

# American Birds

Fall 1985



# American Birds

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*A seasonal journal devoted to the birds of the Americas*

*Published by the National Audubon Society*

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AMERICAN BIRDS welcomes the submission of articles and photographs for publication. Our major areas of interest are the changing distribution, population, migration, rare occurrence, ecology, and behavior of the birds of North and South America, including Middle America and the West Indies. We solicit articles on problems in field identification, and contributions to our Site Guide series on birding locales, and to our Centers of Learning series that profiles institutions concerned with ornithology.

**AUTHORS**—AMERICAN BIRDS publishes papers of a technical nature, but only when written in an easily readable style, without complicated equations, long tables, or complex graphs. Lengthy papers should be accompanied by an abstract of about 50 words. All submissions will be carefully considered, but authors planning major submissions should correspond with the editors first. Major articles should not exceed 3000 words and six display items, but exceptions may be agreed upon after consultation. All material submitted should be original and not published previously. Manuscripts should follow accepted rules of format and style, be typewritten, double-spaced, on one side of white paper, with generous margins. Submissions should include suggestions for subheads and full captions for all figures, tables, and photographs. We require the original typescript, display items of publishable quality, and at least two copies of everything submitted. All manuscripts will be acknowledged and evaluated promptly, but authors are advised that a backlog exists, and that this may entail a delay in publication after acceptance. Manuscripts will be refereed before being accepted. Submissions judged to be unsuitable for publication in AMERICAN BIRDS will be returned. We also welcome letters to the editor of moderate length.

For a Work in Progress section, we welcome notices of research projects seeking field reports or other collaboration and requests for assistance; we publish advance notices of important conventions, meetings, symposia, seminars, and conferences.

**ARTISTS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS**—AMERICAN BIRDS is now able to publish more pages of illustrative material, both in color and in black-and-white. We welcome submission of photographic essays or series of topical interest, high-quality photographs of significance, transparencies of paintings in color, as well as line or wash drawings that can be used in an illustrative or decorative manner. Photographs should be glossy black-and-white prints or transparencies, clearly marked with the photographer's name and address. We would like to hear from (with a sample or two) artists who might be willing to illustrate articles for us. As usual, documentary photographs will be used, space permitting, in our Changing Seasons and Regional Reports sections.

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AMERICAN BIRDS is published five times a year. Editorial and business offices are located at 950 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. Subscriptions, all in U.S.\$: One year U.S.A. \$25, Canada and Foreign \$30, Libraries and Institutions, \$32. Single copies: Christmas Bird Count \$15.00. Fall Migration (Spring issue), Winter Season (Summer issue), Spring Migration (Fall issue), Summer Season (Winter issue) all \$4.50 U.S.A. Checks and money orders *in U.S. \$ only* should be made payable to AMERICAN BIRDS. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and additional Post Offices. Copyright © 1985 by the National Audubon Society, Inc.

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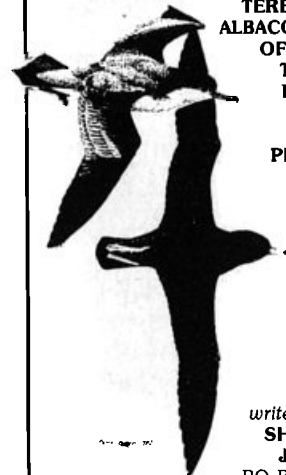
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## ...from the editor's desk

**A**S THIS ISSUE GOES TO PRESS, WE ARE PLEASED TO announce that you will have to read pretty fast to keep up with us. The eighty-fifth Audubon Christmas Bird Count issue—weighing in at nearly 2½ pounds—will be arriving in your mail boxes within the next two-three weeks. This year's issue tells the tale of avian early-winter abundance in 1478 counts across North, Middle, and northern South America, including counts from Bermuda and the West Indies. Once again the Herculean task has been performed. So clean up your binoculars, make sure they are aligned, dig out your wool, down, Polar Fleece, Gore-Tex, cotton and denim clothes. Call your local compiler and birding friends. Make all the last minute arrangements. The eighty-sixth Christmas Bird Count season is nearly upon us. By the time you receive this issue all count compilers should have gotten their packets. If, by some chance, you or yours did not receive a packet, call us at 212-546-9192 to check on it or order another. Remember that the first day of the coming count period is December 18, 1985, and the last date on which a count can be held is January 5, 1986. Get ready! Get set! Go for it!!!

