

MEMORANDUM

TO : All Banders

FROM : Chief, Bird Banding Laboratory
Migratory Bird Populations Station
Laurel, Maryland 20810

December 23, 1969
MTAB-13

- SUBJECT: 1. End-of-the-Year Reports
2. Timetable for Submission of Non-game Bird Schedules
3. Current Status of the Edit and Verification of the North American Bird Banding Files
4. A Bird-Bander's Guide to Determination of Age and Sex of Selected Species
5. Request for Comments Concerning the "Recommended Band Sizes" Contained in Your Manual
6. New Address on Bands
7. What Happened to "The Rest of You"

1. End-of-the-Year Reports. One of the essential ingredients of our annual "Christmas MTAB" seems to be a "plea-reminder-threat" concerning the need for prompt submission of your banding schedules.

We are very pleased that "most of you" (see MTAB-11, subject #1, and MTAB-12, subject #5) are cooperating fully and are submitting your schedules in accordance with the timetables outlined on page 14 of MTAB-6.

If you are:

- a. A game bird bander who submits his "pre-, post- and in-season" banding data as outlined on pages 14 and 15 of MTAB-6, or
- b. A non-game bird bander who submits his schedules when he finishes a string of bands,

then skip the rest of this subject--it doesn't apply to you.

However, if you:

- a. Have just finished or are getting ready to prepare your "annual report," or
- b. Have a string of a hundred bands flying around on birds which are getting caught, shot or otherwise recovered and you haven't forwarded your schedule to the Banding Laboratory, or
- c. Are a game bird bander who "just doesn't have time to get his schedules in," then the following comments apply.

We now have nearly three years of banding data filed in our computer in such a manner that the data can be rapidly located by the computer and used to acknowledge recovery reports. Approximately 81 per cent of the recoveries we receive each year relate to birds which have been banded three years or less. Thus, we are on the verge of having a system whereby most of the persons who report a band recovery will receive an acknowledgment within a reasonably short time IF:

- a. Your schedules have been received,
- b. Verified by the BBL biologists,
- c. Logged in,
- d. Edited,
- e. Keyed, verified and
- f. Updated into the computer files.

Obviously, we can't accomplish b. through f. until a. has occurred.

A satisfactory response will not be received by persons who report the recovery of a band for which we have not received a schedule from the bander. Those individuals face an additional delay of one to three months while we search our files in vain for schedules that aren't here and then attempt to obtain the data from the bander via correspondence.

This year, for example, scores of Mexican or southwestern hunters who shot white-winged doves, mourning doves or band-tailed pigeons banded this summer by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission will experience an overlong delay in receiving their "Certificate of Appreciation" since the 40 schedules reporting pre-season white-winged and mourning dove bandings didn't arrive at the Banding Laboratory until October 30, and the 14 schedules reporting pre-season band-tailed pigeon bandings didn't arrive until December 1.

The Arizona white-winged and mourning dove hunting seasons opened on September 1 and the band-tailed pigeon season opened on October 11.

2. Timetable for Submission of Non-game Bird Schedules.

We have received several letters from banders asking when they should submit non-game schedules. As pointed out elsewhere in this MTAB, we wish to obtain your data as soon as possible.

The timetable outlined on pages 15 and 16 of MTAB-6 will be mandatory after January 1, 1970.

3. Current Status of the Edit and Verification of the North American Bird Banding Files.

Last April you received MTAB-12 which outlined the impending computer edit of the existing banding data files.

We have experienced several delays due to difficulties encountered in defining and programing these edits, but we are now beginning production runs on the first of three phases of the edits. By the time you read this, we will have edited the data in the "Banding Tub File" (see MTAB-12, page 2).

As we anticipated, we are encountering thousands of questionable records. In order to handle and maintain control of these records, they are being processed by the Banding Laboratory staff on an "assembly line" basis.

Since the same checks will be run on data in different computer files and each record in each file will receive numerous different checks, you may receive different questions concerning the same record or similar questions about different records at various times during the file edit period. Please bear with us and provide whatever clarification is requested as soon as possible.

Inate comments concerning illogical systems or "I told you that last week" may be noted in the "remarks" section of your schedule or submitted to the editor of your banding association.

We rather optimistically hope to have the files edited, the questionable data removed, and many data resolved and back in file by late spring/early summer.

