

AMERICAN BIRDS

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... from the editor's desk

Throughout its history, birders, pundits, poseurs and a variety of editors have regaled *American Birds* with the subtle yet immutable substructure which is the basis of its cosmic order. Because an ounce of application is worth a ton of abstraction, we introduce in this issue a few new elements you will plainly perceive.

To our star-studded group of *American Birds* Advisors we warmly welcome a group of four who bring with them wide-ranging multidisciplinary interests, different slants, and often illuminating viewpoints: Glen E. Woolfenden, President of the American Ornithologists' Union, Graduate Research Professor of Biology at the University of South Florida, co-winner of the William Brewster Memorial Award for 1985, and co-author of *The Florida Scrub Jay, Demography of a Cooperative-Breeding Bird*; Frank B. Gill, Curator of Ornithology, Vice-President, Systematics and Evolutionary Biology at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, member of the A.O.U. Committee on Classification and Nomenclature, member of the Board of Directors of Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association, Chairman of the American Birding Association Checklist Committee, and winner of the 1988 Eugene Eisenmann Medal of the Linnaean Society of New York; Joseph R. Siphron, member of the Board of Directors of the National Audubon Society, Chairman of the New York State Parks Birdlife Advisory Committee, Partner in the Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy law firm, and long-time member of the American Birding Association, the American Ornithologists' Union, the Cooper Ornithological Society, and the Wilson Ornithological Society; James Van Remsen, Associate Professor of Zoology in Louisiana State University's Department of Zoology and Physiology, Curator of Birds at the L.S.U. Museum of Natural Science, Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union, and author of *Feeding Ecology of Neotropical Kingfishers*.

Each of these men has spent no small amount of time working to build bridges between amateurs and professionals and each respects the combined contributions of both. I believe that because they appreciate and respect the fundamental partnership between field birders and scientists, they enthusiastically accepted my invitation to further commit themselves to *American Birds*. Historically they have had a way of keeping me on my toes—sometimes in a spirit of wit and mischief, invariably as a gesture of fraternity, and always with grand style. We warmly welcome you, Glen, Frank, Joe, and Van with the confident prediction that this publication will continue to evolve and ripen with your increased involvement.

We initiate two new columns in this issue that span considerable latitude in topics covered.

"Facts, Inferences, and Shameless Speculations" will appear in future issues appositionally to a column written by you, the readers, in the form of letters to Pete Myers. This column will be called "Retorts, Reflections, and Thoughtful Refutations" (see page 352). This is your opportunity to react to the pivotal grist in his mill—your own cut-to-measure platform. Talk to us. After all, a person talking sense to himself is no madder than one talking nonsense to everyone else. Step up to your tailor-made podium. This Myers, he is to want more from!

Writers are the luckiest people because what they MUST do is the same as what they WANT to do. With Pete Dunne it is a happy union: we provide the climate and he furnishes the landscape. Let him entice you into his world and see if you can answer the burning question: is he really a writer or a non-stop storyteller to whom someone has given a word processor?

Greetings to our special correspondents!
Stay tuned!

—S.R.D.

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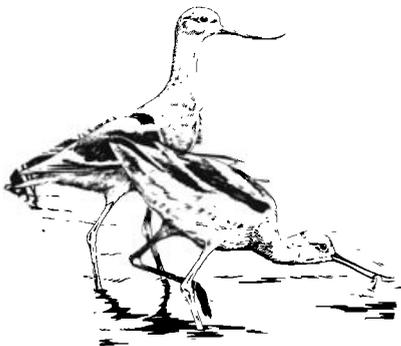
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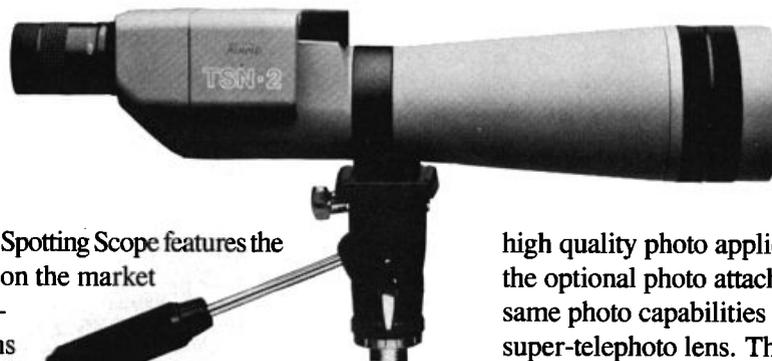
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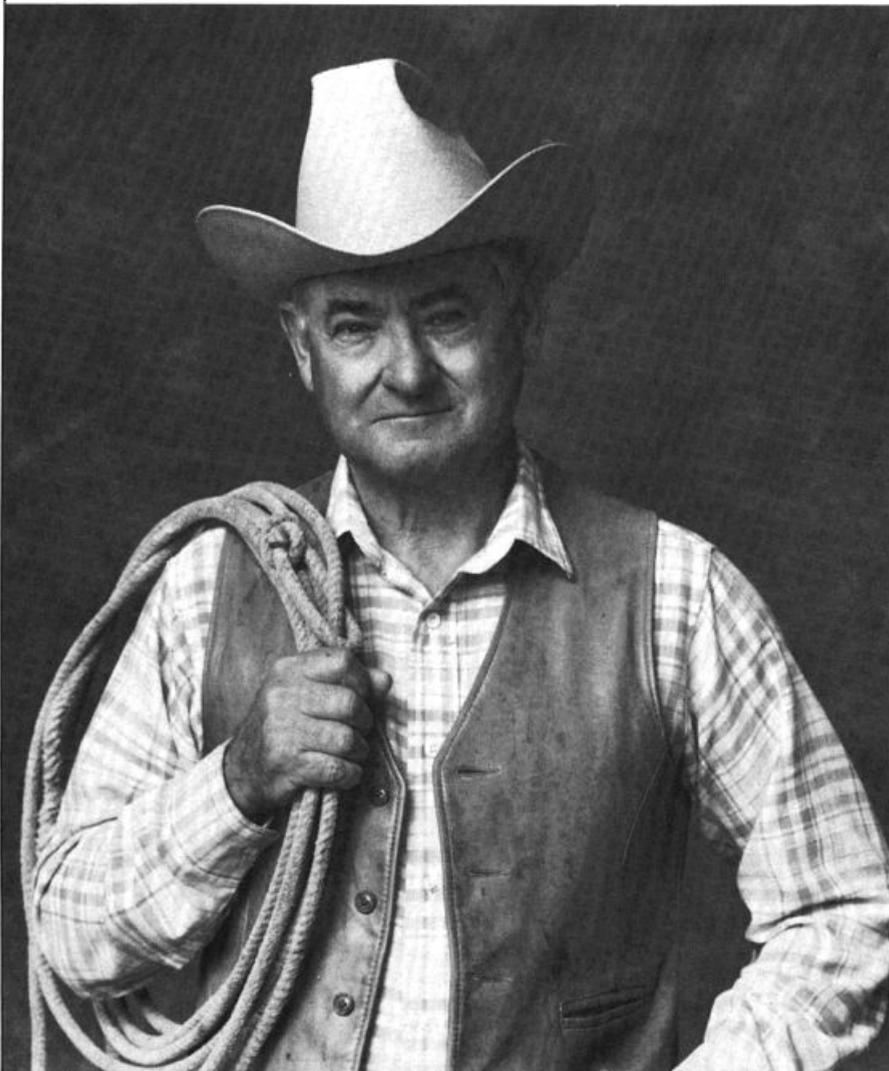
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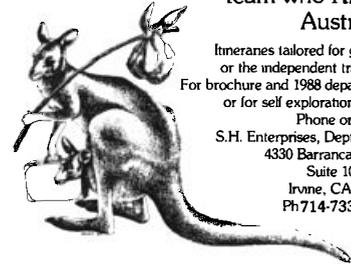
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347 ...from the editor's desk

