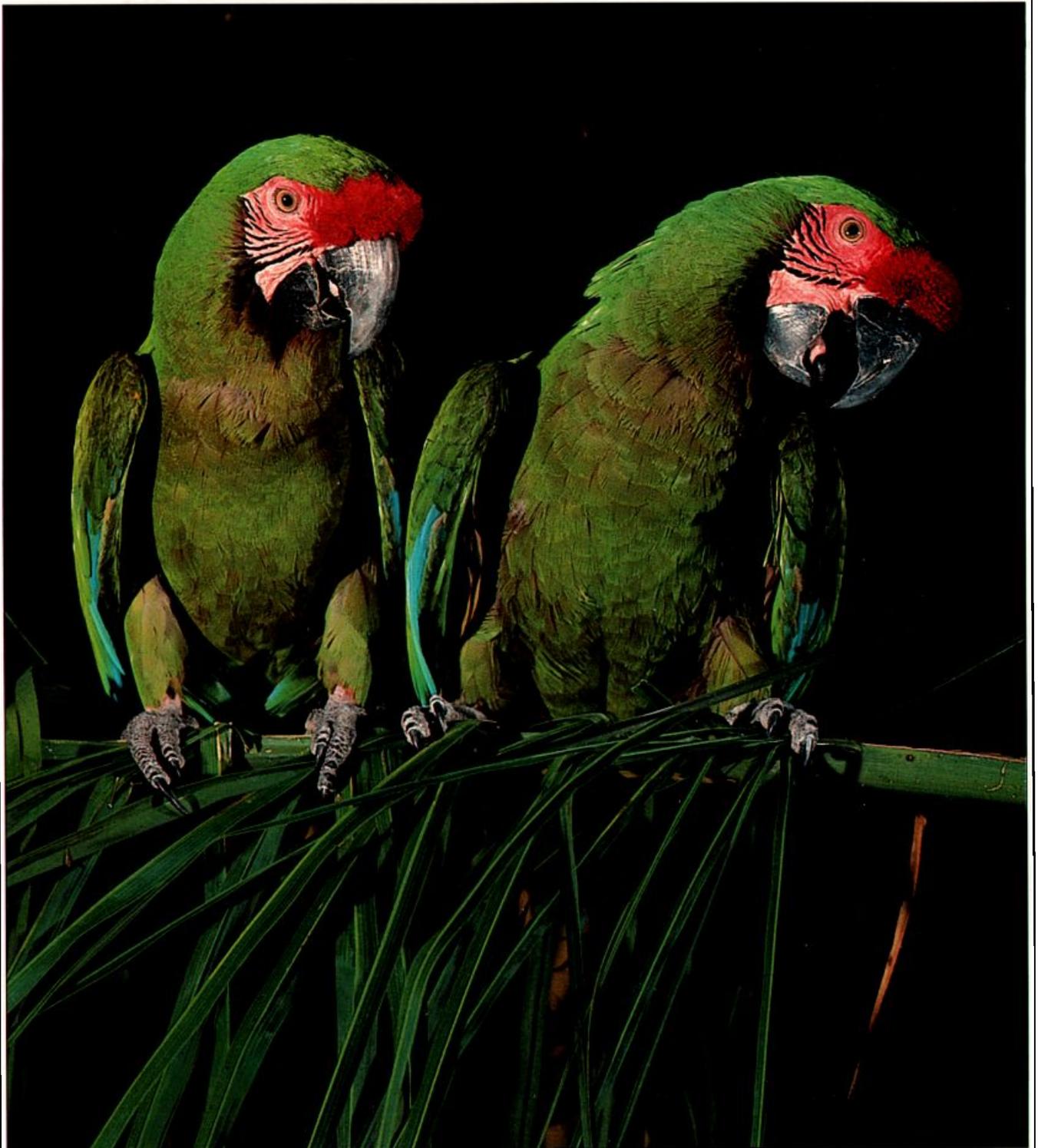


THE STATE OF BIRDING IN RUSSIA · The Art of Nikolai Kondakov ·
Reintroducing The Military Macaw · The Wise-Use Movement · Bluebird Identification

American Birds

THE MAGAZINE OF RECORD AND DISCOVERY · SPRING 1992



MILITARY MACAWS LIBERATED IN GUATEMALA, PAGE 24

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The Magazine of Record and Discovery

FROM THE PRESIDENT

EVERY MARCH FOR THE last six years I have waited and watched in awe in the blinds of Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary to see the spectacle of hundreds of thousands of Sandhill Cranes, flying in at dusk and leaving at sunrise.