4. A Bird-Bander's Guide to Determination of Age and Sex of Selected Species.

This is the title of the 181-page, spiral-bound guide recently compiled by Dr. Merrill Wood at Pennsylvania State University. Dr. Wood states in the preface:

"This publication is for bird-banders and other research workers needing to know the age and sex of live birds of the northeastern United States. The species included in this book are the perchingbirds (Passeriformes) and a few other species commonly handled by bird-banders; omitted are all the "water birds," most of the hawks, all of the gallina-ceous game birds, most of the shorebirds and allies, and most of the owls.

"This collection of information the author hopes will be found to be helpfully organized. It cannot be considered complete. While the keys are expected to guide the reader into observing certain characters useful in determining age and sex, the keys do not give all the details. Birds are variable biological material. Birds do not come like pills in a bottle, all alike. It takes experience to observe variations, and to separate meaningful from unmeaningful variations. For any particular species, somewhere there is certain to be a bander who has more information than is presented here. It is hoped that this knowledge will soon become available to others."

As Dr. Wood points out, his Guide is by no means a complete treatment of all the birds found in North America nor is it necessarily the "last word" for those species covered. It is a welcome, long overdue addition to a bander's library.

The Guide may be obtained from the College of Agriculture, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania 16802, for the sum of \$3.00.

5. Request for Comments Concerning the "Recommended Band Sizes" Contained in Your Manual.

One of the checks we have built into the computer file edits compares the "AOU Number" of each record against the band size (this check is performed only for bands larger than size 1A). This check is intended to detect erroneous band or AOU numbers.

After examining the first group of records rejected by the computer, it is apparent that many banders routinely use band sizes other than those recommended in the Manual. In order to update the "Recommended Band Size List," we are requesting you to NOTIFY US OF ANY BAND SIZES IN THE MANUAL WHICH YOU FEEL SHOULD BE CHANGED.

6. New address on Bands. For many years bands used by the North American Banding Program carried some version of the legend "Avisé Fish and Wildlife Service Write Washington DC." Due to the limited space on most bands, it was necessary to abbreviate the legend. As a result,

there are five versions of the legend on our bands. After looking at the addresses on thousands of incoming recovery letters, it was apparent that persons finding banded birds had some difficulty in interpreting some of the abbreviations. For example, the abbreviation "F&W Serv" was very frequently interpreted as "Forest & Water Service," "Fowl & Water Service" or, occasionally, "Foul Water Service." (The last interpretation sort of makes one wonder where the hunter had his duck blind.)

For those reasons, plus the probability that differences in the legend could be causing differences in the band reporting rate of different size bands, a decision was made to adopt a new legend. The FY 69 band contract calls for the following legends:

On size 0 - 1A	AVISE BIRD BAND WASH DC USA	On size 2 - 9	AVISE BIRD BAND WRITE WASH DC USA
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We also hope the new legends will be more acceptable to our colleagues in Canada who, until now, have been marking thousands of birds with the "U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's" bands.

We have also realized another beneficial side effect from the new legend. All recovery letters carrying the address on the band are received in the Main Post Office in Washington, D. C. These letters are then sorted and routed to the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife Mail Room in the Interior Building, Washington, D. C. (and here I'd like to tip my hat to the postal workers for their ability to decipher and properly route the multitude of different addresses these letters carried). In the Interior Mail Room, each letter had to be examined to separate those containing band recoveries from the thousands of other pieces of "Fish and Wildlife Service" mail they received. Band recoveries were separated, batched and transmitted to the Banding Laboratory which is located at Laurel, Maryland.

The Washington Post Office has been alerted and is cooperating beautifully in identifying and routing letters with the new "Avisé Bird Band" address directly to the Banding Laboratory, thus shaving several days to a week off the time it takes a recovery letter to arrive at the Lab.

The band manufacturer was requested to start using the new legend only when he broke into a new band prefix. Since we maintain a considerable stock of bands on our shelves, reissue unbroken strings of bands returned by inactive banders, and at the beginning of the fiscal year had several prefixes only partially completed by the manufacturer, we still will be issuing bands with the "old" legends for some time.

The new legends were first used as indicated below:

<u>Band Size</u>	<u>First Prefix With New Legend</u>	<u>Band Size</u>	<u>First Prefix With New Legend</u>
0	120	4, 4A	624
1	78	5	735
1B	108	6	786
1A	76	7A, 7B	947
2	762	8	628
3, 3B, 3A	1153	9	589 will have new legend 599 has old legend 609 will have new legend

7. What Happened to "The Rest of You."

In MTAB-12 we identified 226 banders whose failure to submit data or "negative reports" placed them in the "Rest of You" category.

