

IN MEMORIAM
David W. Johnston, 1926-2015

David Ware Johnston, a past president of the Florida Ornithological Society, died on July 26, 2015 at his home in Fairfax, Virginia. He was born in Miami, Florida, on November 23, 1926, but spent most of his early life in Atlanta, Georgia. There through the Boy Scouts, he became fascinated with birds. After naval service in World War II, he attended the University of Georgia where he earned a BS in 1949 and a MS in 1950. He was always active in the Georgia Ornithological Society and served as editor of its journal, *The Oriole*, during 1956-1959.

After earning a PhD from the University of California at Berkeley (1954) he taught at Mercer University (1954-1959) and Wake Forest University (1959-1963) before coming to the University of Florida in 1963. During his 16 years in Gainesville, among many research interests, he did important work on aspects of the Indigo Bunting's ecology and biology, fat deposition and depletion by migratory birds, and pesticide accumulation in the fatty tissues of birds; in all of these studies he used tower-killed birds from Herbert L. Stoddard's WCTV study on Tall Timbers Research Station for most of his specimen material. Johnston devoted much time investigating and writing about the biogeography of West Indian birds, particularly those of the Cayman Islands, and his interest in island avifaunas led him far afield to such places as Wake Island and Alaska.

He also found time to prepare hundreds of expertly crafted study skins as a teaching collection for the Department of Zoology. These specimens are now housed at the nearby Florida Museum of Natural History, designated as the David W. Johnston Teaching Collection, and are used heavily for teaching courses in ornithology, vertebrate zoology, and wildlife ecology.

Johnston was a Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union (1974), and served as president of FOS during 1977-1979. He edited *Bird-Banding* (now *Journal of Field Ornithology*) and *Ornithological Monographs*, and for a time was director of the ecology program of the National Science Foundation.

He went to George Mason University in Virginia in 1981 and though he retired from academia in 1988, he stayed involved in science, being a member of the Virginia Society of Ornithology, and serving as an editor and advisor to government and international organizations such as the World Bank, World Wildlife Fund, Wildlife Management Institute, and U.S. Forest Service. He became interested in the history of natural

history (he also liked to repair old clocks); among his seven written or edited books was “*The History of Ornithology of Virginia*,” as well as “*A Guide to Bird Finding in Virginia*,” “*Virginia’s Endangered Species*,” and “*Ecology and Conservation of Neotropical Migrant Landbirds*,” the last winning the best-edited book award from the Wildlife Society in 1999. He published a hundred or so peer-reviewed papers in various scientific journals. One of his final works, “*Cedar Key: Birding in Paradise, Finding Birds Then and Now*,” was published in 2009.

He is survived by his wife of 34 years, Esta, three children, and many friends and colleagues in the Florida ornithological community.

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