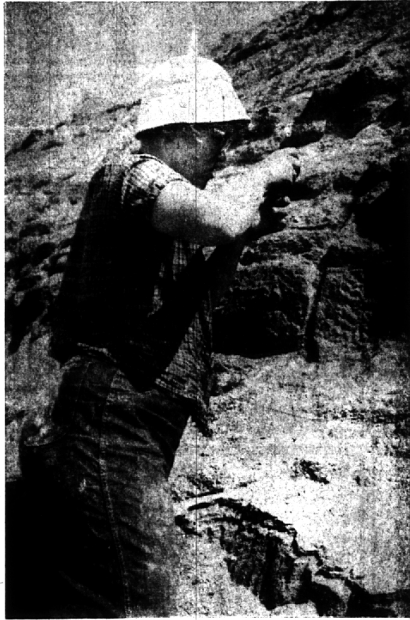


This Brand New Band News Comes Nickell-Rated



Kathy Crockett (who has a brother named Davey) takes a bank swallow from a nest in the quarry at Rogers City, for banding.



Shephen Stackpole of Grosse Pointe (right) takes colored movies of Earl Neeb as he bands a bank swallow in the Rogers City quarry.



Earl Neeb (right) and Doug Larkins photograph the nest of the rare Kirklands Warbler, which nests only in Michigan.

CRANBROOK—Walter F. Nickell, naturalist at Cranbrook Institute of Science, is an indefatigable bird-bander. He's been at it for 28 years, and has banded over 50,000 individual birds of more than 150 species. In 1957-58 he banded 20,690, and this year to July 1, 11,090.

Recently he headed a group of four young scientists and one photographer to Presque Isle County in northern Michigan where in 13 days they banded 7,500 birds of 16 species as Stephen Stackpole of Grosse Pointe recorded the adventure on 7000 feet of color movie film, which will be shown through the winter months to the Institute Junior members and other naturalists.

THE FOUR YOUNG PEOPLE from this area are all majoring in science at their respective colleges.

Douglas Larkins of Royal Oak and Earl Neeb of Pontiac are both students at Highland Park Junior College. Toby Hall of Bloomfield Hills is at Kalamazoo College and Kathy Crockett, also of Bloomfield, is at Ohio Wesleyan.

Both of the young men have assisted Nickell in field work, and Earl Neeb has attended Nickell's field classes since he was nine years old, and now is his assistant in natural history, weekends and holidays.

WHEN THE PARTY REACHED Rogers City, the Presque Isle Advance ran a story written by its owner and publisher Harry H. Whitley under the headline: "The Bird-banders are With Us Again." A few quotes from the story give a first-hand "feel" of bird-banding:

"Ever since the Seagulls have been laying their eggs on the fine piles at Calcite Harbor and have been bringing forth their young, we had it in mind that Prof. Walter P. Nickell of Cranbrook Institute of Science should be coming around.

"And sure enough, on Saturday, he came into the Advance office right on schedule . . . Seems like Prof. Nickell attracts folks. This year he has with him a larger party than usual . . . (names and details follow).

"All these nice people are camped at Hoft State Park. They have Prof. Nickell's trailer and also a nice tent to shelter them.

"WE DROPPED IN TO SEE them Saturday night. There was a big fire burning next to their camp and the party was about to sit down to hot dogs, etc. We offered, at least to the ladies, the conveniences of home, a hot bath, etc. But we could not sell a thing. The party have their sleeping bags . . . and the chill of the night, which drives us to our fireside, does not bother them . . .

"Sunday, we went to Calcite to see how they do it. The group, well protected (it is much better to be protected from what falls from the sky where gulls fly in huge numbers), were busy picking up the newly hatched chicks and putting bands on them.

"They would gather up an armful of chicks, hold them between their legs and band them one at a time and release them. The chicks wobbled off and overhead were much ruffled parent birds, screaming and much upset at the invasion of their sacred nesting grounds."

THROUGH ARE YEAR Nickell has had many "recoveries"—reports on banded birds—from far-flung places, from Laborador on the north to Argentina in the south, all of which are recorded by Whitley in his story. He goes on to say:

"By Monday night the party had banded 5500 gulls and because there are still many left Prof. Nickell sent for more bands which will arrive in a day or two.

"The party left for the Mio section Tuesday to band warblers and will return at the end of the week to complete the banding of the gulls.

"Prof. Nickell tells us that in the last three years they have banded around 12,000 gulls at Calcite. He was surprised at the increase in the colony since a year ago.

"Monday the party turned to banding bank swallows. They found that of the birds netted, about 1 in 12 had been banded previously, showing they return each year to the Calcite nesting ground."

We plant a seed in earth's soil because we know that it will grow into the pattern created within it—providing we cultivate the soil. The more and better the cultivation, the lovelier, the stronger the flower. Can one not apply this thought to himself . . . as he seeks to relate his life to Deity's perfect Plan? Do we not have to provide the best "soil", for this Plan to grow?

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