After eight months we at last have determined the status of all banders' 1968 reports (we think).

We found we had overlooked "negative reports" or banding schedules submitted by 15 banders (13 negative reports and two schedule submissions).

We offer our apologies to:

Anderson, S. H.	Davis, F. W., Dr.	Spitalny, G. L.
Brewer, R., Dr.	Dempster, R. T., Dr.	Spofford, W. R., Dr.
Bridges, R., Mrs.	Graham, C. E., USGMA	Taylor, W. K., Lt.
Cody, M. L., Dr.	Kirkpatrick, R. D.	Webster, C. G.
Davis, C. G., Miss	Sanderson, K. H.	Wolcott, C., Dr.

We also offer our apologies to the bander who, after receiving MTAB-12, sent in his 1968 schedules and a brief note to the effect that "after scanning the list of names in MTAB-12 and noting the prominence of many of them, I feel somewhat slighted by having my failure to submit records overlooked and being omitted from the list."

We will try to be more careful when we prepare this year's listing of "The Rest of You."

The following action was taken on the remaining 211 permits:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| a. Submitted schedules after receipt of MTAB-12 and prior to June 14 | 42 |
| b. Submitted "negative report" after receipt of MTAB-12 and prior to June 14 | 94 |
| c. No response received by June 14--permits suspended | 75 |
| | 211 |

Of the 75 permits suspended, the following action was subsequently taken:

a. Permits reinstated	34
b. Permits inactivated	29
c. Permits revoked	<u>12</u>
	75

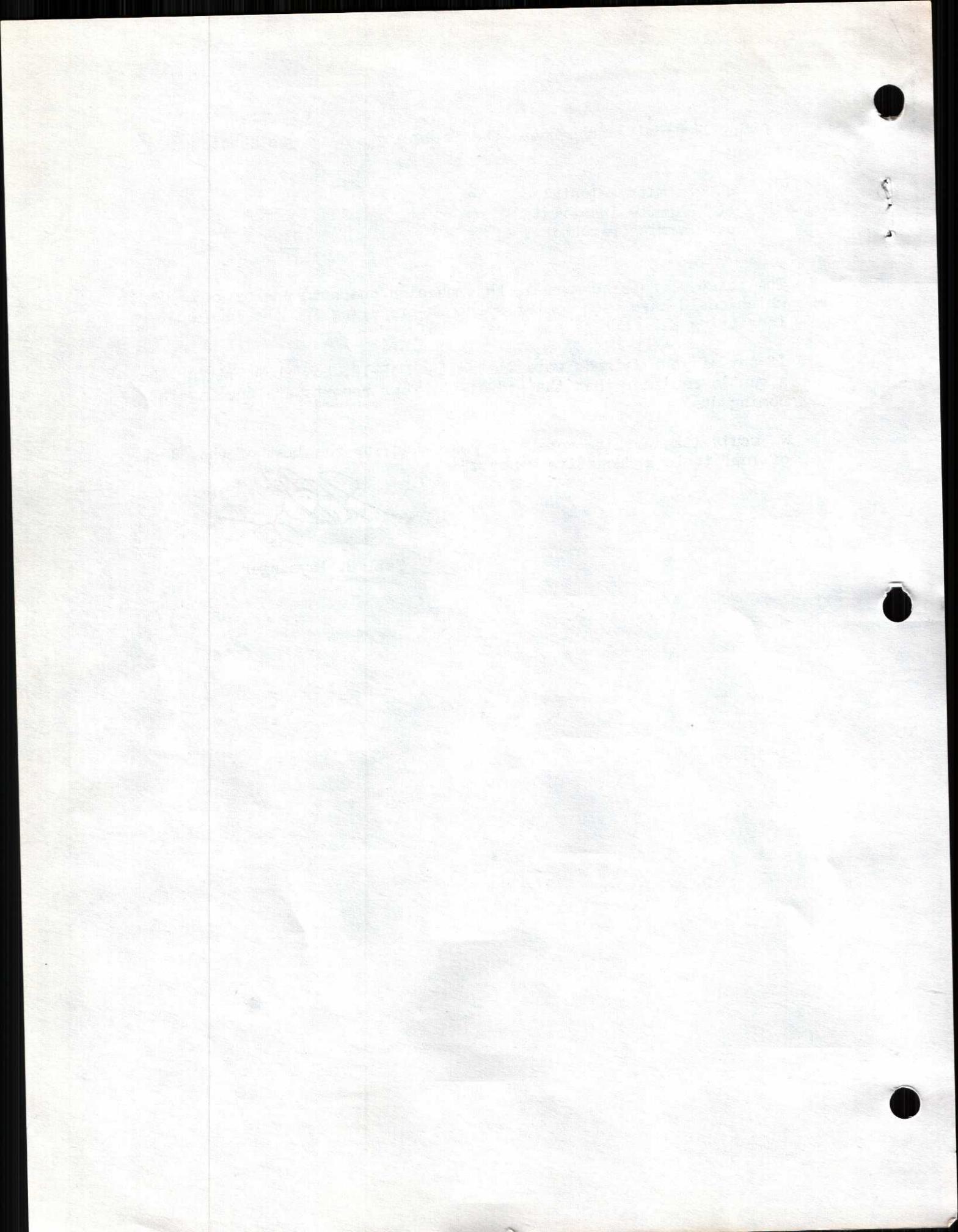
The point of this summary is to emphasize the hundreds of wasted hours which could have been better spent in preparing for the file edit or in getting data out to you more rapidly.

