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News, Notes, Comments

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and *Living Bird Quarterly*. Several abstractors have not contributed abstracts for a considerable period and have not responded to enquiries as to whether or not they wish to continue their service to *NABB*. We thus assume that they are no longer able to participate and thank Noel J. Cutright, Lawrence R. DeWeese, Elmer J. Finck, Mike Kowalski and Paul E. Stake for their previous contributions. Robert C. Tweit has added some of the journals previously covered by them to his responsibilities: *Condor*, *Journ. Field Ornithol.*, and *Journ. Wildl. Manage.* Abstractors are needed for the following additional journals previously covered by them: *Auk*, *Birding*, *Bird Study*, *British Birds*, *Connecticut Warbler*, *Ecology*, *Jack-*

Pine Warbler, *Kansas Ornithol. Soc. Bull.*, *Kingbird*, *Loon*, *Passenger Pigeon*, *Science*, *Wildlife Monographs*, *Wildlife Soc. Bull.*, and *Wilson Bull.* In addition, exchange copies of *Ornis Fennica* and *Ring* are no longer received. Readers interested in abstracting any of these journals for *NABB* are invited to contact the Literature Editor at 218 First Ave., Toronto, Ontario M4M 1X4, Canada.

A full list of journals abstracted and their current abstractors will be listed in the next issue of *NABB*. The following journals, previously abstracted, no longer exist: *Alta. Bird Record*, *Ont. Field Biol.*, *Inland Bird Banding Newsletter*, and *Syesis*. -M.K.M.

News, Notes, Comments

Documentation of Winter Records of Swainson's Thrush in Ontario

Foy and Foy (1990) reported that a Swainson's Thrush (*Catharus ustulatus*) which they banded in North Carolina on 12 November 1988 was questioned by the U.S. Bird Banding Lab. The bird in question was caught again in both December 1988 and January 1989. Since this species is found further north in Ontario until about 23 October with an extreme fall date of 11 November (James *et al.* 1976), a few late fall stragglers in the southern U.S. states might be expected, as a result of late hatching, injuries, or other factors. However, as the normal winter range of this thrush is in Central and South America (American Ornithologists' Union 1983), lingering into December and January is more unusual. Blom and Wilds (1984) considered all winter records of Swainson's Thrushes in North America as unlikely, as most lack substantiating details, and they knew of no specimen or photographic evidence.

An early March observation of a Swainson's Thrush in Toronto, Ontario in 1984 prompted me to review winter (December through March) records for that province (McNicholl 1985). Apart from my observation and the extreme early spring date of 23 March listed by James *et al.* (1976), I found no winter records outside December. However, I did find 11 or 12 December records (depending on whether sightings at two locations near Ottawa in 1984 involved one or two birds). All but two of these were sight records, and not all were properly documented, but at least four of these records were observations by some of Ontario's top birders, and two records were of birds observed for several days by Alan Wormington, the authority to whom most rarity reports

are sent for critical comment by the editors of *Ontario Birds*. In addition, detailed notes were taken by veteran thrush banders David Agro and David Shepherd of a Swainson's Thrush caught and banded at Long Point on 20 December 1984. Finally, a bird killed by striking a window at Kingsville on 2 December 1976 was identified as a Swainson's Thrush by R. Douglas McRae, who prepared the specimen for the collection of the National Museum of Canada (now Canadian Museum of Natural History). I have not conducted a thorough search of Ontario literature for records since 1984, but a Christmas bird count record of 16 December 1989 near Harrow is listed as being accompanied by "excellent details" and photographed (Pratt 1991).

These records do not detract from the importance of documenting out-of-season occurrences of any species, but do suggest that Swainson's Thrushes prevented for whatever reason from migrating can survive the earlier weeks of winter in at least the milder parts of North America.

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Significant longevity record of a captive-reared Barn Owl

On 13 June 1977, I banded a (HY) 75-day-old Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) (USFWS 576-92279) in Davis, Yolo County, California. The bird was rescued at age 30 days after falling from a palm tree (*Washingtonia filifera*) nest. It was raised in captivity with several other conspecifics of varying ages (20-45 days). A surrogate parent was not used. It was fed dead laboratory mice until 60 days old and then placed in a small flight cage and fed both dead and live mice until 75 days old. The bird was released from a hackbox but did not return after the first night of freedom. The owl was recovered dead along a roadside 13 April 1990 in Stockton, California, 52 miles (84 km) SSE. To my knowledge, this is the longest survival record (12 years, 10 months) of a captive-reared Barn Owl.

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Black-capped Chickadee and Tufted Titmouse Explode

At our backyard-type banding area in SE upstate New York, the chickadees have been feeding in a steady stream from mid-morning to late afternoon since early January 1991. There is a pine tree 15 feet from the porch where we feed. Often the tree is trimmed with chickadees and a miscellany of other birds waiting to come to the feeders.

We participate in winter feeding counts run by the local Audubon Chapter during the first week of each month. Our reports, which are to be the highest number of a species seen at one time, have been between 20 and 30 chickadees and two to four titmice. But the ten pounds of sunflower seed doesn't last a week.

When it was warm enough, the traps were put out. In six hours on one weekend, I trapped and banded 90 Black-capped Chickadees and on the following weekend, I banded 40 more. During this same period, I banded 15 Tufted Titmice.

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Nature at Work

On 4 February 1991, while on a coffee break, I had the opportunity to watch a Sharp-shinned Hawk take from the feeder platform one of the more than 100 Black-capped Chickadees we feed. It flew to my favorite pine tree near the office and on a bare branch proceeded to do what comes naturally for this hawk.

I consider myself fortunate for rarely does one see this sort of event. Many are upset by hawks taking small birds, but this is part of the food chain and surely an important part in nature.

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