

1988

Inland Regional News

North American Bird Bander

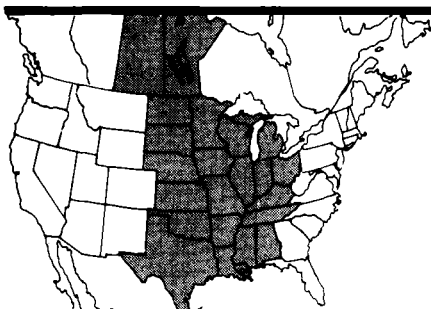
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Inland Regional News

Inland Bird Banding Association

Founded 1922

GNATCATCHER BANDED AFTER 55 YEARS

On May 14-16, 1988 I attended the Annual Meeting of the the Illinois Audubon Society, which was held at White Pines State Park near Oregon, Illinois.

I took along one 32 ft. mist net and set it up just outside my cabin door. During the three-day meeting I was able to have the nets open for short periods. In that time I captured 15 birds, as follows: Gray Catbird (1), Northern Cardinal (3), American Redstart (2), Northern Waterthrush (1), Ovenbird (1), Mourning Warbler (1), House Wren (2), Indigo Bunting (all males) (3). And last of all, but most exciting, was an adult male Blue-gray Gnatcatcher.

In fifty-five years of banding this is the only Blue-gray Gnatcatcher I have ever captured. This brought my grand total of species and subspecies banded, according to the old A.O.U. Checklist, to 190.

This total includes some unusual species, which escaped from a restaurant near me. They include a Sennett's Titmouse, Gray-headed Junco, and Pink-sided Junco. I also caught a Brazilian Cardinal (now called Red-crested Cardinal). The cardinal was given to Richard Hogar, who operates a rehabilitation center, as I knew the bird could not endure our harsh winters.

Karl E. Bartel, 2528 W. Collins Street,
Blue Island, Illinois 60406

BIRD BOOKS MAY BE SOLD

Do you have a bird book you wish to sell, or give away? Or, do you have ornithological journals to sell, or trade? If so, send a brief note for publication in *Inland Bird Banding Newsletter*.

Do you wish to obtain a particular bird book, or an issue, or volume, of an ornithological journal? For assistance in buying, selling, trading, or giving away ornithological publications, contact Willetta Lueshen, Editor, *Inland Bird Banding Newsletter*, Route, 2, Box 26, Wisner, NE 68791.

WANTED: *Wilson Bulletin*, 1975, Volume 87, the issue that includes pages 241-247. Dave Stage, P. O. Box 354, Lural, NE 68745.

FOR SALE OR TRADE: *Hunting Wild Life with Camera and Flashlight*, Volumes I and II. By George Shiras, 3d. National Geographic Society, Wash., D.C. Second Edition, 1936 (First Ed., 1935). Inscribed by author. Good condition. Make offer. Willetta Lueshen, Route 2, Box 26, Wisner, NE 68791. Ph: 402-529-6679.

NOTICES

Are trespassers and vandals causing you problems? They can be discouraged by posting your property with a banding station poster. It is 19" x 12", with black weatherproof ink on white Texoprint - tough, durable and flexible. "U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE BIRD BANDING STATION." Illustrated with stylized goose. For photo, send self addressed stamped envelop. Five posters will be sent ppd. 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 Don Beimborn, is available from Afton Press, 3630 Glenhurst S. St., St. Louis Park, MN 54416, for \$9.95 ppd. in U. S. Funds.

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

IBBA arm patches are embroidered in several colors. Price \$1.75 each ppd. Make check payable to IBBA. Send with order to Al Valentine, 17403 Oakington Ct., Dallas, Texas 75252.

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 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 same 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. Make check payable to IBBA.

NOTICE

Donald H. Wilkins, formerly of Ballston Spa, New York, has retired and is living at Route 4, Box 437C, Park Rapids, Minnesota 56470 (PH: 218-732-3821). He is starting a new bluebird trail at his new location, and is interested in contacting other banders who are working with bluebirds, Tree Swallows, or Purple Martins. He states that after having empty martin houses for twenty-six years in New York, he is pleased to now have the start of what may eventually be a fairly respectable martin colony.

Banders who are working with these species are requested to contact Don Wilkins at the above address.

PUBLICATIONS PERUSALS

Hawks in Flight. By Pete Dunne, David Sibley, and Clay Sutton. 1988. Houghton Mifflin Company, Two Park Street, Boston, MA 02108. 254pp. \$17.95.

Because field marks and sizes vary, hawks are difficult to identify. Pete Dunne recommends that these birds should first be studied from a distance, noting general body shape, the way they hold their wings and move. Geographic location, habitat, and season are important clues. David Sibley's drawings, and Clay Sutton's photographs help the reader to learn to identify each of the 23 species of diurnal raptors seen over North America. Hawk identification skills will be developed quickly if this book is used. While studying hawks one should also use *A Field Guide to Hawks*, by Clark and Wheeler, and also published by Houghton Mifflin Co.

