

In Memoriam



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IN MEMORIAM: WILLIAM GEORGE, 1925–1992

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William George, a member of the AOU since 1960 and Elective Member since 1969, died at a hospital in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, on 18 April 1992. Born in Santa Cruz, California, on 2 February 1925, he attended Stanford University and served in the Naval Air Corps during World War II. Initially an English major, he wrote and published several short stories during and after the war. He switched to ornithology and the University of Arizona, where he earned undergraduate and graduate degrees. His doctoral research on the classification of the Olive Warbler (*Peucedramus taeniatus*) led him to conclude that it was not a parulid warbler, as heretofore supposed (1962. *Am. Mus. Novit.* No. 2103).

From 1961 to 1964, Bill worked at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, first as a Frank M. Chapman Fellow and then as a Research Fellow. He spent a year in South America collecting songbirds for the Museum.

He joined the faculty at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale in 1964. He was promoted and attained full professorship. Bill taught courses in invertebrate zoology, vertebrate zoology, and ornithology. Diagnosed with cancer in 1985, however, he was forced to cease teaching the next year because of failing vision and the inability to walk.

His research interests included oscine hyoid structure, wing plumage, avian taxonomy, the habits of

woodpeckers, raptor management, the avifauna of southern Illinois, and the life history of the southeastern shrew (*Sorex longirostris*). Among ornithologists, though, he will be remembered chiefly for his studies of predation by domestic cats. Living on a farm in Cobden, Illinois, he was aroused by observations of his own cats. They prompted him to investigate the extent of such predation and its consequences for natural predators. He published his research in numerous journal papers and presented his findings at ornithological meetings. Bill was working on a book on the cat predation studies and his wife, Marian, a joint author, intends to finish it for him.

He was a member of several ornithological societies and served on the AOU committees on Research and on the Fuertes and Nice Awards. He helped to establish the Cave Creek Wood Warbler Sanctuary near his home.

Bill was seriously ill for the last seven years of his life. A voracious reader, he was very discouraged by his loss of eyesight. "In spite of his handicaps," his wife writes, "he remained essentially unchanged: contentious, irreverent, curious, scornful of hypocrisy, funny. He charmed his nurses and infuriated his doctors." He is survived by his wife, two daughters, and two grandchildren.

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IN MEMORIAM: ARTHUR BERNARD SINGER, 1917–1990

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Arthur Bernard Singer was born 4 December 1917, and died 6 April 1990. Although brought up in New York City, Arthur developed an early fascination with birds. His favorite haunts were the Bronx Zoo and the American Museum of Natural History, where Robert Cushman Murphy encouraged his efforts and

where Arthur acquired a worldwide perspective. After graduating from Cooper Union Art School in New York City in 1939, he began his career as an art teacher, art director, and designer. His real interest, however, was in depicting the postures and plumages of birds and mammals. As early as 1941 his wildlife art

was exhibited at the Bronx Zoo. While he was in the army, his wife Edith ("Judy") helped mount this first exhibit; Arthur never saw the show.

Arthur's first major commission was to prepare eight prints of state birds and flowers for *American Home* magazine in 1956. He entered the international scene in 1961 with the publication of Oliver Austin's *Birds of the World*, which contained over 700 of Arthur's paintings and was published in eight languages.

In North America, Arthur Singer is best known for his field guide art in *Birds of North America* by Robbins, Bruun, and Zim, which has sold more than five million copies since 1966. An innovation for field guides was illustration of a characteristic habitat of each species, as well as a typical behavior. Arthur relied on a magnificent collection of his own photographs of birds and mammals in their native habitats to supplement his field sketches and museum specimens. He was concerned with minute details of posture, eye and leg color, as well as the artistic design of each page. He strived for perfection in depicting color, even though he knew that much of the color fidelity would be lost in the printing process. He brought many of his finished art pages to a coastal bird-banding station in Maryland during the fall migration to make last-minute changes after comparing his renditions to hand-held birds.

He collaborated with Bertel Bruun in preparation of the *Hamlyn Guide to Birds of Britain and Europe*, which

was first published in London in 1970 and republished in the United States by McGraw-Hill. This guide has been translated into 10 foreign languages. He then illustrated Alexander Skutch's *The Life of the Hummingbird* (1973) with scores of action paintings of brilliantly colored hummingbirds, most of them larger than life. He also did the plates for Finn Salomonson's *Birds of Greenland* (1981). The U.S. Postal Service commissioned him to design 50 stamps showing state birds and state flowers. Arthur painted the birds and his son, Alan, painted the flowers. The resulting 1982 sheet became the largest selling single issue in U.S. postal history.

Arthur Singer was a strong advocate of habitat protection, especially in the tropics; he served on the board of the Asa Wright Nature Center in Trinidad. His wildlife art has graced the walls of dozens of art shows and is cherished by collectors in Europe and in North America. Cooper Union awarded Arthur their first Augustus St. Gaudens Medal in 1962, and, in 1985, on the 200th anniversary of Audubon's birthday, the National Audubon Society presented him the Hal Borland Medal. He joined the AOU in 1962 and had been an Elective Member since 1970. Arthur was a devoted family man. His first wife Edith died of cancer. He is survived by his two sons (Paul and Alan), two grandchildren, and his second wife, Dale Cantwell Singer. I thank Alan Singer for assistance in writing this memorial.