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Eastern Regional News

North American Bird Bander

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sometimes occur in front of the eyes of Tundra, not Trumpeter, swans (p. 211). Bohemian Waxwings were named in North America for their erratically wandering behavior, not for "Bohemia" (p. 235); in Europe, the species is known simply as "Waxwing." Since Ivory-billed Woodpeckers never occurred in British Columbia, the natives of Vancouver Island presumably attributed rain-bringing to Pileated Woodpeckers instead (p. 242). The genus name of Canyon Wren is *Catherpes*, not *Salpinctes* (p. 247). Several names and spellings of birds (e.g. "widgeon") and even places (e.g. British Guiana, pp. 61, 82, 224) are very outdated.

In spite of its shortcomings, this interesting book is a worthwhile addition to the libraries of birders and ornithologists. Any future editions would benefit from an index or more thorough cross-referencing and especially from much more thorough proof-reading.

Martin K. McNicholl
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Eastern Regional News

Eastern Bird Banding Association

Founded 1923

President's Message

I would like to begin by thanking David Hauber for his service to EBBA as president during the previous year.

Thirty years ago, then EBBA President Dr. Robert Yunick in his President's Message published in *EBBA NEWS* wrote: "We as banders are aware of many ways to measure various things with various devices. We measure wings with rules, weights with balances, abundances with net-hours, etc. However, when, where and how do we measure ourselves?" He went on to encourage EBBA members to attend the annual meeting to learn better methods and techniques as a way to self improvement.

That message is as appropriate today as it was in 1969. We now have the new Pyle, *BAND MANAGER*, *MAPSPROG*, the North American Banding Council, and the mandates of the Buckley Report. Banding can never be regarded as

"recreational activity" but most of us are not ashamed to admit that it still is incredibly great fun. But along with the joy must come the dedication to constantly improve our techniques and find ways to better organize, analyze, and present the results of our banding. We "self-improve" in many ways—attendance at annual meetings, seeking out more experienced banders for guidance, teaching our skills to others and learning from our students, and encouraging new banders to develop their own research and expertise. We should never be afraid to learn.

Finally, check out EBBA's new website at <http://www.pronetisp.net/~bpbird>
Thanks, Bob Pantle!

Elizabeth W. Brooks

EBBA's 77th Annual Meeting

14 -15 April 2000

Audubon, Pennsylvania

Mark your calendar for the new **millennium**! EBBA's next annual meeting will be held at Audubon, Pennsylvania, the site where Audubon banded the first bird in the United States in the year 1805.

For information about the meeting or if you are interested in giving a presentation, please contact:

Alan Gehret

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Ph. 610-287-4490

e-mail: JJAJostle@AOL.com

RESEARCH AWARDS

The EASTERN BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION seeks applicants for its annual \$500 research awards in aid of research using banding techniques or bird banding data. Applicants should submit a resumé of their banding and ornithological background, the project plan including the significance of the study site, and a budget. No formal application forms are necessary. The deadline is 15 March each year with award announcement 30 April.

Send applications/inquiries to:

Memorial Grants Chairperson

RICHARD N. ROBERTS, EBBA

7212 Fiddler Bay Lane

Chincoteague, Virginia 23336-2017

(e-mail: nroberts@shore.intercom.net).

A Rainy Day EBBA History Lesson

Last fall, while waiting out a day of bad weather at the Kaiser-Manitou Beach Banding Station at Braddock Bay, NY, I found myself house cleaning the boathouse where we store everything from aerial net assemblies to demo Italian nets to tweezers for tick removal to old IMBD posters. Several years earlier, Gerhard Leubner from Rochester, an active EBBA member in the '50s and '60s, had donated his library of *EBBA NEWS*—every issue from 1954 to 1969—to Braddock Bay Bird Observatory. I had never found the time to go through the magazines; now, a rainy day had given me my chance. Once I started, I

couldn't put them down. Here was great reading, a glimpse into two decades of EBBA history, and some of the great names from our past (and some of them still active today)—Jonnie Fisk, Dorothy Bordner, Jean Stull, C. Hapgood Parks, Gladys Cole, Mabel Warburton, Charles Blake, Merrill Wood, Edith Andrews, and many more.

