American Birds plans a new series on breeding behavior

BEGINNING WITH the next—March, 1982—issue of *American Birds,* we will inaugurate a series of illustrated articles that will substantially broaden the scope of *American Birds'* interests. Each article in the series will be a pictorial essay with accompanying text, on the breeding behavior of a single species of North or South American birds.

With the exception of one very memorable article entitled Leks, Sex, and Buff-breasted Sandpipers (Volume 33 Number 6) by J. P. Myers, *American Birds* has left bird behavior largely to other journals (although with many a behavioral note tucked into an "S.A."), and concentrated on distribution, migration, population, rare occurrence,

identification, and of course, our unique continental record of field reports. But in considering behavioral articles, we realized that there is much exciting material to be published, that with our capability for color illustration, we could do better than anyone, and the question became "Why not?"

We will, at least for the foreseeable future, eschew the kind of behavioral paper that centers so largely around statistical studies. We will not compete with *Auk* and *Condor* for such papers. Our series will depend largely on pictures to tell the story (if budget permits, we may even also provide sound tracks).

The series will be the special project

of J. P. Myers, who has been appointed Editor, Special Projects, strangely enough, and by even greater coincidence, the first article in the new series will be written and illustrated by the very same J. P. Myers, and intriguingly entitled "The promiscuous Pectoral Sandpiper."

We welcome "Pete" Myers to the staff, and the series to our pages Authors, or potential authors, of possible numbers in the series are invited to contact Dr. Myers at the Philadelphia Academy of Sciences, 19th and The Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103 Telephone: (215) 299-1181.

Thirteenth in the Fuertes print series

[The original painting was reproduced in *Bird-Lore,* Volume XII, Number 23, May-June 1910. Distribution notes have been abridged from the A.O.U. Check-List, 5th Edition (1955), but the Chapman text has been unchanged except for a taxonomic update.]

Sharp-tailed Sparrow *Ammospiza caudacuta*

Northeastern British Columbia, southern MacKenzie, central Saskatchewan and central Manitoba south to southern Alberta and North Dakota; James Bay; Atlantic coast from lower St. Lawrence Valley south to North Carolina. Winters on the Gulf coast from southern Texas to Florida, and on the Atlantic coast from New York to southern Florida.

Seaside Sparrow *Ammospiza maritima*

Salt marshes of the Atlantic Coast from Massachusetts

south to northern Florida, and of the Gulf coast from southern Texas to central peninsular Florida. Migrant in part in winter from the northern limits of the breeding range.

Dusky Seaside Sparrow *Ammospiza nigrescens*

Resident in salt marshes of eastern Orange and northern Brevard counties, central eastern Florida (Persimmon Hammock on St. Johns River, near Indian River City, and Titusville, Merritt's Island). Total population, 5 males, now (1982) in captivity in Gainesville, Florida.

Notes on the Plumage of North American Sparrows

By FRANK M. CHAPMAN

Sharp-tailed Sparrow *A. caudacuta caudacuta* (Fig. 1). The pronounced buff markings, brown crown stripes, and striking pattern of the upper parts, are among the most characteristic features of the Sharp-tail in fresh plumage. Worn summer birds lose much of the buff on the breast and sides, which are then more sharply streaked, but the buff on the sides of the head is still conspicuous.

The nestling differs greatly from the adult, being entirely rich buff below, usually more or less streaked on the breast and sides; the upper parts are dark blackish brown, the feathers of the back, the wing coverts and tertials being widely margined with yellowish brown. This plumage, as Dwight has shown, is worn from the time the bird leaves the nest in late June or early July, until September or early Octo-