

Ontario Bird Banding Association
Newsletter
November 1972

November Meeting

This month, the meeting will be held at the home of John Roberts, 22 Rowanwood Ave., Toronto, at 8 pm on the evening of Tuesday, Nov. 14.

Our Speaker will be Jim Anderson of Dundas, Ont., who will talk to us about goose banding.

This promises to be an interesting subject and members are urged to attend.

The F.O.N. Christmas cards and Nature calendars will be on sale at this time for those persons wishing to get a head start on their shopping.

October Meeting

The Oct. Meeting was held at Hawk Cliff Raptor Banding Station over the Thanksgiving Weekend. This seems to have been a wrong choice as only five members besides the regular Hawk Cliff banders attended this meeting. Regular trapping and banding continued through the weekend.

Attendance at outdoor meetings has been poor this past summer. Consideration is being given to stopping the field trips alto. either. The executive would like to hear some views on this matter, especially from those most likely to be able to attend such meetings. Drop a line to me if you have any ideas and I will put them forward at the next executive meeting.

Applications Please!

Our Editor, David Brewer, is resigning this position to guide nature tours, such as the Venezuelan Bird Tour for the F.O.N. next March.

This, of course, means that we will be looking for someone interested in becoming editor of Ontario Bird Banding.

Persons interested in doing just this, please contact the executive through me at the addresses at the end of this Newsletter.

Nature Leaves

Open fires, even small ones, create considerable amounts of air pollution. For example, one pound of leaves burned in the open can release 600 times as much pollution as a pound of coal burned in a furnace - hydrocarbons, aldehydes and organic acids. Smoke damage, obnoxious fumes, as well as health hazards to those with respiratory ailments, are a few of the common effects of open burning.

Anyone wishing to register a complaint about open burning or any other air pollution problem, telephone the nearest Air Quality Branch office of the Ministry of the Environment. All complaints are investigated.
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Legislative, Ministry of the Environment

Recoveries of Banded Birds

Dr. Edward Dinniwell of Hamilton seems to have had a series of retraps of birds banded by John Miles (formerly of Hamilton). With one reported last month here are two more:

Redwinged Blackbird, male, at least one year old when banded by John at Hamilton, on May 22, 1965 was caught by Ed at Hamilton on June 11, 1972.

Catbird, at least one year old when banded by John at Hamilton on July 16, 1966 was caught by Ed at Hamilton on June 3, 1972.

An Exceptional Banding Recovery of the Gannet

Although a "little" out of our range, this remarkable recovery of the Gannet comes from Dr. David Brewer:

One of the pleasant things that can happen to a bird bander is to get a recovery years after banding, when he has all but forgotten the time and effort spent in capturing the bird.

When I lived in Scotland, I used to spend a few days each summer banding young Gannets (*Sula bassana*) on the rocky island of Ailsa Craig in the Firth of Clyde, a breeding colony which has been known since the Middle Ages.

I left Scotland in 1966; at first recoveries continued to come in, principally from Spain, Portugal and Morocco, but as time passed, so they got fewer in number until now, six years later, they are getting pretty sparse. (The Gannet has a very high mortality rate in the first year of life, but if it survives this period of inexperience it tends to live to a ripe old age - often twenty years or so. Consequently, recoveries, which occur principally in the form of dead birds washed up on shore, trail off rapidly with time.)

I was therefore especially surprised to get recovery details on 104-7812, banded as a young bird on July 2, 1966, found dead at Ashdod, Israel, on Mar. 3, 1971.

The place of recovery is quite exceptionally far east. Although some Scottish birds enter the Mediterranean, they usually remain west of Malta. The furthest east recovery I have had was near Toronto, on the "heel" of Italy.

104-7812 is certainly by far the furthest east recovery of a banded Gannet, and may well be the furthest east RECORD of this species, which is a variant to the Eastern Mediterranean.

Unusual Fall Migration

O.B.B.A. members Denis Scott and Floyd Deiter along with Joe Johnston, observed a (Greenland) Wheatear on Oct. 10 and 11 in the vicinity of the Bruce Trail (near Inverhony).

The Greenland Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe leucorhoa*) is a subspecies of the Old World Wheatear and averages larger and more brightly coloured (more strongly buffy under parts in autumn eastern Canada - Godfrey - Birds of Canada).

