

ASIO OTUS ASIO OTUS ASIO

A few readers informed me that they had caught the mix-up in the scientific names of the Long-eared Owl and the Eastern Screech-Owl that occurred in *At a Glance* in the last issue. The Latin name of the Long-eared Owl is *Asio otus*, which means "owl with ears," whereas the Eastern Screech-Owl is *Otus asio* or "eared owl." The distinction escapes me. Both owls were formerly in the same genus (*Strix*), and the unfortunate similarity of the Latin names came about when they were assigned to different genera. The author, of course, has several excuses for the error: my wish to stress the similarity of the two names which led to my own confusion, a bad case of computer "bleeding greenies," and also my initial indecision about which owl species was really pictured in the photograph. It *was* a Long-ear!

The following helpful information about identifying Long-eared Owls (LEO) to distinguish them, in this instance, from Great Horned Owls (GHO) has been sent in by Denny Abbott, who has been observing the possible nesting of Long-ears on Plum Island. "LEO has a square facial pattern with the height equaling the width; GHO has a flattened facial pattern, the height about half the width. LEO's crown to the top of the beak is a dark narrow 'V' shape; GHO's crown is a light, widened, somewhat flattened 'V'. LEO's ear tufts are inside or equal to vertical lines drawn through the eyes; GHO's ear tufts are outside such lines. LEO has a relatively short, narrow bill; GHO has a longer (twice that of LEO), proportionately wider, heavy looking bill."

Dorothy R. Arvidson

SPRING HAWK WATCH

The Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch needs volunteer observers for the weekends of April 18 and 19, April 25 and 26, and May 2 and 3 for selected inland and coastal sites. We also need watchers to cover Wachusett Mountain, Plum Island, the Page School in West Newbury, and points on the Outer Cape on weekdays during the peak migration period from April 15 to May 10.

Whether you'd like to cover a new spot you think might be a good spring site, cover a more familiar site, or be teamed with a more experienced hawk-watcher, we need your help. For more information, write Paul M. Roberts, EMHW, 254 Arlington Street, Medford, MA 02155, or call 617-483-4263 after 8:00 P.M.