

## Important Announcement: Schedule Shifts

This issue completes the first volume of *Continental Birdlife* — the first of many, we believe. This, our first foray into publishing, has been tremendously gratifying so far. The personal satisfaction of seeing the journal roll off the press has been greatly augmented by the letters we've received: literally hundreds of letters bearing congratulations, encouragement, constructive criticism. Were we somewhat different in our psychological makeup, we might have filled this issue with laudatory letters from big names in the bird world. But although modesty militates against this, we want to express our deep appreciation to all who wrote. Every note of praise was savored, every criticism was carefully considered. Perhaps we cannot please everyone, but we can and will take all opinions into account.

One of our major concerns in producing *CB* has been pursuit of the elusive goal of complete accuracy. To this end, we have spent hundreds of hours double-checking facts in the library, the museum and the field; we have harrassed various experts with repeated long-distance calls for information; and as a final step, we have performed an eternity of proofreading. The search for accuracy is sometimes educational, sometimes merely tedious, always time-consuming. But we believe that the goal of accuracy merits every minute we've spent upon it, and we were pleased that some readers wrote to agree with this sentiment.

Another major concern of ours has been the problem of publishing on schedule. When we first conceived of *CB* it was a bit daunting to see the popular bird journals that always arrived quite late — including some that had been in existence for a decade and more, even some that were very professional in outward appearance. It was clear to us beforehand that publishing must involve pitfalls and delays which we could not predict without experiencing them ourselves. So we resolved to pay close attention to all aspects of scheduling throughout the production of Volume One . . . to experiment, to experience all the kinds of delays that were possible.

We have certainly succeeded in experiencing delays. Our first number, dated February, was not out until May 1979; now that we're nearing completion of the 1979 volume, 1980 is more than half gone. We've fallen farther behind because of our experimentation with all possible production methods: many of our trials were in fact errors. But now we know all about the time factors involved. Now we could publish on perfect schedule — if it were possible to start over . . .

The main point of this announcement is that we are, in a way, starting over. Invoking a plan conceived some time ago, we are skipping 1980 entirely (it is leap year, isn't it?), and beginning Volume Two with the February 1981 issue — which will actually reach all subscribers during February 1981. This jump in scheduling will allow us to catch up completely without any corner-cutting or compromise on quality. It will also herald some other alterations in *CB*: you will notice some changes in design, and some new features; the number of pages per issue will increase substantially.

These changes (like everything else) will cost money. No one will be too surprised to learn that we are raising our subscription rate. However, in gratitude to those who supported us during our formative year, we are offering them a special renewal rate: all Volume One subscribers are invited to receive Volume Two at 1979 rates (\$9.00 in the U.S., \$10.50 elsewhere) if the renewal is sent in before December 31, 1980. Those who have already (with heart-warming faith) renewed their subscriptions for 1980 will automatically receive the 1981 issues.

We hope you will all join us for what promises to be a fascinating year.