

1926

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TRAPPING AND BANDING BIRDS AT IOWA CITY
DURING 1925

DAYTON STONER

The present brief account is intended as a progress report on the status of the bird trapping station located in the back yard at my home in Iowa City. This station, consisting of two government sparrow traps, was established in 1920 and has been in almost constant operation since that time. An "Everset" trap was added to the complement of traps in 1925.

During the past year (January 1 to December 31, 1925) the station was discontinued between June 12 and August 10. For the remaining time, approximately 10 months, the traps have been baited and awaiting occupants. During this period 87 individuals representing 12 species were taken. Of these, 45 were English Sparrows while the remaining 42 were native birds of which six were subsequently recovered. Some individuals repeated more than once; however, not all were retaken in the traps. Although a comparatively small number of birds is involved in this report, the percentage of recoveries (Repeats and Returns) is high.

The appended table indicates the gross results of my trapping operations at Iowa City for the past three years.

1923	6 species	112 individuals	1 recovery
1924	14 species	145 individuals	14 recoveries
1925	12 species	87 individuals	10 recoveries

As a matter of fact the past season has been rather disappointing on account of the comparatively small number of birds that visited the traps. I believe that this circumstance may be due not to a reduction in the number of individuals of those species that would be likely to frequent the traps but rather to the fact that birds once captured are more or less frightened during this event and "remember" it; thereafter, for a time at least, they shun the region in which it occurred. It seems, too, that the birds occurring in the vicinity of the traps are more wary and suspicious than before the traps were installed on the premises for the neighboring lawns, where trapping has not been practiced, have had even more than the usual number of bird visitors. These remarks apply not only to native species but also to the English

Sparrow for 87 individuals of this species were taken in 1923 and 75 in 1924.

However, in spite of this situation the work will be prosecuted with even greater vigor for the birds suffer no real harm from the trapping and banding. Furthermore, every banded bird is a potential carrier of information.

The following table shows in condensed form the details of my trapping operations during 1925.

NAME OF BIRD	MONTH TAKEN	No. TAKEN	REMARKS
Red-headed Woodpecker	May	1	
Blue Jay	March	1	1 return
	May	2	
	June	2	
	August	3	
	September	1	
Bronzed Grackle	April	8	2 recoveries
	May	3	
English Sparrow	February	3	Mostly immature though fully fledged birds able to fly were taken in August
	April	1	
	May	15	
	June	1	
	August	22	
	September	1	
	November	2	
Slate-colored Junco	January	1	
Cardinal	March	1	1 recovery
	June	1	
Catbird	May	1	
House Wren	May	1	1 return
White-breasted Nuthatch	December	1	
Chickadee	March	1	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	January	1	
Robin	March	3	5 repeats
	April	4	
	May	6	
12 species		87 individuals	10 recoveries

The following brief notes are of interest in connection with these trapping operations.

Blue Jay No. 307078, banded as an adult on May 25, 1924 was recovered July 17, 1924. The bird was in the trap with an unbanded Bronzed Grackle. On June 2, 1925 the Blue Jay was again recovered, this time with another but unbanded individual of the same species.

Bronzed Grackle, No. 316145, Ad. female; banded May 25, 1925; recovered same place (government sparrow trap), May 28, 1925.

Cardinal, No. 251128, Ad. male; banded August 6, 1924 was recovered in the Everset trap March 1, 1925. Incidentally, I may remark that this trap has added very little to the success of my station, only six additional birds, all English Sparrows, having been taken in it during the course of the year.

Golden-crowned Kinglet, No. 5707A, a female, banded January 23, uttered a continuous weak trill during the entire procedure of banding and subsequent examination, perhaps four minutes in all.

Robin, No. 319085, Ad. male; banded March 21, 1925; recovered (trapped) same place, April 5, 1925.

Robin, No. 319087, banded as an adult on April 1, was in the trap with a male English Sparrow. It was recovered on May 5 when it fought and squealed and pecked the operator's hand viciously. After a few moments it became quiet and lay peacefully and freely in my wide open palm but clinging tightly to my first finger with its bill. The bird then was rolled gently toward the tips of my fingers while it retained its hold on my first finger. Immediately following this, my palm was gradually turned sideways so that toward the end of the experiment the bird hung suspended bearing its entire weight with its mandibles; in a moment it "came to" and took flight from this position. Apparently extreme fright rendered the bird quite unaccountable for its behavior.

Robin, No. 319090, Ad. male; banded May 20, 1925; recovered May 23 and again on May 24, 1925, same place (trapped).

Robin, No. 319091, Ad. female; banded May 24, 1925; recovered (trapped) same place, May 25, 1925.

The Robin records suggest that many of the early spring arrivals among the members of this species remain over to nest and do not move on northward.

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