Waterfowl: An Identification Guide to the Ducks, Geese, and Swans of the World. By Steven Madge. 1988. Houghton Mifflin Company, Two Park St., Boston MA 02108. 298pp. \$35.00.

This is the third book in the series of worldwide identification guides. Preceding books are *Seabirds* and *Shorebirds*. This will be useful to hunters and artists, as well as birders. It covers 150 species of ducks, geese, and swans. All major plumage changes are illustrated in full color. There are 48 color plates and 150 maps. The text discusses voice, population, distribution, range, habits, and habitat. This scientifically accurate information has been compressed into an easy-to-read format.

The Complete Birder: A Guide to Better Birding. By Jack Connor. 1988. Houghton Mifflin Company, Two Park Ave., Boston, MA 02108. 285pp. Cloth \$17.95; paper \$8.95.

Recognizing the birder's need for help beyond the field guides, Jack Connor has put together suggestions for choosing binoculars and other equipment, and how to use it. He has offered help in mastering the most difficult groups - warblers, hawks, shorebirds, gulls, and terns. Tables and charts make this book easy to use and will help the reader upgrade his field skills.

Handbook of North American Birds, Volume 4, Diurnal Raptors, Part 1, and Volume 5, Diurnal Raptors, Part 2. Edited by Ralph S. Palmer. 1988. Yale University Press, New Haven, CT. 433pp., Vol. 4; 465pp., Vol. 5. \$40.00 each volume.

These two volumes, written in lay language, are devoted to the physical appearance and life cycle of the condor, vultures, kites, eagles, hawks, falcons, and allies that have occurred naturally in North America. The authors have provided diagnostic information on each species, including both sexes at all ages and in all seasons. Of special interest to IBBA members is the banding data for each species. Written in a non-technical language, these volumes are a valuable reference source for all.

A Guide to Bird Finding in Kansas and Western Missouri. By John Zimmerman and Sebastian T. Patti. 1988. University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66045. 244pp. Cloth \$22.50; paper \$9.95.

Birding opportunities in Kansas and Western Missouri are abundant. The authors point out some of the many birding places, describing exactly how to reach each, and what birds will be found at each location, and in each season. Habitat and road conditions are described. The numerous maps of the wildlife

areas give details. A checklist of the birds of the region is given. Robert M. Mengel's drawings are excellent.

Handbook of the Birds of Europe the Middle East and North Africa: The Birds of the Western Palearctic. Volume V, Tyrant Flycatchers to Thrashers. Chief Editor, Stanley Cramp. 1988. Oxford University Press, 200 Madison Ave., NY 10016. 1080 pp. \$175.00.

This, the first of three volumes on passerines, covers the whole of Western Palearctic, which includes all of Europe, together with the Middle East, including Turkey, Iraq, and Jordan, and Africa south to 19 degrees N. For each breeding species a description, habitat, distribution, mortality, longevity, behavior, breeding, food, weight, and measurements are given. Color plates show full range of plumage of each species. W. L.

STUDENT IN SPAIN WANTS CORRESPONDENCE

Following is a letter to Inland Bird Banding Association, which was received recently. Are there any members who would like to reply?

Coordinator:

I am a student of ornithology and do field work in Catalonia (northeastern Spain). As a naturalist I am very interested in keeping correspondence with anybody of your organization, to exchange information about birds and the natural resources that exist in the U. S. A.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Joaquim Badia Rodriguez
Rambla Bisbe Pol No. 63
B8350 Arenys De Mar
Barcelona
Espana.

CONGRESS TO MEET IN NEW ZEALAND

The 20th International Ornithological Congress will take place in Christchurch, New Zealand, on 2-9 December, 1990. The Congress program will include 6 plenary lectures, 48 symposia, contributed papers, workshops, discussion groups, and films. There will be a mid-Congress excursion day. Longer excursions are planned to ornithological sites before and after the Congress. For further information contact Dr. Ben D. Bell, Secretary-General, 20th International Ornithological Congress, Dept. of Zoology, Victoria University of Wellington, Private Bag, Wellington, New Zealand.

THE 50th MIDWEST FISH AND WILDLIFE CONFERENCE will be held December 4-7, 1988 at the University Inn, Columbus, Ohio, with the Ohio State University and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife as the hosts.

The theme of the 50th Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference is "Fifty Years of Fish and Wildlife Problems, Programs, Progress".

