 720pp. \$57.50.

This textbook is directed toward the general student, not the specialist. For the most part, it can be read and understood by the reader without special preparation. It deals with the natural history of birds. The Authors' aims are to present, simply and straightforwardly, the basic facts of bird biology, and to arouse in the reader, a lasting fascination for birds. Frequent revisions of this text are necessary because there is constant research, and new findings, in the study of birds. The late Dr. Welty was a member of IBBA for many years.

*An Eagle to the Sky.* By Frances Hamerstrom. 1970. Second printing 1988. Nick Lyons Books, 31 West 21 Street, New York, NY 10010. 144pp. \$10.95 paper.

Long out of print, it is good to see this delightful story republished. Frances Hamerstrom has devoted much of her lifetime to the study and care of birds of prey. This story tells of her experiences with two Golden Eagles - the happy moments, the stressful moments. The author has a keen sense of humor, and all who read this charming book will become acquainted with her. Her love for wildlife is loudly portrayed. Fran is a member of Inland Bird Banding Association, and has banded birds for The United States Fish and Wildlife for more than 50 years.

Willettta Lueshen

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Does anyone have BIRD SLIDES that you would like to donate for educational purposes? If so, contact Willettta Lueshen, Route 2, Box 26, Wisner, NE 68791, or call collect 402-529-6679.

## RAPTOR STUDIES IN MANITOBA CONTINUE

More than 20 years of field work has been conducted on the Great Gray Owl in southwestern Manitoba. More than 630 owls have been banded and 75 have been radio-marked since 1984. Current efforts focus on daily and annual movement patterns, territoriality, family dispersal and habitat use throughout the year. This information is critical for the development of management guidelines for the species in response to habitat losses caused by peat mining, deforestation for agricultural purposes and for forest clearcutting.

Studies continue on Burrowing Owls and Ferruginous Hawks in southwestern Manitoba. Research in 1988 will include monitoring of nests, banding of young, an owl transplant and release, and artificial structure placement and monitoring. Some funding is also available for lease negotiations with farmers to ensure that habitat critical to owls and hawks is secure.

### BANDERS INVITED TO PUBLISH

All banders are invited to send informal reports of returns, recoveries, and unusual captures to the editor for publication. Announcements, news about members, or any tid-bits of interest to banders are welcome. Photographs, in either color, or black-and-white, having good contrast, as well as art (pen and ink drawings preferred) are wanted. Please send to:

WILLETTA LUESHEN, EDITOR  
INLAND BIRD BANDING NEWSLETTER  
ROUTE 2, Box 26  
WISNER, NEBRASKA 68791

All scientific papers should be sent to:

DAN KRAMER, EDITOR  
NORTH AMERICAN BIRD BANDER  
3451 Co. Road 256  
VICTORY, OHIO 43464

### SURPRISE PACKAGE AVAILABLE

IBBA has numerous reprints on hand, which may be distributed to members. There are too few copies of each to list them. A package of 6-8 reprints will be sent to anyone who sends \$2.00 to cover postage and handling to IBBA, Route 2, Box 26, Wisner, NE 68791. Papers include such topics as age and sex determination, trap patterns, collecting data, checklists, etc.

\* \* \*

WHITEFISH POINT OBSERVATORY and Bird Banding Station is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year. Congratulations! For information write to WPBO, c/o Michigan Audubon Society, 409 West E Avenue, Kalama-zoo, Michigan 49007.

## NOTICES

Deter trespassers and vandals by posting your property with a banding station poster. It is 19" x 12", with black weather-proof ink on white Texoprint - tough and durable. "U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE BIRD BANDING STATION". Illustrated with stylized goose. For photo of poster, send self addressed stamped envelop. Five posters will be sent postpaid for \$11.00. Send order to Willetta Lueshen, Route 2, Box 26, Wisner, NE 68791.

A *Bird Bander's Guide to Determination of Age and Sex of Selected Species*, by Merrill Wood, Second Edition revised by Wood and Donald Beimborn, is available from Afton Press, 3630 Glenhurst S. St., St. Louis Park, Minnesota 54416 for \$9.95 postpaid in U. S. Funds.