Here are some brief highlights of the years from 1954 to 1969: In 1954, a three-cell Potter trap sold for \$5.50! EBBA had 206 members; membership was \$2.00 a year, and included six issues of the *EBBA NEWS* (which cost three cents each to mail). Mist nets were a controversial, new

innovation, and Malcolm Lerch of Penn Yan wrote "while the use of nets helps immensely, they have to be watched more closely than traps." The Rev. Garrett Ditwiler wrote about the clockwise direction of 4800 starlings in migration in "In defense of the Starling."

In 1955, Ralph Bell reported banding 534 American Robins within 1/4 mile of his home at Clarksville, PA. He advocated using perches in traps (birds struggle less) and noted that elderberry canes make good perches.

In 1956, the annual meeting was at Washington Crossing State Park and a photo shows banders giving blood samples for Dr. Brooke Worth's psittacosis project. And 12 northern New Jersey banders signed a statement that "(mist) nets are more harmful than beneficial" to which E. Alexander Bergstrom, editor of *Bird-Banding* wrote a rebuttal. And in 1956, Chan Robbins banded 505 Purple Finches.

In 1957, Eleanor Dater, of Ramsey, NJ, reported that she had found a good source of mist nets in Japan, selling for \$1.50 each! The annual EBBA banquet was held at the Robert Morris Hotel near Philadelphia. The meal cost \$3.00 "and worth every penny in food, good company, and entertainment." Also in 1957, the first Operation Recovery report was published.

In 1959, Ralph Bell banded more Homed Larks, crows, meadowlarks, martins, Vesper, Savannah, Grasshopper, Chipping, Field and Song sparrows than anyone else.

In 1960, Doug Whitman's beautiful photograph of an American Kestrel graced the cover of one of the issues.

In 1961, Walter Bigger gave tips on finding Eastern Phoebe nests under bridges while avoiding copperheads and rattlesnakes! Bob Leberman reported banding 1092 starlings at Meadville, PA. And the first advertisements for Roger MacDonald's banding pliers appeared (\$5.00 each).

In 1962, the annual meeting was held at the Carroll Villa, in Cape May (\$3.50 per night including breakfast). Ralph Bell reported that between 1954

and 1961, he banded 3653 Barn Swallows (2465 of them HY). Twelve-meter nets now cost \$2.09; 5m (?) 1 1/2" nets cost 89 cents each. E. C. Clyde of Effingham, SC, offered pecan meats (10 lbs for \$3.00) to bait traps.

In 1963, Bob McKinney had 13 Downy Woodpecker returns at his Rochester, NY, backyard station. Edith Andrews reported on a wintering Baltimore Oriole.

In 1964, one issue featured beautiful Black-capped Chickadee sketches by Jean Stull. Jean's exquisite drawings graced many issues of *EBBA NEWS*. John T. Linehan of Delaware reported banding 12,683 cowbirds. And at the annual meeting, Robert Pyle won the prize for correctly identifying the most bird skins.

In 1965, William Pepper wrote a delightful treatise entitled "Problems of a gull bander" or "to run or not to run." Ted Grisez presented a new design for net poles.

In 1966, Janie Olyphant shared her joy at discovering nylon bird bags for sale at Sears & Roebuck for 80 cents each.

In 1967, John Miles and Harold K. MacPherson reported on the Dundas Marsh Banding Station at Hamilton, Ontario.

In 1968, Chan Robbins presented an eloquent defense of the use of net hours in banding statistics. Operation Recovery became the Atlantic Flyway Review edited by Fred Schaeffer. Twenty-eight stations from Mount Desert Island, Maine, to Homestead, Florida, contributed their banding results. Bill Clark reported on his first year of hawk banding at Cape May. And there was a classic article by Leslie Gray on "Banding Sharp-shinned Hawks at Point Pelee" when Bill Wasserfall, Bas Richardson, and the author ran out of cans and bags. One of the men stuffed seven sharpies down inside his shirt to run for help.