348 The Practiced Eye—Red-naped Sapsucker and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
Kenn Kaufman

351 Facts, Inferences, and Shameless Speculations
J.P. Myers

353 Retorts, Reflections, and Thoughtful Refutations
Reader's column

355 The Secret Birding Journal of G. Washington From Virginia
Pete Dunne

357 Red-naped Sapsuckers feeding at Willows: possible keystone herbivores
Paul R. Ehrlich and Gretchen C. Daily

366 Louisiana State University, Museum of Natural Science
J.V. Remson, Jr. and Robert M. Zink

370 Regional Reports Pictorial Highlights
Spring 1988

374 Snowy Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*) records from Panama
Gonzalo Castro and J. P. Myers

375 Is tropical deforestation responsible for the reported declines in neotropical migrant populations?
Richard L. Hutto

380 First record of Red-footed Boobies nesting in the Gulf of Mexico
John W. Tunnell, Jr. and Brian R. Chapman

382 Range expansion and population increase of nesting Song Sparrows in Tennessee
Stephen J. Stedman

385 The recent occurrence of Garganey in North America and the Hawaiian Islands
Larry B. Spear, Moray J. Lewis, M. T. Myres, and Robert L. Pyle

393 Changes in bird life at the western end of Lake Erie (Part I of III)
Harold F. Mayfield

399 The Changing Seasons
Ted L. Eubanks, Jr.

487 Birder's Bookshelf

496 Market Place

**The Spring Season
March 1–May 31, 1988**

407 Northeastern Maritime Region
Bruce Mactavish

410 Quebec Region
Richard Yank, Yves Aubry, and Michel Gosselin

413 Hudson-Delaware Region
William J. Boyle, Jr., Robert O. Paxton, and David A. Cutler

416 Middle Atlantic Coast Region
Henry T. Armistead

420 Southern Atlantic Coast Region
Harry E. LeGrand, Jr.

424 Florida Region
H. P. Langridge

426 Ontario Region
Ron D. Weir

431 Niagara-Champlain Region
Douglas Kibbe

433 Appalachian Region
George A. Hall

436 Western Great Lakes Region
David J. Powell

440 Middlewestern Prairie Region
Bruce G. Peterjohn

444 Central Southern Region
Thomas A. Imhof

450 Prairie Provinces Region
Bernard Gollop

452 Northern Great Plains Region
Gordon Berkey

454 Southern Great Plains Region
Joseph A. Grzybowski

456 Texas Region
Greg W. Lasley and Chuck Sexton

462 Northwestern Canada Region
Chris Siddle

464 Northern Rocky Mountain-Intermountain Region
Thomas H. Rogers

466 Mountain West Region
Hugh E. Kingery

469 Southwest Region
David Stejskal and Janet Witzeman

474 Alaska Region
D.D. Gibson, T. G. Tobish, Jr., and M. E. Isleib

477 Middle Pacific Coast Region
David G. Yee, Richard A. Erickson, and Stephen F. Bailey

480 Southern Pacific Coast Region
Guy McCaskie

484 Hawaiian Islands Region
Robert L. Pyle

485 West Indies Region
Robert L. Norton

Front cover photograph: Eastern Blue Bird (*Sialia sialis*) photographed in Lapeer County, Michigan. Photo/Jim Battles.

Back cover photograph: Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*) Photo/John Winnie, Jr

