



*Barn Owl. Photo/ Allan D. Cruickshank from N.A.S.*

The Blue List for 1974 finds relatively few changes from that of 1973, suggesting that our evaluations of the well-being of the species listed have withstood the tests of time and critical appraisal.

It should be emphasized that inclusion on the list does not necessarily mean that a species is declining throughout its range. The list includes those species reported as declining in numbers, whether in a restricted area or throughout.

To help check and update the list, the editor called on the Regional Editors of the seasonal reports, men and women who are authorities on the bird populations of their areas, and who are in touch with hundreds of observers throughout their regions. They were given the 1973 Blue List, and asked to consider whether each bird listed should be retained or deleted for 1974. They were further invited to make suggestions for new additions to the list; either of birds to be Blue-Listed or to be watched for possible inclusion. Twenty-three Regional Editors responded; their opinions are incorporated herein.

All observers are asked to pay special attention to the Blue-Listed species and report all observations to their Regional Editors, so that more accurate evaluations of their status may be made.

#### THE BLUE LIST

1. **Red-throated Loon.** Only three regions suggested it be deleted from the list; two at the northern end of the Atlantic Coast, and one at the southern end of the Pacific. Elsewhere it was a "keeper."
2. **Red-necked Grebe.** Added on the basis of suggestions from two areas: Ontario and Hudson-St. Lawrence, but not mentioned by editors from other involved regions.
3. **Western Grebe.** Four editors suggested deleting the species, but it was considered declining in the Middle Pacific Coast and Southern Great Plains regions, and so remains.
4. **Fork-tailed Petrel.** All West Coast editors agreed that this bird should remain on the list.
5. **White Pelican.** There was general agreement that this species be retained, with contrary opinions only from the Western Great Lakes and Central Southern regions.
6. **Double-crested Cormorant.** A diversity of opinion surrounds this bird. Western and Midwestern editors favor its retention, Atlantic and Gulf Coast editors believe that it should no longer be Blue-Listed. The score: 10 to 9 for listing. Obviously, as with all fish-eaters, it is a species to be carefully watched.
7. **Black-crowned Night Heron.** Another species with different impressions in different regions. Nine editors say keep it, nine say delete. In general, those in favor of listing are in mid-continent areas, while the two coasts see no present dangers. But in one region two editors were on different sides of the fence. More study needed!
8. **Wood Stork.** No controversy: all the editors agree on listing this species.
9. **White-faced Ibis.** Few editors are concerned with this species, but those with this ibis in their regions agree that it should remain on the list.

10. **White Ibis.** Stephenson in Florida says retain it; Imhof in Alabama suggests deletion. Florida has a somewhat stronger case.
11. **Fulvous Tree Duck.** A candidate for early removal from the list; apparently in no danger in Florida and the South Pacific Coast regions, Webster in South Texas dissenting.
12. **Sharp-shinned Hawk.** Editors were almost unanimous in approving the retaining of this troubled species on the Blue List. Opposite opinion came only from the Northern Great Plains, Western Great Lakes, the Southwest, and Southern Pacific Coast regions.
13. **Cooper's Hawk.** An even more pessimistic overview of status of the Cooper's Hawk came from all sections of the continent, except for the southwestern corner of the United States. Parker and McCaskie were alone in suggesting deletion of this species.
14. **Red-shouldered Hawk.** Another declining species which was approved for Blue-Listing by 15 of 18 editors considering it. Only Florida's John Ogden, California's Guy McCaskie, and Alabama's Thomas Imhof see hopeful signs in the Red-shouldered picture.
15. **Swainson's Hawk.** All three Pacific Coast editors, and those of the Southern Great Plains, Northern Rockies, and Western Great Lakes region support the listing of this hawk. Stuart Houston of the Northern Great Plains, and Ted Parker in the Southwest find no cause for alarm.
16. **Ferruginous Hawk.** Throughout its range it is declining, according to the editor-experts in its range. But here too, Parker in the Southwest finds no problems. Are the raptors which are threatened elsewhere doing well in Arizona and New Mexico, and if so, why?
17. **Harris' Hawk.** Only four editors reported, three for, and one against. Contrarily it is the Southwest Region editor who considers the species declining; this would be the most important region for this species in the U.S.
18. **Marsh Hawk.** No pattern emerges, with nine editors for listing and nine for de-listing. But more eastern than western editors are for keeping; apparently east of the Mississippi the Marsh Hawk still has problems.
19. **Osprey.** Not quite unanimously approved for listing, but the score here is 17 to 2. Osprey is still a threatened species everywhere except apparently along the Northern Pacific Coast, and in the Western Great Lakes region.
20. **Caracara.** Unanimous in favor of listing in the opinions of the five concerned Regional Editors.
21. **Prairie Falcon.** Unanimous in favor of listing in the opinions of the 10 Regional Editors concerned.
22. **Merlin.** Almost unanimous in favor of listing, with 14 editors agreeing, and two (Clive Goodwin in Ontario, and P.A. Buckley in Hudson-St. Lawrence) dissenting. But these two do not deny the scarcity of this raptor, they merely fail to note any further declines.
23. **Am. Kestrel.** A species that is listed only because it seems to be in difficulty in a few widely-separated areas. Thirteen editors would strike it from the list, but two in Florida plus Frederic Scott in Virginia and Van Remsen in California note serious declines.
24. **Sage Grouse.** A "keeper" in the eyes of the five concerned Regional Editors reporting.
25. **Limpkin.** A slight enigma. Stephenson in northern Florida would drop the species. Kale in southern Florida would keep it on the Blue List. More information is obviously needed.
26. **American Oystercatcher.** Another candidate for possible removal from the list. Although it is a low population species, it seems to be increasing slightly in the Northeast, in trouble along the Gulf Coast, and of controversial status in Florida.
27. **Piping Plover.** Habitat disturbance in this and other shorebirds is the basic reason why most editors would keep the Piper on the list. The score: 9 to 4 in favor, with two Florida editors of differing opinions, as are two editors from the Middle Atlantic Coast region. Worth continuing attention.
28. **Snowy Plover.** In trouble everywhere except in the Southern Pacific Coast Region. Retained on the list.
29. **Franklin's Gull.** Added on the basis of a report from Robert Janssen that the species "suffered a tremendous crash in Minnesota in 1972-3." No comment from other editors. To be watched carefully.
30. **Gull-billed Tern.** A unanimous "keeper" among the seven Regional Editors concerned. How this world-wide species is faring elsewhere would be of great interest.
31. **Least Tern.** Habitat disturbance and destruction is a factor here (See this issue, pp 946-949). Two out of three Florida editors, however, would de-list the species, as would Scott and Imhof. [Royal Tern. Removed