According to Godfrey, occasional individuals occur in migration seasons in Southern Ontario. The Wheatear winters in the Old World but breeds in eastern arctic Canada, Labrador and Greenland; also in Alaska, Yukon and western Mackenzie.

Barn Swallow Nestings - 1972, by Audrey E. Wilson

On May 22, 1972, Helen Hawke and myself began our third consecutive year of recording nesting barn swallows in a bank barn basement on Lot 14C of Cranoke Township. For the first time since we started these studies in 1970, the barn was in use with beef cattle being fed and sheltered in the open basement area.

Nests were typical barn swallow nests; cup-shaped, made from mud and attached to ceiling beams about 8 feet above floor level. Each nest was lined with soft white feathers. Many of the nests from previous years were rebuilt while the remainder were newly constructed nests. Two old barn swallow nests were edged in a fine green moss. This was the work of the Eastern Phoebe who abandoned six young in the first nest but raised a partial brood in the second nest.

To avoid disrupting the nesting rhythm, the nests were visited on 8 dates: May 22, 31, June 14, 28, July 3, 26, Aug. 2. Nest numbers were tacked to the ceiling beside each nest to facilitate record keeping. An old car mirror fastened to a ruler was held over each nest to observe its contents. A flashlight shining on the mirror's surface revealed the number of eggs or young.

This year, records were kept on a total of 39 broods - 13 nests were used a second time. 148 young barn swallows successfully departed from their nests, 9 eggs appeared to be sterile and 6 Phoebe young were abandoned.

Since 1970, 325 young have been successfully raised in this barn, ideally located in a hay field near a stream. It is interesting to note that in spite of the barn being used for cattle, in 1972, observations revealed the greatest number to date. This was due to the fact that studies were carried on over a longer period of time than in the past.

Miss Wilson also mentioned in her letter that they have tagged over 2,500 monarch butterflies since mid-August and shipped 800 of them by air to Florida.

Christmas is coming.....

The Canadian Nature Federation this year have chosen J.F. Londoune's Ruby-crowned Kinglet for their Christmas cards.

The message inside reads; Christmas Greetings and all good wishes for a Happy New Year.

These cards may be ordered from the Service Department, Canadian Nature Federation, 46 Elgin St., Ottawa K1P 5K6, Canada.

Price - \$2.35 for 10 cards with envelopes.

Order now for certain delivery before the Christmas rush starts.

The Federation of Ontario Naturalists have a perky little chipmunk running across their card. He pauses only long enough to take a look at the British Grenadier Lichen, which has added a Christmassy touch to the picture. This card is from a painting by well known Canadian naturalist, Robert Bateman and comes with the message "Season's Greetings" on without, to be used all year round as a hasty note.

Both the hasty note and Christmas cards are available through me at the price of \$2.50 per dozen plus 13 cents tax please.

I would appreciate a quick order though, as I will be moving again and will not be able to take your orders after the 18th of November. This will allow you two weeks, I hope you will order these cards as they are most attractive.

Also from the F.O.N. this year we can offer you their 1973 Nature calendar. Twelve memorable nature photographs have been chosen from past editions of the Ontario Naturalist.

Printed in full colour on twelve 13 1/2 x 11 inch sturdy pages and bound in a heavy cord stock with Corlox binding, this would be a perfect way of giving all year round. Price - \$3.95 (Please add 50 cents for tax, postage and handling)

The calendars are also available through me, but I'm afraid the same time space for ordering applies to the calendar too. Both items will be on sale at the Nov. Meeting on Nov. 14, for those in the Toronto area.

Our American members who may wish to order these items may be interested to know that after deductions etc. are made from foreign cheques, a big hole has been made in the original amount. Perhaps it would be worth your while to look into money orders, or risk cash(?) It hardly seems fair, but after I cashed a cheque today for \$3. I received only \$2.69.

Did you hear.....

about the bear that had been eating honey and still had some of the sticky stuff on her paw? She sat by the stream, holding her paw over the water. Of course, the flies were buzzing around the paw after the honey, which attracted the trout in the stream. The trout jumped for the flies and Mother Bear swatted them with her other paw up onto the bank for her cubs!

It's true!

Miss Jayne E. Evans,
Secretary,
P.O. Box 551,
Midland, Ont.

for applications and other
correspondence after
Nov. 5, please note the
change of address

Miss Jayne E. Evans,
Secretary,
P.O. Box 248
Essex, Ont.