

OBITUARIES

Edited by James Wiley

(To whom obituary manuscripts should be sent)

Pablo Canevari, 1951–2000—Pablo Canevari was born in Buenos Aires on 22 May 1951. Natural history became an avid interest to him during his pre-college years, and remained a strong focus to him for the rest of his life, setting the stage for his chosen career

as a conservationist. He graduated from La Plata National University (Buenos Aires, Argentina) in March 1979 with the equivalent of a Master's degree in ecology and evolution. Pablo's career included being a research assistant with the Museo Argentino de Ciencias



Pablo Canevari, 1951–2000
(Photograph by David C. Twichell, taken in September 1988).

Naturales (Buenos Aires), an advisor to the Argentine Council of Education in the making of educational biology films, an advisor to the International Wetlands Research Bureau and to the Pan American Program of the International Council for Bird Preservation, and a biologist with the Argentine national park service, where he worked in administrative capacities in the Buenos Aires headquarters. On the side, Pablo illustrated several natural history publications, and created the logo (an anteater) for Argentina's best-known conservation organization, Fundacion Vida Silvestre.

It was in his capacity at the national park service that we first had contact with this modest man, whose warm smiles and wonderful sense of humor, along with his outstanding knowledge of Argentine natural history, almost instantly captured what would become a cherished, and long-lasting professional and personal relationship. A few years later Pablo joined the staff of the Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences as the coordinator of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) during its formative years. His task was to help build a cooperative, conservation-oriented network of international collaborators, whose combined effort would help safeguard shorebirds by identifying and encouraging protection of the wetlands they depend on throughout the Western Hemisphere. The position required that he live in the United States, and so he and family, including a newly born daughter, moved to Massachusetts, a place they had never seen, where they had no home, and where the language was initially a challenge to them. For the next three years, Pablo and family remained in Massachusetts, where they made a new life for themselves. Pablo devoted his work to making the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network grow, especially in Latin America.

Under Pablo's leadership, the WHSRN

program grew steadily in North and South America, a testimony to his persistent yet patient efforts. But perhaps more so, the early success of WHSRN was fostered by Pablo's quiet persuasion among disparate people and organizations, enlisting them to step forward and develop an informal, cooperative conservation network spanning the hemisphere. One of his principal initiatives was the development of workshops throughout South and North America, and these were the vertebrae that together formed the backbone of WHSRN. Each one assembled biologists and students to learn about shorebirds and wetland conservation issues, with a special effort made to found a working group to carry efforts forward after the training session. It was Pablo's unique approach that made these workshops into seed banks of future conservation efforts rather than simply interesting learning experiences. Pablo did not lead these workshops, but instead persuaded selected attendees to provide leadership, thus honoring and fostering in-country expertise. The WHSRN effort became a model to other cooperative conservation programs such as Partners-in-Flight.

Not long after WHSRN merged with Wetlands International, Pablo moved on to a new conservation program when he accepted a position with The Convention on Migratory Species, also known as the Bonn Convention. Once again he and family moved, this time to Germany, with another new language to learn. As a technical officer to the Convention, focusing on conservation of migratory species in Latin America, Pablo's work was largely administrative, moving him away from the field natural history domain he loved so much. But he and family took every opportunity to travel, make new friends, and to appreciate Europe's natural history.

After 3½ years with the Convention, Pablo and family returned to their homeland, with Pablo planning to work once again with

the WHSRN and other conservation initiatives. But sadly, soon after their homecoming to Argentina, Pablo was stricken ill at age 49, and within seven months died from a brain cancer on 22 March 2000.

Aside from the program accomplishments of his foreshortened conservation career, Pablo Canevari also furthered natural history study through his artistry and variety of publications. Perhaps most notable was his principal involvement in the development of a field guide to the birds of Argentina.

Because our account is written for a professional medium, we have focused on Pablo

Canevari's quietly effective career. But Pablo the friend, the husband and father, were what made this man among the best. His chuckling, the twinkle in his eyes, his wonderful wit, and his unfettered pride and love of his family were central to his persona. As authors we have all worked professionally with Pablo, but to the core, each of us writes of a dear friend who secondarily was an extraordinary naturalist, talented artist, and champion conservationist. — Brian Harrington, Laura Payne, and Heidi Luquer, Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, Manomet, Massachusetts 02345, USA.