from list, apparently holding its own over most of its North American range.]

32. **Ancient Murrelet.** A problem. Only two editors report: Crowell of the Northern Pacific Coast region would keep, Van Remsen of the Middle Pacific Coast region would delete. Tentatively retained.
33. **Yellow-billed Cuckoo.** Kept on the list on the basis of declining populations in California and South Texas. Eleven editors elsewhere, however, detect no difficulties for the species.
34. **Barn Owl.** Except for the Pacific Coast, the Southwest, and possibly Florida, editors agreed that the Barn Owl should remain on the Blue List, and be closely watched. Several editors, including George Hall of the Appalachian Region, reported that they never get information on Barn Owls. More interest and attention is suggested.
35. **Burrowing Owl.** Only three editors out of 10 reporting favor deletion of this species, and two Florida editors are split on the subject.
36. **Florida Scrub Jay.** Unanimously retained.
37. **Bewick's Wren.** Another case of widely disparate opinions, from region to region. But outside of South Texas, the Southwest and the Pacific Coast, all editors favor retention.
38. **Loggerhead Shrike.** An obviously declining species in much of its range, although it is apparently doing well and unthreatened in the Northern Great Plains, Florida, and the West Coast. Deserves closer attention.
39. **Bell's Vireo.** Five to one in favor of retention, with only Parker in the Southwest dissenting.
40. **Gray Vireo.** Another enigma. McCaskie would keep, Parker would de-list.
41. **Yellow Warbler.** Retained only because it is declining in northern California.
42. **Com. Yellowthroat.** Retained only because it is declining in northern California.
43. **Bachman's Sparrow.** John Ogden of Florida favors de-listing, while four other editors favor retention. Retained for this year.
44. **Grasshopper Sparrow.** Added on the basis of disturbing reports from Florida and the Northeast. Still in no danger elsewhere.
45. **Henslow's Sparrow.** Added on the basis of declines in the Northeast and the Western Great Lakes region. No reports from else-[Santa Barbara Song Sparrow. Removed from list. Either extinct or on the brink.].

The following are additional species mentioned by Regional Editors as possible candidates for the list. Each of these species was listed by only one Editor.

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| Janssen | King Rail, Whimbrel, Tufted Titmouse, Yellow-breasted Chat.   |
| Goodwin | House Wren.   |
| Kale    | Ovenbird  |
| Gaines  | Long-eared Owl, Short-eared Owl, Willow Flycatcher.   |
| Buckley | Least Bittern, Am. Bittern, Broad-winged Hawk, Com. Merganser, Wilson's Plover, Upland Sandpiper, Barred Owl, Whip-poor-will, Com Nighthawk, Cliff Swallow, Purple Finch. |

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LIST — STATUS UNDETERMINED

Following is the list of species or subspecies presently included in the category of "Status undetermined, special concern" by the Office of Endangered Species, U.S. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. Most are subspecies of restricted range, but several are species already Blue-Listed, and thus marked (B). Both your Regional Editor and the above-named office, whose address is Washington 20240, seek your cooperation in reporting evidence (or lack of it) of the presence of these birds in (or out) of their presumed ranges.

- White-faced Ibis (B)**
- Red-shouldered Hawk (*elegans*) (B)**
- Ferruginous Hawk (B)**
- Broad-winged Hawk (Puerto Rico)**
- Caracara (B)**
- Aplomado Falcon (*septentrionalis*)**
- Merlin (*richardsonii*, *columbarius*) (B)**
- Rock Ptarmigan (*townsendi*, *yunaskensis*, *sanfordi*, *dixonii*)**
- Sharp-tailed Grouse (*columbianus*)**
- Gambel's Quail (*ignoscens*)**
- Snowy Plover (*nivosus*) (B)**
- Mountain Plover**
- Bristle-thighed Curlew**
- Long-billed Curlew (*parvus*)**
- Short-billed Dowitcher (*caurinus*)**
- Red-legged Kittiwake**
- Burrowing Owl (*floridana*, *hypugaea*) (B)**
- Short-eared Owl (Puerto Rico)**
- Winter Wren (*meligeris*, *tanagensis*, *seguamensis*, *stevensoni*, *petrophilus*, *semidiensis*, *helleri*)**
- Black-capped Vireo**
- Gray-crowned Rosy Finch (*umbrina*)**
- Grasshopper Sparrow (*floridanus*) (B)**
- Fox Sparrow (*annectens*)**
- Song Sparrow (*samuelsis*, *maxillaris*, *pusillula*, *amaka*)**
- McKay's Bunting**