

The Last Word

WE ARE MAKING a serious and time-consuming effort to discover and eliminate errors in our mailing list, which is now computerized and managed for us by an outside firm. The process of switching from our former method to the new, resulted in a small number of subscribers who either were inadvertently omitted from the new list, or whose addresses were incorrectly transcribed: either case resulting in non-delivery. Equally frustrating to us, some changes of address have been added to the list without old addresses being deleted, resulting in double mailings.

We are currently checking every address label in a complete computer printout of our current list. While non-delivery can result from postal mishaps beyond our control, we believe that this task will result in far fewer complaints. However, bear in mind that we cannot check a duplicate printout for each issue. The only way we can become aware of a problem is if the subscriber tells us. We replace recent missing copies without charge if reported promptly, but we look with some skepticism upon claims by libraries that an entire volume was never received, two years ago.

Chances for errors on our list multiply when renewals for expired subscriptions reach us late. If your subscription expires with this issue, and you delay your renewal beyond a week before the day of the May issue mailing, you have already been deleted from the mailing list, and then must be re-entered. Your May issue must be mailed separately and later, at higher rates, and if we must send a second notice before your renewal, our total extra cost for your renewal is almost \$1.

IN AMERICAN BIRDS 32:1093-94 (1978) we spelled out in detail the kinds of articles and short papers we are interested in. Here, revised slightly, is what we said then, and it still applies today.

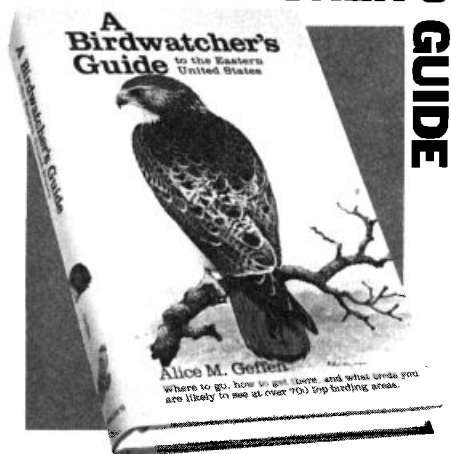
FOR MANY YEARS *American Birds*, formerly *Audubon Field Notes*, has been the major publication in documenting the changing birdlife of the North American continent.

Much of the material we publish results from the field observations and studies of thousands of amateurs and professionals alike, on species distribution, on population dynamics, on migration, and on the rare occurrence of American birds. These areas of concern are evident in our quarterly regional reports, our Changing Seasons summaries, our Christmas Bird Counts, our habitat studies of small tracts, and in the major and minor articles submitted to us both by professionals and amateurs. We want every author and potential author of papers in all our fields of interest to know that we welcome and actively solicit for publication pertinent manuscripts and illustrations. If you have an idea you think might make an interesting article (by you or someone else) tell us about it.

IN THE EVER-MORE-CROWDED field of journals, we think that authors are rewarded in choosing *American Birds* for publication in a unique way: they reach a circulation of 14,500+, including hundreds of universities and colleges, and a readership of 24,000+.

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uency in itself. Many authors tell us they are amazed at the widespread response publication in *American Birds* brings them. And we feel certain that, because of our editorial policy of fostering readability in manuscripts, *American Birds* is more thoroughly read than some journals. We have one other editorial policy that benefits authors of timely "occurrence" articles: we do not publish articles in strict order of receipt or acceptance, but when possible rush into print as soon as possible (sometimes within days of receipt) articles and photographs



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graphs in this category. All articles, long and short, are refereed before publication.

HERE THEN, are the categories of concern in which we continue to seek and publish articles.

Bird Distribution. We want articles about single species: Cassin's Sparrow (September, 1977), or groups of species: Reclaimed surface mines (January, 1978), changes in range, winter or summer: Am. Woodcock (November, 1978), single occurrences of importance: Eared Trogon (May, 1978), summaries of rare occurrences: Curlew Sandpiper (September, 1978), or annotated lists: Birds of Antigua (November, 1978).

Migration. We seek articles about orientation, mechanics, sampling studies, unusual phenomena. Example: Transatlantic autumn migration (May 1978).

Field Identification. We solicit full scale or short articles on difficult species or groups, illustrated. Recent examples include: Eskimo and Little Curlews (March, 1977), Seabirds of the Bay of Fundy (March, May, 1978), Pine Siskin plumage (June, 1976).

Site Guides. We publish comprehensive, well-illustrated, professionally-mapped studies of interesting or important birding areas. Recent example: Coastal Marin County, California (May, 1978).

Field Study Techniques. We want articles on the "how to" of bird study. Examples: Birdwatching etiquette (June, 1976), Recording bird positions at sea (November, 1977), Basic bird book library (October, 1976), Making sound recordings (May, 1977), On taking field notes (September, 1977), Telephoto flash (September, 1978).

Behavioral Notes. Many of the published "S.A.s" in the regional reports are in fact notes on unusual bird behavior, and we welcome picture essays or short articles on this subject. Examples: Roof-nesting Least Terns (February, 1975), 1975), Green Heron using feather lure (June, 1975).

Rare and Endangered Species. We welcome status reports on closely monitored endangered or threatened species. Examples: Hawaiian forest species (May, 1977), California Condor (August, 1976),

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Eskimo Curlew (March, 1977), Ivory-billed Woodpecker recording (June, 1975).

Photographs. We always seek photographs as documentation of rare occurrences, to illustrate articles on identification or behavior, and for covers. Cover photographs must meet our very high standards and we pay \$100 for volunteered photographs selected as covers. Picture essays are welcome.

Drawings. We would like to vary the appearance of our pages with black-and-white drawings, to be used as decorative or instructive illustrations. They can be rendered in pencil, pen, scratchboard, wash, or any preferred technique. If you are willing to provide illustrations of subjects we may suggest, let us hear from you.

Our primary concern is North America, including the Hawaiian archipelago, and Bermuda, Mexico and Central America, the West Indies, and South America. We do, however, review books and list tours from and to other continents, and we do include the Eastern Hemisphere for the Near and Rat island groups of Alaska.

For further information and suggestions for authors, see *American Birds*, 30(6) second cover, or communicate with the Editor.

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IMPORTANT POSTSCRIPT. On January 1, 1980, *American Birds* ended its policy of accepting two-year subscriptions. There is a one word explanation for this: inflation. No longer can we even roughly predict our costs a year in advance, much less for longer periods of time. Recently we increased, with regret, our one-year subscriptions from \$10 for the United States and \$12 for Canada and

foreign, to \$12 and \$14. If we continued to accept two-year subscriptions at the old rates of \$18 and \$20, we would, in effect, be charging only \$6 for the second year's subscription.

If we could somehow fairly accurately estimate our costs for 1981 and 1982, we might arrive at a safe longer-term charge. But then it might well look strange: \$12 for one year, \$26 for two, and 42 for three! A most disturbing prospect.

Meanwhile, a number of subscribers are still hopefully sending us two-or-more years' subscriptions, and others are cagily extending subscriptions beyond future expiration dates. Our policy, however, must be to refund any amounts in excess of the single year's fee that may be *currently* due.

—The Editor.



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