

1989

Eastern Regional News

North American Bird Bander

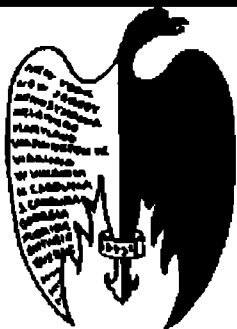
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Recommended Citation

North American Bird Bander (1989) "Eastern Regional News," *North American Bird Bander*. Vol. 14 : Iss. 4 , Article 9.

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Eastern Regional News

Eastern Bird Banding Association

Founded 1923

President's Message

In December, 1989, I accepted an invitation from the Bird Banding Laboratory to represent EBBA at a Bird Banding Workshop which was held at the Bird Banding Lab (BBL) in Patuxent, MD., on January 30 & 31, 1990. In attendance were invited representatives from the regional banding associations, state wildlife agencies, bird rehabilitators, the Canadian Wildlife Service, and the academic community. The meeting began with introductory comments being made by the participants concerning the work of the groups represented, the role of bird banding in achieving each group's objectives, the status of what the present banding system provides, and suggestions of the most important subjects to be discussed at the workshop.

During these introductory comments, I gave a brief outline of the history of and purposes for which EBBA was founded, stated that the banding of birds was essential to our existence, and noted those things such as bands, schedules, and manuals, etc., that the Bird Banding Lab presently provides us. The major suggestions I made concerned the need for the BBL to provide the necessary leadership to establish a more coordinated banding program which would make better use of the available energies and expertise of non-professional banders. I asked for direction from the BBL as to what non-game programs or inquiries our membership should be addressing, and stressed the importance that our membership felt bird banding plays in conservation education.

Following these introductory comments, the remainder of the workshop was spent discussing those topics that the BBL thought were of greatest importance. I will list the major topics discussed with a brief summary of what I felt the general consensus was.

Latin America - It appeared that all participants supported the expansion of banding in Latin America to increase our knowledge of "our" migratory birds on their wintering grounds.

Conservation Education - Most participants supported the belief that bird banding demonstrations played a very positive role in the conservation education of children and adults.

Rehabilitation Banding - Participants were divided on their views concerning the value of banding rehabilitated birds. Discussion also concerned the problems with the coding of these birds on the BBL schedules.

Recreational Banding - It was during this discussion that I objected to the label of recreational bander and also responded to an earlier implication that non-professional banders were unable to work cooperatively. The need for and the value of cooperative studies was a topic mentioned by many of the participants. The role of leadership in the organization of such studies was an issue that solicited varying viewpoints. Some participants felt that the leadership role should be taken by the BBL, while others felt that other organizations (such as EBBA, WBBA, IBBA, AFO, or major banding stations) should provide the needed leadership. All participants seemed in agreement that cooperators (or non-professional banders) were a vital and important part of the banding program in North America. It was also suggested that what was needed was more of these banders, not less.

Bander Training - While not designated as an official topic of discussion, the issue of training new banders was brought up several times. Concern was expressed about the competency of new banders with some suggestions about regional training classes perhaps being introduced at major banding stations.

Banding to Monitor Population Status - David DeSante provided an overview of the MAP (Monitoring Avian Productivity) program which is in its second year of operation. This is an excellent example of a cooperative banding project involving constant effort from banding stations across North America for the long-term biomonitoring of land bird productivity, survivorship and population trends.

Capture-Recapture Technique - The discussion centered around the availability of models or programs for use in capture-recapture studies, and their value in handling the data accumulated in these studies.

It would be impossible to relate all of the topics that were discussed at this workshop in this format, but in addition to those mentioned, time was spent on how the British Trust for Ornithology operates, the Mitchell Amendment and its implications, suggestions for funding (such as fees for banding permits), use of existing data, and others. John Tautin gave a brief statistical report concerning the BBL and banders and suggested the possibility of a more rigorous study of banders. Such a study would be a random sampling to find out what banders do and for what purpose.

This Bird Banding Workshop provided the opportunity to begin a more cooperative relationship between the Bird Banding Labs in the United States and Canada and the people they serve. Only time will tell whether this will become a reality.

Hope to see many of you at the Annual Meeting in Rochester, New York on April 27-29.

Judith Bell

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 1990.

If you want to remember a departed bander or birder friend, or to simply 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.

EBBA's ANNUAL MEETING will take place **27-29 April 1990** at Rochester, New York, hosted by **GENESSEE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY**. There will be workshops on song bird identification, raptor banding, auxiliary marking, and other banding matters; as well as papers on regional ornithology by EBBA and OBBA members. We shall repeat last year's successful bucket raffle and will have equipment displays. Plan to bring yours.

Sunday's field trips will go to Braddock Bay where, weather permitting, there will be hawk watching, hawk banding, and passerine banding in progress. With favorable weather at this time of year, Broad-winged Hawk counts of up to 15,000 in a day are possible at the hawk watch. There will also be waterfowl viewing along Lake Ontario and at Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge.

Watch for your registration form shortly in the mail. A few openings still exist in the program. For information, please contact:

Robert P. Yunick
1527 Myron Street,
Schenectady, New York 12309,
518-377-0146 or at work at 518-370-4200.