

AUSTRALIAN BIRD-BANDING SCHEME.

Warren Hitchcock, as Secretary of the A.B.B.S. has asked us to publish the following notices. It is important that all members should read these instructions carefully, and that they should be strictly observed.

1. Age Category on Schedules.

It is most important that banders make the correct distinction between "non-flying" and "flying" young on their schedules. The "banded" columns in Table 1 of the Annual Reports are made up of "pull" (= non-flying young, i.e. nestlings and runners) and "trap" (= free-flying birds, including adults caught in nets and traps and obvious juveniles and immatures that are actually free-flying at the time of banding).

Birds such as cormorants, some ducks, and shearwaters that are still at the "flapper" stage are not free-flying and should not be entered as "J" on schedules.

2. Banding of Nestlings.

Nestlings of species for which there is no approved band size must not be banded. Approved sizes are based on trials of ADULT birds, and there is a change in the diameter of the tarsus of many species between the nestling age and the time they achieve flight. It is the adult that has to carry the band for life, and trials done on non-flying young can be quite misleading.

3. Banding of Young of Hole-Nesting Species.

The majority of banders will use their commonsense and not disturb the young of hole-nesting species, e.g., parrots, owlet-nightjar, white-backed swallow, bee-eater, pardalotes, kingfishers and treecreepers. Doubtless there are methods for "extracting" young from such nests without undue harm being done. But the scheme is pledged to observe the greatest care in the catching and banding of birds; if there is the slightest chance that young will be disturbed, or the nest deserted, through banding - leave it alone!

4. Band Size List.

The undermentioned alterations to Band Size List No.10 (October, 1963) have been notified by the Secretary of the Australian Bird Banding Scheme -

<u>R.A.O.U</u> <u>Number</u>		<u>Band</u> <u>Size</u>
158	Greenshank (<u>Tringa nebularia</u>) (addition to list)	6 ✱
111	Gull-billed Tern (<u>Gelochelidon nilotica</u>) (amendment to list)	7 ✱

✱ circular monel band.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

The following extracts from letters received from members will be of interest to others:

Mass Banding of Terns.

D E. Barnes, in a letter dated 7.2.64 from Port Lincoln, S.A., writes:

"I was very interested in the article re "Mass Banding of Terns", as we use something of a similar nature constructed of fish net. This is light and follows the contour of the banding site readily as it has lead weights to anchor it and is slung on rope. Two sides are erected and the third, or gate, is closed when the birds are walked into the area. Overcrowding in the corners has to be watched but is overcome by not allowing large numbers of birds to enter at once.

"We erected this gear three times and banded 700 in about two hours (four banders). More could have been marked as we estimated that not one half of the young present were banded. They were at the near flying stage and practically all would be on the wing in a few days.

"We, too, have a system to speedily handle the rings and also to keep them in their correct sequence when banding. Three appropriate sized tapered pieces of brass are mounted upright into a wooden base block. The taper allows the rings to be spread easily and uniformly. Correct sized sticks are made to take ten bands per stick and the sticks are coloured in five different shades. The bands are mounted on the sticks in the correct sequence and five sticks attached together by rubber bands (= 50 rings) the two lots of 50 bands are attached to each other making the 100. The packet with the bands' numerals on is also attached to the last 50. These 100s are