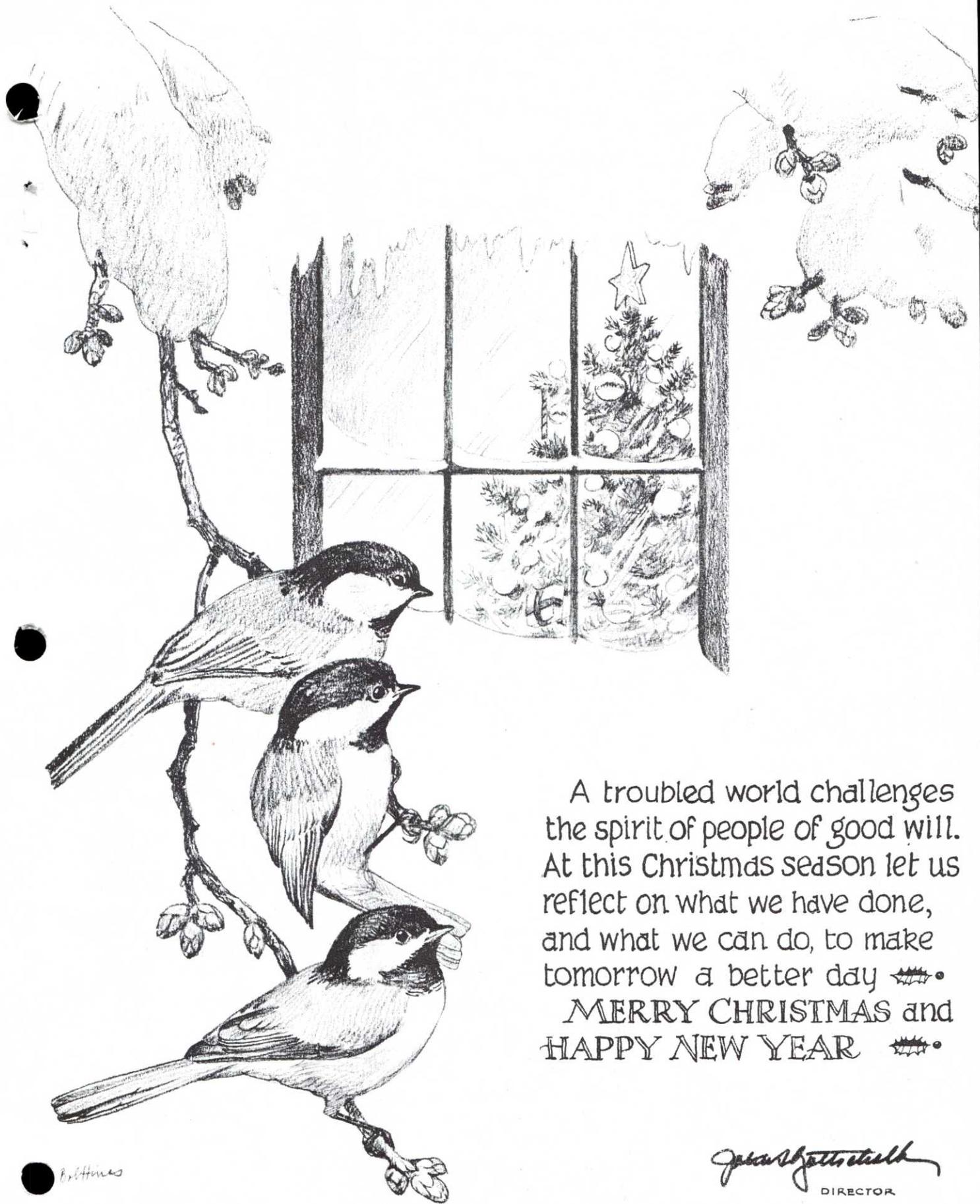
If any of your friends were listed in MTAB-12, how about giving them a gentle reminder that the end-of-the-year reports are once again coming due?