Avoid a rear end collision by placing *Caution Bird Watcher Driving* on your rear bumper. Bumper sticker is available from Jane Dunlap, Route 3, Box 172, Norfolk, NE 68701 for \$1.75 each ppd.

Cavity-nesting birds, such as bluebirds, wrens, and tree swallows, are easily captured in the nest box by using the Bauldry trap. A package of three Bauldry traps, along with instructions, is available for \$6.00 ppd. from IBBA, Route 2, Box 26, Wisner, NE 68791. Make check payable to IBBA.

Also available from the above address are patterns for the Bauldry trap, and for the Bauldry artificial nest cavity, designed to keep out raccoons and house sparrows. State pattern desired. A donation to cover printing and mailing costs will be appreciated.

Anyone wishing to purchase an IBBA arm patch may contact Allen E. Valentine, 17403 Oakington Court, Dallas, Texas 75252.

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"KIRTLAND'S WARBLER AT THE CROSSROADS--Extinction or Survival" is the title of a national symposium designed to provide information to wildlife biologists, researchers, and the interested public, 9-11 Feb., 1989. For information contact Kenneth R. Ennis, USDA Forest Service, 421 S. Mitchell St., Cadillac, MI 49601 (616-779-8715).

THE WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY will meet 25-28 May, 1989 at St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana. Contact Doris J. Watt, Dept. of Biology, St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, IN 46556 (219-284-4668).

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## TENTH ANNIVERSARY RECOGNIZED

Congratulations, *Bird Watcher's Digest*! You have provided thousands of birders with hours of good reading, which is both informative and fun. With your impressive list of contributing editors and columnists, your next decade will be even better. Thankyou for adding to the joys of birding.

## CRANES AND PEOPLE VISIT PLATTE

Thousands of people from many parts of the world visit the Platte River Valley of Nebraska during the month of March. They are there to see the 400,000 to 500,000 Sandhill Cranes. All have great hopes they might see a Whooping Crane, which may be seen among the Sandhills. The birds are easily observed in the fields as one drives the country roads. Each evening they come to the river to roost. This magnificent flight may be seen from one of the several blinds available to the public.

Special events, some entertaining, some educational, are planned to take place March 11 through 18, 1989 at the cities of Kearney and Grand Island, at Fort Kearny State Historical Park, Lillian Annette Rowe Audubon Sanctuary, and other places.

George Archibald, Director, International Crane Foundation, Baraboo, Wisconsin, will be a speaker at Grand Island March 18th.

At the time this goes to press details of plans have not been completed. To receive full information contact Gary Lingle, 2550 N. Diers Ave., Suite H, Grand Island, Nebraska 68803 (308-384-4633), or Kearney Chamber of Commerce (800-652-9435), or Ken Strom, Manager, Lillian Annette Rowe Audubon Sanctuary, Route 2, Box 112-A, Gibbon, Nebraska 68840 (308-236-7574). Also Willie Lueshen will give assistance if you call 402-529-6679.

## REPRINTS WANTED

Are your raptor reprints taking up too much space and gathering dust? The U. S. Bureau of Land Management would like to add them to the Raptor Management Information System, or to its General Raptor Reprint File. In return, you receive an appropriate amount of free use of the computerized systems.

For details, write to Butch Olendorff, U. S. Bureau of Land Management, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825 (Ph: 916-978-4725). If you are interested just in using the extensive literature retrieval capability of the RMIS, write, or call, for a free brochure.

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ALL IBBA MEMBERS WHO ARE BANDERS are requested to submit 1988 summaries of your banding activities. Please send total birds banded, total species, number of returns, recoveries, longevity records, and all interesting or unusual records. Share your experiences with other members, and send to Editor, Willetta Lueshen, R. 2, Box 26, Wisner, NE 68791.

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CORRECTION: *Birds of Canada*, by W. Earl Godfrey, and illustrated by John A. Crosby and S. D. MacDonald, was published by The National Museum of Natural Sciences of Canada. It is distributed by The University of Chicago Press, 5801 Ellis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60637, except in Canada. To place an order send \$39.50 to The University of Chicago Press, or call 800-621-2736.