

successive years - all in February or March.

Noisy Friar-bird - A maggot of a parasitic fly was found completely embedded under the skin of the lower mandible of one of the birds netted. By removing a small scab at the point of entry, the maggot was forced out and passed alive to C.S.I.R.O. for identification. The maggot was larger than that of a blow-fly.

Red-browed Finch - This has provided the longest life history of all birds taken in this area, one bird having been taken on 19.3.61, 26.5.62, 13.10.62 and 26.4.63.

Olive-backed Oriole - An unusual migrant. Two birds were seen in the area early in March, 1963, and one was netted on 16.3.63.

Other banders, Bill Belton, John McKean and Bill Lane have banded in the area and their figures are included.

Reference: D.W.Lamm, S.J.Wilson and W.Belton, "New Information on birds of the Australian Capital Territory", Emu, 1963, 63:57 (April)

MIST-NETTING WADERS.

S.G.Lane, Lane Cove. N.S.W.

Migratory waders have a magnetic appeal to many ornithologists and these notes give some of the difficulties encountered by me when trying to band them in the Sydney area. It is hoped that they will help other banders to be more successful.

Suitable wader habitats are scarce around Sydney; the closest and best feeding ground where the largest concentrations are found is Botany Bay.

Waders have been trapped or netted successfully in other places. Here we have used mist nets and some wader nets, mostly during the hours of darkness.

Public relations make it advisable never to catch birds in public view unless onlookers can be given a full explanation of the State requirements concerning licence for trapping protected species and the penalties for catching or taking fauna illegally. Daytime operations must therefore be restrict-

ed to secluded locations.

Factors which have to be considered here (Sydney) are: (1) suitable area available to banders (2) secluded area for daytime work (3) freedom from wind (4) state of tide (5) state of moon (moonlight nights are no good for netting birds) (6) weather (overcast sky can help in daytime and assist at night: rain restricts or prevents netting).

Botany Bay, Sydney. Here the tidal mud flats are by a main road beside the Sydney airport. The area is very exposed to wind and much artificial light from the adjoining residential and factory areas. It is very disturbed by fishermen whose boats are strewn over the mud flats.

Early in 1959 eight nets set from 7 p.m. - 11.30 p.m. failed to catch anything: a heavy wind was blowing. On the night of February 2/3, 1962, from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. (11 hours) with overcast sky, heavy wind and thousands of birds in the area, ten nets, ten banders and assistants caught only 1 Little Stint (Erolia ruficollis), 2 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers (E. acuminata), 1 Red-capped Dotterel (Charadrius alexandrinus) and 3 Silver Gulls (Larus-novae-hollandiae). Large flocks were observed approaching the nets only to change course at the last moment apparently at the sight of the nets billowing in the wind.

The Entrance, Tuggerah Lakes. Two areas were tried. A single net was set on a tidal sand flat early one morning without success. Holiday fishermen moving about the area prevented further attempts. The other area was a small non-tidal mud-bordered pond, shaped like a figure "8", about 150 ft. in length by 20 to 30 ft. in width at each end, with a narrow centre portion which suited my single 4' x 30' Japanese nylon net.

At 4.30 a.m. on 27.11.58 the net was set while approximately 15 Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were feeding at one end. By walking slowly towards the birds they were "driven" from end to end five times before flying away. Catches were 5, 3, 2, 1 and nil, in that order, all avoiding the net area at the last drive. Weather conditions at the time were ideal. Heavy dark cloud obscured the rising sun and there was no wind. Two other attempts were not successful due to unfavourable weather.

Canada Bay, Sydney. This is an inlet on the Parramatta River behind which netting was carried out at night in a small mud flat swamp adjacent to mangroves. At high tide waders move in from the river mud flats. To set and clear nets, Clive Campion and myself often worked thigh deep in smelly mud pestered continuously by mosquitoes. The first

attempt early in October, 1959, was unsuccessful while two other attempts resulted in the catches shown:

	<u>16.10.59</u>	<u>3.11.59</u>
Curlew Sandpiper (<u>Erolia ferrungineus</u>)	2	6
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (<u>E. Acuminata</u>)	18	16
Golden Plover (<u>Pluvialis dominicus</u>)	-	1

One Sharp-tailed Sandpiper banded on 16th October was retrapped on 3rd November.

Quibray Bay, Sydney. This is a small bay on the S.E. side of Botany Bay. Nine banders and assistants with 14 nets visited this area on February 13, 1963, from 7 p.m. to 10.30 p.m. Large flocks of Godwits and Curlews were observed here during the preceding week. The weather was overcast and very windy. Few birds were seen and only one caught, an Eastern Curlew (Numenius madagascariensis).

Summary: Despite the very limited success of these operations relative to the effort expended, waders can be satisfactorily netted providing conditions are favourable.

A Sharp-tailed Sandpiper 050-07774, banded at The Entrance, N.S.W. on 27.1.58 was recovered (shot) at Hexham Swamp, N.S.W. on 7.3.61, 27 months later and approximately 35 miles from banding place.

It is worth noting that some species of waders have been successfully netted during daylight in America using decoys cut from plywood or similar material and placed in clusters 3' to 4' upwind of the net. It was unsuccessful on open beaches and failed to catch Willets and Black-bellied Plovers. (Ref. Bird-Banding, 1960, Vol.31, No.2, pp 89-90).

TO-DAY'S STORY.

The following tale is at present going the rounds. We should like to acknowledge the source, but have been unable to locate it, except that it seems obviously American.

"The metal strips used to band birds are inscribed: "Notify Fish & Wild Life Service, Wash., D.C." They used to read "Washington Biological Survey," abbreviated to "Wash. Biol. Surv." This was changed after a farmer shot a crow and