Last August I saw where many of these Sandhill Cranes nest along the Arctic coast of Russia. I traveled with Eskimo and Chukchi marine mammal hunters for eight days in open whale boats along the Russian coast of the Bering Strait.

We were in a treeless landscape of bare stone desert, alpine tundra, wet lowlands, coastal lagoons, rocky headlands and long sandy beaches. The unmistakable call of cranes reverberated over the prehistoric Eskimo and Chukchi villages—sites dating back 5000 years, now abandoned but priceless in their archaeological treasures.

Known as Beringia, it's a fragile region rich in the shared cultural heritage of its native peoples and rich in bird life. Audubon is working hard to have a large part of this Arctic region linking Alaska and Chukotka Peninsula designated as the Beringian Heritage Interna-

tional Park, bringing into reality a pledge by presidents Bush and Gorbachev made in June, 1990.

According to some, marine bird populations in Beringia are larger and more diverse than any similar region in the Northern Hemisphere. Estimations run to 100 million birds on the Alaska side of Beringia and millions more on the Russian side. The wetlands attract countless breeding waterfowl. More than 200 kinds of birds return to this region each summer.

You can find threatened Arctic Peregrine Falcons, stately Emperor Geese, Lesser Snow Geese from California, Bluethroats and Arctic Warblers, a million King Eiders, and Pacific seabirds galore on the islands and headland remnants of the land bridge. And, of course, there are Sandhill Cranes.

Today, the region, rich in natural resources—minerals, perhaps oil, marine mammals, fish—is in jeopardy.

Tourists present a great opportunity but also a considerable danger if they are allowed to roam freely over the unprotected archaeological and nesting sites.

There is an urgent need to provide economic help, yet the Russian and native peoples are desperate to grab whatever they can as quickly as they can, leaving themselves open to serious ex-

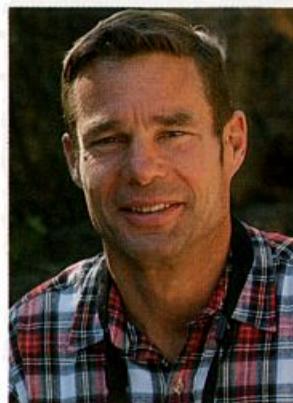
ploitation.

And, of course, the fishing interests, the oil companies, the mining and timber companies, and even the tourism promotion companies, see the international park as a threat to their ability to do business freely.

In February I traveled to the Russian White House in Moscow to lobby for the creation of the Russian part of the park. The U.S. Congress is also considering a bill to complete its part of the deal and set up an international advisory commission to oversee its management.

Further U.S. action depends on action first by the Russian parliament and President Yeltsin. My visit there was a serious attempt to move Russian legislation along, and I believe we had some success. But we must work hard to make the international park a reality in 1992.

Peter A.A. Berle





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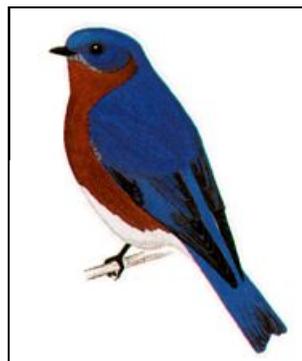
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In this issue, *Pete Dunne* offers a glimpse into the realm of thought and introspection which can accompany a quiet day of hawkwatching.

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THE STATE OF BIRDING IN RUSSIA 32

McDonald's is now in Moscow and so is Marshal Case, Audubon's director of education. The world has gone topsy-turvy in a hurry. A first close-up look at birding and ornithology in what was the Soviet Union. By *Malcom Abrams*.

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FRONT COVER: Military Macaw pair, two of the species recently reintroduced in Guatemala. Photo by *Everett Butler* of *ABRC*.

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FROM THE EDITOR

The *American Birds* staff began planning "The State of Birding in Russia" in this issue more than one and one-half years ago. Since then the world has changed dramatically. The Berlin Wall has disappeared, the Persian Gulf War has sunk into dim memory, the disastrous economy there signaled the breakup of the Soviet Union, the Warsaw Pact has disbanded, last August's abortive coup by hard-line Communists accelerated the fragmentation of the Soviet Union, Gorbachev left, Yeltsin took over, and privatization is proceeding slowly. In the meantime, the question dominating Russian politics is the very definition of Russia itself.

