

ANNOUNCEMENT

A HOME STUDY COURSE IN ORNITHOLOGY

BY

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The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology has recently announced a home study course in bird biology entitled Seminars in Ornithology, which should be of interest to every birdbander, no matter how experienced in the field, who has never had a formal college-level course in ornithology. That includes most of us.

The course is the result of 10 years of planning and writing by O. Sewall Pettingill, Jr., and a staff of professional collaborators, and involved the investment of more than \$70,000, some of which funds were provided by an industrial grant.

The course consists of nine seminars which may be completed at the student's own pace; each seminar is studied and a set of quiz sheets are to be returned to Cornell before the next seminar is studied. Corrected quiz sheets are returned. Students who complete the entire course satisfactorily receive a certificate from the Laboratory.

The course is \$11.00 per seminar (the final lesson is free) which can be paid per seminar, or in advance. If paid in advance, the total cost is \$88. Per seminar the cost is \$95 (with registration fee). There is a 10% discount to Laboratory members.

The seminars are copiously illustrated and the subjects of each seminar are: 1. A Preview of Birds, 2. The External Bird, 3. Birds in the Earthly Environment, 4. Birds on the Move, 5. The Internal Bird [Pt.1], 6. The Internal Bird [Pt.2], 7. Behavior of Birds, 8. Birds from Nests to Flight, 9. Birds and you.

The undersigned bought this course and completed a few lessons before releasing this announcement in EBBA News. So from personal experience, I heartily recommend this course to all EBBA News readers. Your money will be well invested, believe me! When you diligently study each Seminar, your lectures and net-lane talks will take on new meaning, because you'll know what you are talking about, instead of grasping at straws. Besides, there will be few questions from your audience which you will not be able to answer.

Good luck! Fred Schaeffer, Ed.

A BANDER'S LIBRARY
By Robert P. Yunick

The beginning bander is faced with a multitude of decisions on where to spend most advantageously his limited funds on a seemingly limitless list of equipment, gadgets, books, etc. To assist newcomers in selecting a bander's "identification library", I have listed below a number of recommendations for consideration. The term "identification" is intended to cover in the broadest sense matters of specific identification, determination of age and sex, the use of geographical distribution data, and general banding skill improvements which make one a more knowledgeable identifier of passerines in the hand. The texts that comprise the list are ones which I have found useful in various ways. In no way have I intended to be a critical reviewer of each of these sources.

I have classified these recommendations into two groups: A. Essential to have, and B., Those which are nice to have if one can afford them. Lastly, the important matter of cost is considered.

A. Essential to have.

1. A Manual for the Identification of Birds of Minnesota and Neighboring States by T.S. Roberts, \$4.50, 293pp., University of Minn., Press., Minneapolis, Minn., 1955. This soft cover, rugged guide excels in providing plumage details, molt data mostly from Dwight, measurements and interesting summaries of the various avian families. The text is written in the form of a key. Because of a lack of colored illustrations, this text finds its greatest utility in confirming species identification after once having consulted Peterson or Robbins, *et al.*, or in confirming details on age or sex plumage characteristics. Its combined compactness and detail are without peer.
2. Birds of North America - A Guide to Field Identification by C.S. Robbins, B. Bruun, H.S. Zim, and A. Singer, \$5.95 in hard cover or \$3.95 in soft cover, 340pp., Golden Press, New York, 1966. This guide serves front-line duty on the majority of species identification problems. Its compactness, coverage of all North America, distribution maps and excellent artwork make it an extremely valuable guide. In conjunction with Peterson it is usually the first text sought for a species confirmation. The soft cover version has taken well to rugged field use.
3. A Field Guide to the Birds (Eastern) by R. T. Peterson, \$5.95 in hard cover or \$3.95 in soft cover, 254pp., Houghton-Mifflin, Boston 1947. My well worn 23-year-old copy of the hard cover text which has only recently required a couple of rubber bands to keep on the cover has given exemplary service. I cannot