We would like nothing more this year than for the list of the "Rest of You" to be a "negative report."



Earl B. Baysinger





A troubled world challenges
the spirit of people of good will.
At this Christmas season let us
reflect on what we have done,
and what we can do, to make
tomorrow a better day •

MERRY CHRISTMAS and
HAPPY NEW YEAR •

Brittner

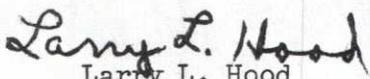
James H. Gattis
DIRECTOR

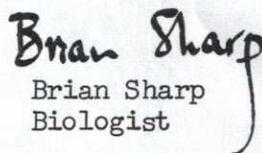
BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

If we had the time,
We'd write a rhyme;
But since we don't,
We won't.

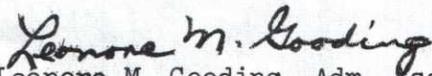
BEST WISHES FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON FROM THE STAFF AT THE BIRD BANDING LABORATORY

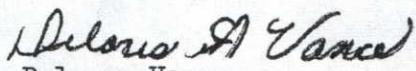

Earl B. Baysinger, Chief


Larry L. Hood
Biologist

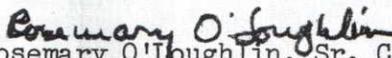

Brian Sharp
Biologist

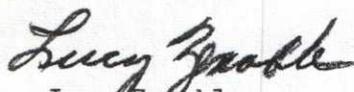

Helen Shapard
Secretary

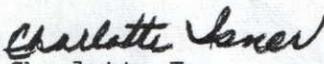

Leonore M. Gooding, Adm. Asst.


Delores Vance
Secretary

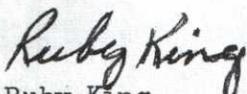

James Britt, Office Supervisor

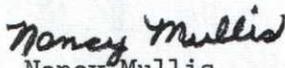

Rosemary O'Loughlin, Sr. Clerk
Control Correction Unit


Lucy Zentoble
Sr. Clerk
Recovery Unit

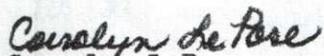

Charlotte Isner
Sr. Clerk
Editing Unit

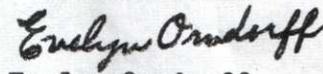

William Bennett
Band Control Clerk

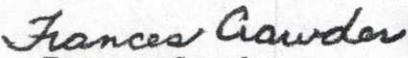

Ruby King
Processing Clerk

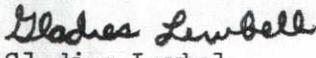

Nancy Mullis
Control Clerk


Helen Coaplin
Processing Clerk

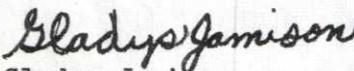

Carolyn LePore
Schedule Control Clerk

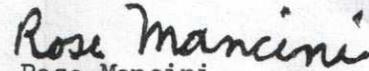

Evelyn Orndorff
Processing Clerk

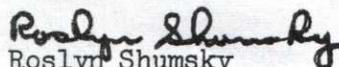

Frances Crowder
Map Room Clerk

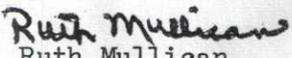

Gladies Lewbel
Control Clerk


Sue Samson
Processing Clerk


Gladys Jamison
Processing Clerk


Rose Mancini
Editing Clerk


Roslyn Shumsky
Editing Clerk


Ruth Mullican
Processing Clerk