Every time we scheduled an issue for the article, another crisis began and so we'd delay. All the while we were talking to Marshal Case, National Audubon's senior vice president for education, about his youth camp program and his contacts in Russia in the ornithological and birding world. In particular we wanted him to help us find a superlative bird artist/naturalist whose work we could bring to light in *American Birds*. For a while it seemed as if there wasn't one, but we couldn't accept that. Finally we found Nikolai Kondakov, whose work we've brought from Moscow and present here with pride and pleasure. This is the very first time that any of Kondakov's bird sketches or paintings have appeared in any publication in North America. We feel it especially appropriate to publish a Kondakov juvenile Sandhill Crane—the very species that Audubon's President, Peter Berle, talks about in his message in this issue



and one of the species whose precious breeding grounds Audubon is working to preserve by establishing the Berlingian Heritage International Park.

Because we're members of a global birding community we are delighted to also bring you a success story of Military Macaws in Guatemala by Chris Wille. Maybe it's going to take just this kind of imaginative eco-politics to restore some of our most endangered birds.

Finally, as we were putting this issue to bed, we received word that *American Birds* is a winner in the 27th Annual Society of Publication Designers' competition. This represents the highest level of excellence in the field. We were judged the winner from a field of 150 recently redesigned magazine entries. The medal will be conferred on the evening of May 1, 1992. Celebrate our wonderful

good fortune with us.

Stay tuned!

—S.R. Drennan

ANSWERS TO THAT'S BIRD & BOOK ENTERTAINMENT, VOLUME 45, NO. 5, WINTER 1991 AMERICAN BIRDS

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2. TRUMPET OF THE SWAN by E. B. White
3. LOON LAKE by E.L. Doctorow
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2. The acclaim with which this first ballet of Igor Stravinsky was met made him world famous. The fantasy is based on a legend in which the hero receives a magical feather.
3. In *Madame Butterfly* there is a song about a robin but this is not the only Puccini opera named for a winged creature. Name the other, first performed in 1917.

4. In Prokofiev's delightful symphonic fairy tale, *Peter and the Wolf*, the oboe is used to indicate what bird's squawk?

5. Name the well-known Sergey Prokofiev composition about a diminutive dejected waterbird.

6. Name the three-act opera by Stravinsky based on the Hans Christian Andersen tale about birdsong and an ailing emperor.

7. Rossini wrote 38 operas in his lifetime but only one was named after a pilfering corvid. What was it?

8. Named for a shorebird, this 1964 church parable by Benjamin Britten was based on a Japanese play about a woman searching for her son.

9. Austrian composer Franz Joseph Haydn wrote at least two string quartets about birds. In one, the ascent of the violin at the beginning is meant to convey its namesake's song.

THAT'S BIRD & MUSICA ENTERTAINMENT

10. In the early 1800s, Beethoven wrote his sixth symphony, known as the Pastoral Symphony. Name at least three birdsongs represented in it.

11. Rimsky-Korsakov's fourteenth and last opera, based on a fairy tale by Pushkin, was

its fourteen movements.

14. This is a rare example of an opera written by two composers. Frenchman Jacques Ibert wrote the first and fifth acts and the Swiss composer, Arthur Honegger wrote the middle three.

15. Eighteenth-century composer and cellist, Luigi Boccherini, wrote a famous string quartet in which a number of birds are imitated. The name is almost too obvious.

16. French composer Olivier Messiaen so loved birdsong that he studied it in the field, made his own recordings, and classified vocalizations by region. Many of his compositions incorporate birdsong. Name six of the thirteen bird species reflected in his *Catalogue d'Oiseaux*, a work begun in 1956 and performed for the first time in 1959.

17. German composer and poet, Richard Wagner, is one of a handful of composers to change the course of music. Name the four types of birds he wrote about in an aria in his 1868 opera, *Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg*.

18. Modern French composer Albert Louis Wolff first conducted this opera at the Met at the end of World War I. Based on a story by Maeterlink, it revolves around two children's search for happiness.

19. Charles Tomlinson Griffes first wrote this work for piano and then arranged it for orchestra. Some say this piece is one of his best. Named for a glitzy bird, it premiered in Philadelphia in 1919.



never performed in his lifetime because he refused to temper its satire of the bungling autocrat, Nicholas II. Name the opera.

12. This Frederick Delius rhapsody, based on a Norwegian folk song, has been described as a "poem in sound." It concerns spring and a bird associated with that season.