For further information contact James M. Keener, Chairman, Arrangements Committee, ODNR, Division of Wildlife, Fountain Square, C-4, Columbus, Ohio 43224

DRIFTWOOD BANDERS HAVE GOOD YEAR

The Driftwood Wildlife Association near Driftwood, Texas, has generously offered to share the annual bird banding report with others. The 1987 report contains excellent and exciting data and stories, some of which appear here. Members of this energetic bird banding crew are Greg Lasley, Becky Lasley, Ann Connell, David Connell, Don Connell, Steve Janda, Mike McElveen, Kathy McElveen, Sarah Connell, Nancy Newfield, Skip Newfield, Dan Laney, Bob Barth, Jane Wilshusen, Pete Wilshusen, Maydelle Vason, Georgean Kyle, and Paul Kyle.

HIGHLIGHTS

January 1987 was highlighted by two individual birds; our first Sage Thrasher and our second American Woodcock. As in previous years, American Woodcocks (approximately one dozen) displayed during the month along the floodplain of Onion Creek. Wintering sparrows were seen in usual numbers.

Spring migration was rather weak again this year. This was particularly true in the area of warblers and vireos. Of the 22 species of warblers and vireos banded, 11 were represented by only one or two individuals. A couple of factors, we postulate, were primarily responsible. First, we had three straight nights of 27 degrees F weather during late March. This killed approximately 90% of the new growth on the trees and decimated the mulberry crop. Secondly, there were no significant rains during the peak of bird movements. The lack of mulberries on the trees was best exemplified by banding only 5 (as compared to a usual average of 80 to 100) Cedar Waxwings. The lack of storms was best shown by banding only 31 Nashville Warblers as opposed to the usual of 80 to 100.

There have been numerous reports, both objective and subjective, of the decline in small songbird numbers over the past few decades. The reasons for this observation; cowbird population explosion, habitat destruction in North, South, and Central America, have been postulated and are undoubtedly true to some extent. Since we have a rather small and new station, we cannot add much to the objective collection of data. We have, however, prepared the following table of the results we have obtained to date. For the collection of the data, Spring Migration has been arbitrarily defined as March 15 to May 31. It is during this period that we do the bulk of our work.

Warblers in Spring Migration at DWA

Year	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
Total number	213	220	254	115	207	108
Days banded	42	34	35	37	33	41
Net-hours	----	----	5430	5450	6840	7390
Warblers/day	5.07	6.47	7.25	3.10	6.27	2.63
Warblers/100 net-hours	----	----	4.67	2.11	3.02	1.46

The trend is obviously downward, hence supporting the general findings across North America. But, because of the small sampling to this date (Dec. 1987), statistical significance is not present. Predictions are that this will be a sad but interesting trend to follow.

Black-chinned Hummingbird Returns

A highlight of the spring and summer was the number of Black-chinned Hummingbird returns. We had 27, representing every year that we have banded hummers.

Year	Individual was banded	# of Returns
1983		2
1984		2
1985		5
1986		18

What is even more amazing is that there may have been an even greater number of returns. The hummer bands have to be hand-fashioned individually. We are, obviously, very careful in placing them on the birds because of the extreme fragility of the legs. It is, to be sure, better to have the band too loose than too tight. A tight band could easily injure the leg of the hummer. One of the returns, X37018, was captured on 04/25/87. I was examining the band for the full number, when the bird withdrew its leg and it slipped--very easily--right out of the band. It had worn the band for a full year--including migration to the west coast of Mexico and back again. Since we "err on the loose side", there may be several birds that are captured each year that have been previously banded. In the preceeding year, their bands may have simply fallen off their legs.

Nest Competition

We had an improbable nesting coincidence in our garage this Spring. On April 18, 1987, a Carolina Wren nest was discovered in a clothes pin bag hanging on a post in the garage. The same bag had been used in previous years by both Bewick's and Carolina Wrens for nesting purposes. When discovered, the wren had three eggs in the nest. Five were laid by April 21, and five young were observed on May 5. They were banded on May 13, and subsequently fledged successfully on May 22. On May 25, a Bewick's Wren was found to have already laid three eggs in the erstwhile Carolina Wren nest. We noticed that the Carolina Wren (presumably the same one) was still in the garage frequently. We discovered her second nest in a toy crate--about 14 feet away--on May 26. She had already laid two eggs by this time. By June 1, the Bewick's Wren was sitting on seven eggs, and the Carolina Wren was sitting on five eggs. The comings and goings of kids and cars seemed no bother. By June 17, the Bewick's was feeding six young, and the Carolina was feeding three. We were unable to find, after a decidedly brief literature search, any records of two species of wrens fledging young from the same nest in succession--not to mention nesting so close to one another simultaneously. Hence, we were watching our garage/maternity ward with great interest. I explained to the Carolina Wren that her second choice of nesting sites, being low and just exposed to an open window, was unwise secondary to snake predation on our station. The happy story of the second nest ended on June 21 when the nest was discovered to be empty--presumably secondary to the aforementioned snakes. The Bewick's Wren went on to fledge five banded young on 06/29.