In 1969, Jonnie Fisk reported her excitement on banding a Short-tailed Hawk at her Homestead, FL, station. Kathleen Anderson announced the establishment of Manomet Bird Observatory. Maurice Broun reported banding 550 siskins at

Hawk Mountain Sanctuary and the recovery of one of those siskins at Seattle, WA. The annual meeting was hosted by the Delmarva Ornithological Society at the University of Delaware and the banquet cost was \$4.00. Bob Yunick was President of EBBA, which had nearly 700 members. Chris Rose offered wing rules for sale at \$4.60 each.

If you have an opportunity, spend some time browsing through the back issues of *EBBA NEWS* or *NORTH AMERICAN BIRD BANDER*. We need to understand and appreciate our history!

Elizabeth W. Brooks

Atlantic Flyway Review: Piedmont-Coastal Plain Region IV - Fall 1998

Elizabeth W. Brooks, Co-coordinator
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Alfred Station, NY 14803

H. David Leake, Co-coordinator
2A Ginguite Trail
Southern Shores, NC 27949

David Leake resigned as AFR Region IV coordinator due to health reasons. We are grateful for the time and energy David gave to the Region IV report. During the eight years he served as coordinator, he worked diligently to get good banding coverage in his region and to improve the quality of the reporting. Many thanks, Dave.

The Region IV reporting stations were joined by Fran Pope and Connie Skipper from Mt. Nebo Wildlife Management Area located in the mountains of western Maryland. Unfortunately, however, we lost the Scott King-Jordan Gameland report due to the death of Liz Pullman's husband. We extend our sympathy to Liz. We also lost the Chicahawk report due to the relocation of David Leake. And Back Bay and James Island did not submit a report for 1998. We hope they will be back with us in 1999.

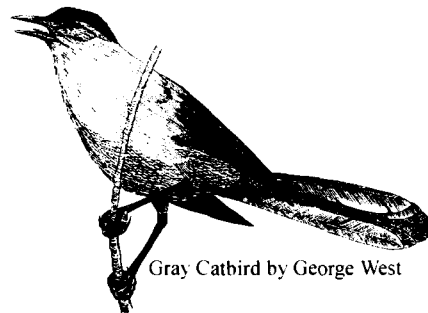
Of the seven stations reporting, results were about evenly split: numbers were up at Laurel, Hollywood, Kiptopeke, and Wekiva Basin but down at Mt. Nebo, Butler and Jekyll Island. Birds/100 net hours were down at Mt. Nebo and Butler Island, about the same at Jekyll Island and Wekiva Basin, slightly improved at Laurel, but dramatically up at Hollywood (51 in 1997; 150 in 1998) and Kiptopeke (51.1 in 1997; 99.6 in 1998). Gray

Catbird and Common Yellowthroat made the top ten list at all seven banding stations.

Weather was cited as a negative influence at three stations. The El Nino weather pattern resulted in few strong fronts. Migration weather was "flat" at Butler Island except for a quick visit from Hurricane Earl. Except for a brief period of rain in September, the weather was dry and frontless at Jekyll Island. Conditions at Hollywood were very dry and Laurel was in a severe drought for the second fall, with 1998 rainfall 9 inches below normal.

As usual, nets caught more than birds. Chan Robbins reported that a deer crashed through three nets in a single morning. Two nets at Butler Island were blown down and filled with debris from Hurricane Earl, (but at least the two baby alligators stayed out of the nets). Wekiva Basin lost two nets to a Black Bear! And Jekyll Island almost caught a Wheatear!

The new Pyle *Identification Guide to North American Birds* continues to improve our ageing and sexing techniques, but not without some degree of frustration. A Myrtle Warbler banded as a HY-M at Butler Island in fall 1995 was recaptured during fall 1998 - as an AHY-F! We're all getting better at this, though!



Gray Catbird by George West