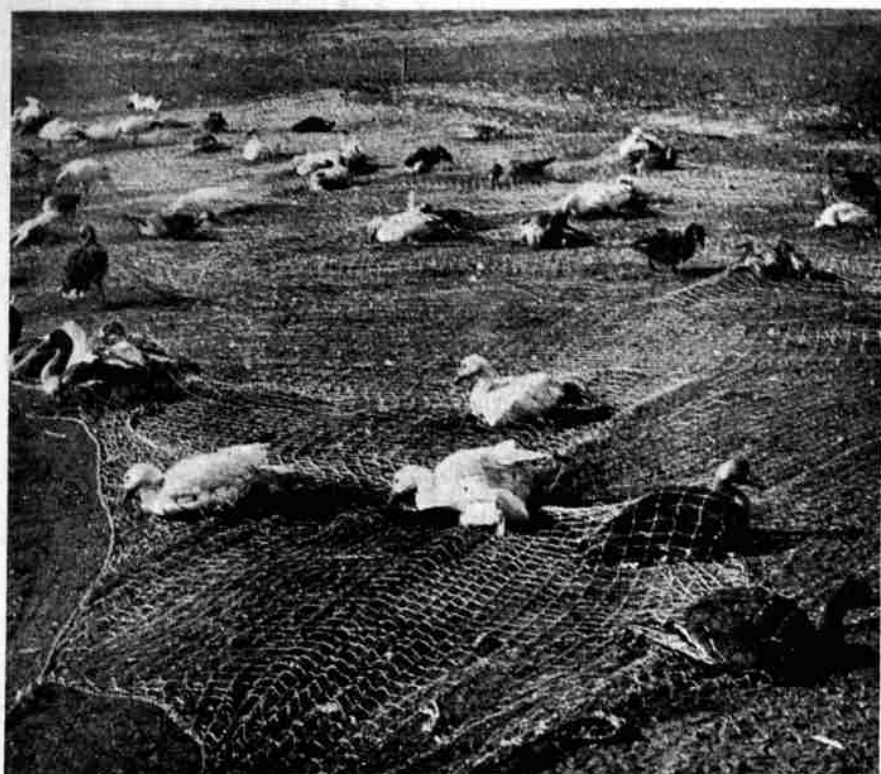


# Game Bird Banding Job Tells Goose History



**SPECKS AND SNOW GESE**, bewildered by the mesh trap-net which has enveloped them, almost quietly await the banding crew. Injuries to the birds in this method of trapping are infrequent, and as many as 160 have been caught at a clip.



**CHECKING** the beak of this snow goose is little Steve Miller, son of Wendell Miller, in charge of the banding operation. Bobby Miller (left) looks on from a little safer distance.

By MALCOLM EPLEY JR.

Those small bands found on the legs of game birds aren't there by accident.

A banding crew of the California Fish and Game Department has been busy earlier this spring banding white-fronted (known as Specks) and Snow Geese in and around the Tulelake Wildlife Refuge south of here.

They are just one crew of many who are doing the same thing throughout the country. The idea is to establish just where each type of bird migrates to, from and by which route they go.

Tulelake Wildlife Refuge Mgr. Tom Horn reported some startling things come from banding operations.

"A Blue-winged Teal," he said, "was banded and released from a duck hospital at the Medicine Lake Refuge in Montana where it had recovered from botulism. It was found by a hunter 83 days later near Barranquilla, Colombia, in South America."

"These," he chuckles, "were surely no prize for the hunters."

To band the birds, a specially rigged trap-net has been designed. It's 30 feet by 90 feet, with mortar

projectiles attached to the net by ropes. The projectiles are placed in mortar tubes, in turn which are placed at an angle in the ground. The net is carefully folded in a trench between the mortars. The target area is baited with potatoes and barley, and when the birds move in all four mortars are fired simultaneously. This hurls the great net out and over the feeding geese which are trapped in the mesh.

Injuries, the refuge manager reported, are infrequent, and as many as 160 birds were trapped at a firing during operations this spring.

**NOTIFICATION**  
The bands are made of aluminum, and are attached to the birds' legs. They carry a serial number and a notice to "Notify Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D. C."

At the banding, the sex, species, date and location of the trap is recorded for each particular leg band.

Though only a few White-fronted and Snow geese have been banded this past few years, Horn said the banding operation has been going

on for some time and that thousands of waterfowl and other birds have been banded.

Information which can be secured from banding, Horn reported, includes sex ratios, total kills, ratio of juvenile to adult birds in the kill and the average life of the birds.

This year's White-front and Snow goose banding was the first real banding operation on these species, Horn said.

## USDA Experts Guess Surplus

Some Agriculture Department officials foresee farm surpluses this year, despite the fact that 1952 plantings probably are considerably below goals, according to the June issue of Country Gentleman.

With normal growing and harvesting weather, these officials say, production of feed grains, wheat and cotton could exceed combined domestic and export demand. A wheat crop of 1,250,000,000 bushels, plus a carry-over of 300,000,000 bushels on July 1, would result in a near-record supply, and at least 500,000,000 bushels in excess of estimated domestic consumption and exports for the next fiscal year.

The Bureau of Agriculture Economics predicts wheat prices "somewhat" below the loan level (about \$2.22) in July.

A corn crop of 3,200,000,000 bushels would just about meet demand because of reduced hog numbers. Some increase is expected in production of oats, barley and grain sorghums.

A cotton crop about as large as

the 15,300,000 bales grown last year is anticipated. Domestic consumption and exports are not expected now to exceed 15,000,000 bales.



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**BIG MESH NET**, 90 feet by 30 feet in size, drops over birds even before they realize it. They are baited into target area. Here member of banding crew readies to take bird from under net.



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Each of these dealers will provide his own tractor, implements and driver. The "match" will be held on the Ben Murphy Farm, two miles south of the "Y" on the Merrill Highway. The date: Saturday, June 14. The time: 1 o'clock in the afternoon.

It will pay you to attend this demonstration! Every farmer in this area is invited to see this "contest." Each guest attending will be given his own "Show-down Program" so that he can follow each part of the demonstration and

judge the various tractors and implements according to what he sees.

The idea behind all of this is simple. We feel that any farmer buying a tractor and implements should have the opportunity to make an honest-to-goodness comparison right in the field.

We further feel that a great many important points about a tractor and about implements—both good and bad—can be revealed only through a demonstration... doing the jobs the farmer will want to do if he buys that equipment.

On some jobs, some equipment is better than others. The important thing is that a tractor and implements should do a better-than-average job all of the time.

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