



The Katharine Ordway
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ORDWAY BULLETIN
No. 104

MACALESTER
COLLEGE

located at 9550 Inver Grove Trail (Dakota County Road 77), Inver Grove Heights, Minn.

ANOTHER RETURNEE at ORDWAY.

Well, ol' 1430-01571 came back again today! (Armistice Day, 1981).

It all started back in '76 - October 25th, to be precise. To be even more precise it was 9:30 in the morning when this young Black-capped Chickadee first crossed paths with me. I trapped it in a ground-trap on the east side of the building and it weighed 12.3 grams and was definitely a "juvenile".

Thus began a string of encounters which was to continue until today, a total of twenty-one meetings with this sassy little fellow. When encountered this morning she weighed 11.8 gms.; it was 10 o'clock in the morning, a usual feeding-time. During the series of re-captures the weight had varied, reaching a high of 13.8 gmas. (Jan. 14, '81) and a low of 11.8 this morning.

On May 10, 1979 and again on the 22nd I determined the sex of this tiny habitue. That spring she was obviously going through motherhood, sitting a nest. At other seasons of the year her gender would not have been apparent. Most of the recaptures took place in cold weather: Jan.: 2 captures; Feb.: 5; Mar.: 3; May: 2; Oct.: 2 and Nov.: 7.

The winter encounters are understandable since the severe weather, snow cover and general sparsity of food drives winter birds to seek provender near dwelling-places and feeders. Similarly the Chickadees become less apparent during the summer months, moving then into the wooded areas to raise their young in cavity nests or an occasional bluebird nesting-box. I believe this one ventured into a trap during May because she was seeking food in "easy" places, perhaps recalling her winter handouts near the building.

So, this little resident, now in her sixth year, continues to hobnob with the human denizens, seeking food but giving nothing in the way of subservience for she was still every bit as feisty and sassy as the first day we met. It has been four months since that twenty-first meeting and the snows have been deep and the temperatures bitter. Has she replaced #1300-38176 (Ordway Bull. No. 73), who has not been heard from for over three years after having been recaptured a total of 76 times over a period of a little over six years? She seems vital enough to do just that.

R. J. CHRISTMAN,
Naturalist

March 11, 1982
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