

IN MEMORIAM: H. ELLIOTT MCCLURE, 1910–1998

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Dr. H. Elliott McClure, an eminent scientist who fostered the promotion of bird banding and the study of migratory birds in Asia, died on 27 December 1998 at St. John's Pleasant Valley Hospital in Camarillo, California, of complications from heart and lung disease. The only child of Howe A. and Clara Phillips McClure, he was born in Chicago, Illinois, on 29 April 1910. After schooling in Seattle (Washington), Lewisville (Texas), and Danville (Illinois), he obtained his B.S. degree in 1933 with High Honors, Phi Beta Kappa, and his M.Sc. in 1936 at the University of Illinois, Ur-

bana. His master's thesis in entomology was a study of insect aeroplankton. He then moved to Iowa State University, where he completed his Ph.D. in wildlife management in 1941 with studies in the ecology and management of the Mourning Dove. In 1938, his lifelong commitment to ornithological activities and bird banding began. He personally banded close to 100,000 individuals of 550 species, the latter possibly a world record. He joined the AOU in 1942, became an Elective Member in 1973, and a Fellow in 1990.

In 1950, McClure came to Japan where he

worked as an ornithologist for the 406 Medical General Laboratory, United States Army, Tokyo, engaged in research related to arthropod-borne zoonoses (including Japanese encephalitis). At that time, one of us (NK) had already worked three years for Dr. O. Austin's office of Wildlife and Natural Resources, GHQ, U.S. Army, Tokyo. Together, the three of us (MY, NK, and McClure) collected birds for blood samples that were smeared onto glass slides and then sent to a medical center in the United States for study and to infect test mice. The main collection points were at Wakkanai, the northernmost point of Hokkaido, where winter birds first arrived from the north, and at Kagoshima, the southernmost point, where summer birds arrived from Asia. Blood samples were also collected at a heronry at Shinhama in Chiba, and from land birds in the Kanto plain and at Mount Takao west of Tokyo.

In 1958, McClure moved to the U.S. Army Medical Research Unit, an addition to the Institutes of Medical Research in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where for five years he studied birds in the tropical jungle. During his stay in Malaysia, Colonel C. M. Barnes of Walter Reed Army Institutes of Research visited the Yamashina Institute for Ornithology (YIO) in Tokyo to request detailed information on the movement of wild birds suspected of transmitting Japanese encephalitis viruses. Because these data were incomplete, the YIO suggested that Barnes organize a project to capture and band birds throughout the Far East. Furthermore, the YIO recommended McClure as the most suitable person to develop such a project.

Thus, in 1963 an epoch-making project for researching migratory birds in Asia was begun by Barnes and McClure with United States and Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) funding. They named it the Migratory Animal Pathological Survey (MAPS); it expanded over eight years to carry on banding work in 18 Asiatic countries. From 1963 through 1966, McClure ran the project from Japan and then set up the MAPS headquarters in Thailand until his retirement in 1975. During those years, he traveled to all of the countries in eastern and southern Asia, promoting international bird-banding cooperation.

The MAPS program banded a total of

1,165,288 individuals of 1,218 species, of which 5,601 individuals of 235 species were recovered. O. L. Austin (*Auk* 92:626) favorably reviewed McClure's "amazingly productive" 478-page report, *Migration and Survival of the Birds of Asia* (U.S. Army component, SEATO, 1974). Lord Medway in his review (*Ibis* 117: 119-120) said that "Thanks to Dr. McClure, training and experience in ringing has been obtained by a generation of biologists in eastern Asia, amateur and professional. From these men, in due course, activity may resurge." And indeed, the Asian bird-banding activities sown by McClure never became extinct. In the 20 years since MAPS ended, Asian banders have steadily increased in numbers, gathering valuable data that McClure used in his 472-page *Migration and Survival of the Birds of Asia, Revised Edition* (White Lotus Press, Bangkok, 1998).

After his retirement in 1975, McClure enjoyed a peaceful life in Camarillo, California, teaching non-credit classes at Moorpark and Ventura Community Colleges, lecturing to various groups, and continuing to band birds. During his lifetime, he published more than 150 articles and eight books, including *Bird Banding* (1984) and *Whistling Wings* (1991), the latter a poetic but truthful account of his beloved Mourning Dove, "Zee," and Zee's risk-filled 17-year struggle against human and other enemies.

McClure was an able leader of untiring energy and thoroughness in both field and laboratory. His tamed Troupial was his intimate companion wherever he went. In addition to his many scientific papers, he was a prolific correspondent who wrote detailed family diaries and long Christmas letters. His personal history is documented in his *Stories I Like to Tell: An Autobiography* (published privately in 1995), which includes many photographs of his family and collaborators.

McClure is survived by his wife, Nobuko; daughters, L. Jeannette Powles and Clara Ann Folk; and three grandchildren. His first wife, Lucy Esther Lou Fairchild, predeceased him in 1991. He was loved by his family and by an extensive community of friends, both national and international. We shall always remember him as a scientist, a friend, and a humanitarian. He will be greatly missed.