This issue was a special pleasure to prepare because we were able to include the splendid Fuertes print with the accompanying text by the foremost authority on Fuertes in this country, Robert McCracken Peck. Bob cheerfully included a synopsis of the life of the artist and we hope all of our subscribers enjoy it. This is the first time this painting has been reproduced in color at this size. The single other reproduction was published by Les Line in his first issue as Editor of *AUDUBON* in 1966. Let us know your reactions. If you are moved to learn more about Fuertes and his art, we suggest that you get a copy of Peck's definitive book, *A Celebration of Birds: The Life and Art of Louis Agassiz Fuertes* (New York: Walker and Co., 1982).

Our lead article, by Pepper Trail, on some of the breeding behaviors of the cock-of-the-rock, was enormous fun producing and while reading it, try to keep in mind that this species functions as an integral member of the tropical community that it inhabits. It depends upon this community for survival. However, all tropical habitats are continually under the stress and pressures of rapid human population growth and absolutely uncontrolled development. Forests are cleared daily. Extensive grasslands are continuously being plowed under and precious wetlands are being polluted and/or drained. Some experts predict that by the year 1990, little will remain of the vast forests in Middle America and the West Indies. Probably the best hope of preserving the neotropical biota is through international cooperation in policy formation, research, and management. For more information on this topic write to: Conservation Reports, International Council for Bird Preservation—United States Section, Inc., c/o Dr. Warren B.

King, Chairman, North Groton Road, Rumney, New Hampshire 03266 or World Wildlife Fund—U.S., c/o Dr. Thomas E. Lovejoy, Vice President for Science, 1601 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20009.

On the topic of increased subscription rates. From the loyal readership of *American Birds*, we have received fewer than 20 letters of complaint since raising the rates with the last issue. About that, all I can say is thank you for understanding why it was necessary to do so and once again please try to find imaginative ways to help us increase our subscription base. Remember that Christmas is coming. A year's subscription to *American Birds* would make a terrific gift. I'm giving several to birders who I know will love *AB* and will look forward to every issue. How about the birder/friend who always borrows your copy? Maybe you should get that birder a subscription of his/her own.

At the most recent American Ornithologists' Union meeting (October, 1985), held in Tempe, Arizona, there were several awards of note that we'd like to mention here. One of the distinguished members of the *American Birds* Editorial Advisory panel and current president of the A.O.U., Frances C. James, presented the Elliot Coues Award for 1985 to one of our long-time Editorial Advisors, Thomas R. Howell. The award is given for general excellence in ornithology and is usually given to a person who has made an impact on ornithology throughout an entire career. Congratulations, Tom, the Coues Award was certainly well-deserved in your case. The William Brewster Memorial Award for 1985 was given to two superb ornithologists, good friends, and firm supporters of *American Birds*, Glen E. Woolfenden and John W. Fitzpatrick. The Brewster Award, more specific than the Coues Award, was given this year for their landmark population biology monograph, *The Florida Scrub Jay, Demography of a Cooperative-Breeding Bird*, published by Princeton University Press. This full-length, meticulously written, 'watershed' book is an indispensable source for anyone interested in helper-at-the-nest behavior, kin selection, and habitat restraints on avian populations and behaviors. Our most sincere congratulations to Glen and Fitz for a job excellently done.

Finally, it is with great satisfaction that I welcome our new Associate Editor, Manuela Soares, to the staff of *American Birds*. She comes to us with a solid and impressive background in editorial and production aspects of magazine publishing, a marvelous eye for detail, a really winning sense of humor, and a keen, inquisitive mind—especially with respect to birds. We look forward to working with Manuela to maintain and improve our journal. With the small but vigorous and dedicated staff here, *American Birds* can only flourish!!

Stay tuned!

—S.R.D.

# American Birds is Serious Birding Equipment

Published five times a year by the National Audubon Society, *American Birds* isn't meant for your coffee table. Sure, it has beautiful photos and illustrations, but more important, it has *information*. Information that can improve your technical knowledge of birds and birding, and make you better prepared on your outings.

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