Purple Martin Foreign Recovery

We had our second foreign recovery reported on June 15 when a male Purple Martin was found dead in a martin house after a storm in Leander, Texas. Leander is about 30 miles and two counties away. He was banded

as a nestling on 06/01/85. While the recovery site is not greatly removed from the banding site, he did get credit for two round trips to Brazil on the DWA Frequent Flyer Program.

Two Longevity Records

According to records from the Bird Banding Laboratory, we established two longevity records with the recaptures this year:

1. Black-chinned Hummingbird X30693
X30700

Both were banded as AHY (after hatching year) birds in the Spring of 1983, which makes them at least four years, nine months old. We assume these are records for the Bird Banding Laboratory, since none have been published for this species by them previously.

2. Summer Tanager 951-00193

It was banded as an ASY (after second year) bird in the Spring of 1982. This makes it at least seven years, one month old. The previous longevity record was six years, no months.

Fall Highlight

The highlight of the Fall was the capture of our first Great Horned Owl. It was caught in a net stretched across Onion Creek, which was mostly dry at the time. There is nothing subtle about dealing with an adult Great Horned Owl.

Two non-avian vertebrates were captured this year in the nets. Both were released unharmed:

1. Red Bat
2. Red-eared Slider (That's a turtle for those of you not up on your herps.) It was captured in a net that was caught in a flooded creek.

Most commonly Banded Species

1987

1. Northern Cardinal	191
2. Black-chinned Hummingbird	147
3. Field Sparrow	113
4. American Goldfinch	84
5. Lincoln's Sparrow	70
6. Ruby-crowned Kinglet	69
7. Least Flycatcher	61
8. Purple Martin	53
9. Painted Bunting	52
10. Nashville Warbler	50
10. Slate-colored Junco	50

1981 through 1987

1. Field Sparrow	787
2. Nashville Warbler	744
3. Northern Cardinal	712
4. American Goldfinch	516
5. Lincoln's Sparrow	487
6. Ruby-crowned Kinglet	462
7. Black-chinned Hummingbird	414
8. Cedar Waxwing	364
9. Least Flycatcher	341
10. American Robin	291

DR. H. ALBERT HOCHBAUM, who was director of Delta Waterfowl Research Station in Manitoba, Canada, 1938-1970, died at the age of 77, on March 2, 1988. While director at Delta 95 students conducted thesis research, several of whom are members of Inland Bird Banding Association.

PETTINGILL RETIRES AFTER 60 YEARS

Editor, Willetta Lueshen received a copy of the following correspondence from George Jonkel, Chief, Bird Banding Laboratory to Dr. Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr., and with permission it is being shared with members. The comments in reference to changes in BBL regulations are of special interest.

April 19, 1988

Dr. O. S. Pettingill, Jr. #3774
P. O. Box 97
Wayne, NE 04284

Dear Olin,

Thankyou for the letter about your banding permit. I understand your reason for bowing out of the banding program, but at the same time, it rather saddens me. I have been very proud to have you as a participant in the program for the many years. You started on the Woodcock study and then variously banded at Machia's Seal Island, in Minnesota, and on Falkland Islands. We have a copy of the Woodcock report at home. I keep it there because issues of the report are rather scarce.

We are deferring a bit on inactivation of your permit because, as you will note on the copy of your first permit, it was issued April 30, 1928, therefore we won't inactivate it until May 2, concluding sixty full years of banding participation, which really is appreciated by our office. If you are doing your autobiography, or if a student will be doing your autobiography, I can ship your file to you, or loan it with your permission. There are some interesting items mentioned.

I noticed in the correspondence in your folder that the first auxiliary marking issued to you was very general and probably so because coordination among researchers was not complicated. The wording was "authorized to use colored leg bands and to feather mark birds for sight identification" (3/4/53). Can you imagine the complications of that type of authorization now? In your correspondence I also found something else previously unknown to me. The Service stocked and distributed color bands up to 1949. After that banders purchased their own bands and initially from Massachusetts Audubon in Boston.

We have received the bands that you sent and thank you for returning them. The very best to you.

Sincerely,

George M. Jonkel, Chief
Bird Banding Laboratory

Editor's Note: Thankyou, Dr. Pettingill, for your 60 years of valuable and fruitful service to the study of birds, and for your steadfast membership in IBBA.

Several Other IBBA members who were recognized for 50 years of banding, and who are still banding ten years later are:

Frederick E. Ludwig, MI	Permit #3491
Paul A. Stewart, NC	Permit #3582
Merrill Wood, PA	Permit #3589
Ben B. Coffey, Jr.	Permit #3857
Oliver L. Austin, Jr., FL	Permit #4008
Daniel Smiley, NY	Permit #4039
J. Marshall Magner, MO	Permit #4381