13. *The Carnival of Animals*, the grand zoological fantasy of French composer, Saint-Saens, is known for its amusing use of the "Can-Can." Name the most famous of

20. American James Fassett composed a work that consists entirely of the recorded songs and calls of real birds.

If you answered fewer than 10 correctly, you may never find your true range. If you answered 10–15 correctly, you've got a sharp ear. Sixteen or seventeen right puts you an octave above the rest. Eighteen or more right means you're a renaissance birder extraordinaire. Congratulations! Send us your answers and you may win a prize.

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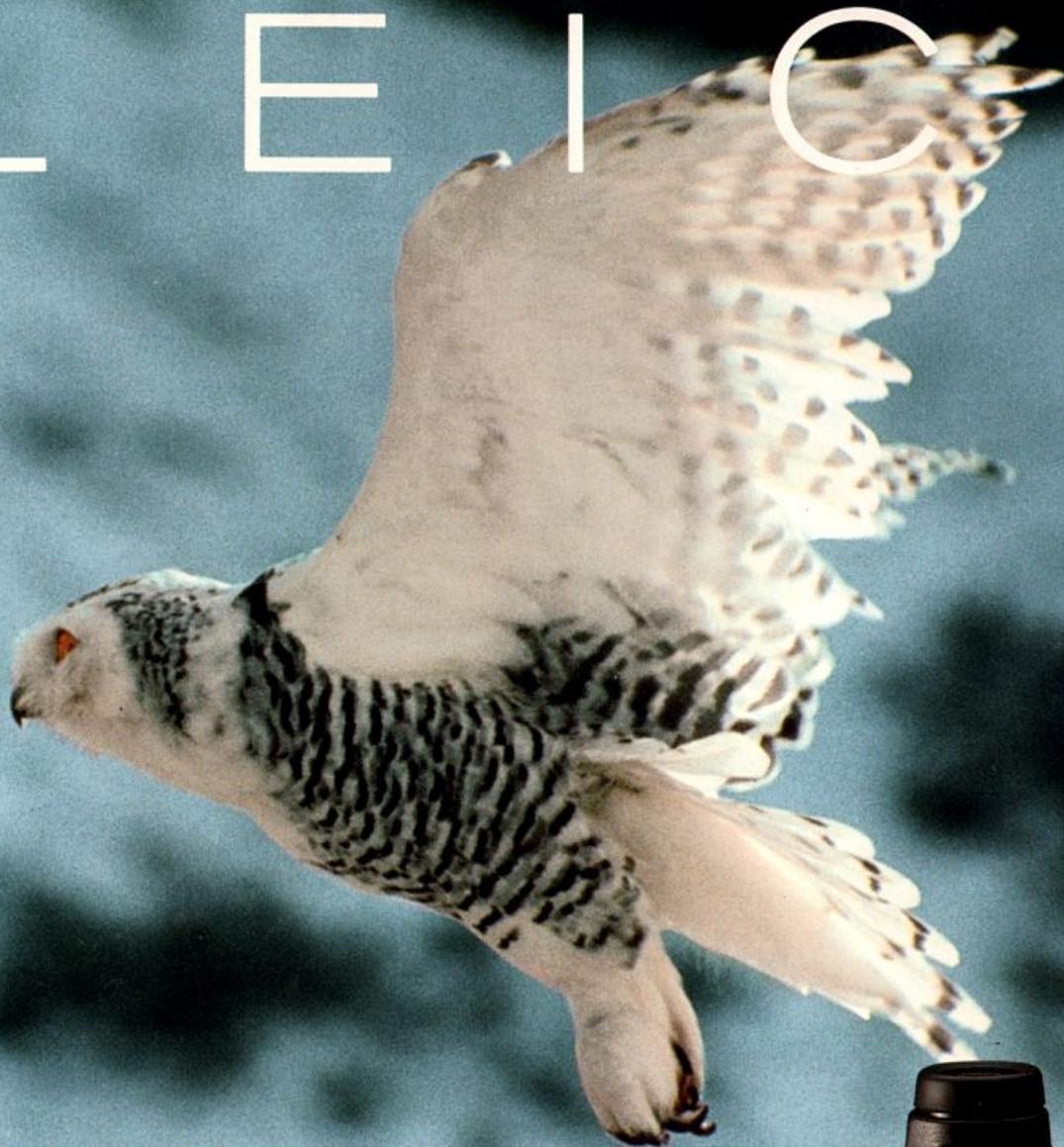
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