

WESTERN BIRD PHOTOGRAPHERS

ARNOLD SMALL, 608 N. Camden Drive, Beverly Hills, California 90210

Ken Gardiner of Menlo Park, California is a skilled photographer who has surely mastered his chosen subjects and his chosen medium. I have studied the results of many birds photographers (eastern, western and foreign) and have yet to find one whose mastery of birds in action represented in a black and white medium exceeds the work of Ken Gardiner.

Of all the areas of nature expression, the photography of birds in motion must be among the most difficult. It requires complete mastery of one's equipment to say nothing of the effort and expense of finally acquiring just the right equipment for the job. A thorough knowledge of one's subject is imperative to success and the quality of Gardiner's work attests to his subject knowledge. Additionally, the technical knowledge and skill required in successful darkroom techniques is virtually an art in itself and to achieve mastery in all of these areas and more represents years of effort, trial and error and expense.

Once Ken had perfected his technique and ultimately simplified it, his results were uniformly excellent. His use of a single type of black and white film (Kodak Tri-X), standard exposures (1/1000th second at f/11 on sunny days and 1/1000th second at f/8 on cloudy or foggy days), and virtually one type of camera-lens combination allows him to direct his full attention to capturing the subject in a pleasing and/or dramatic composition. He develops his own exposed film (in Edwal FG-7 developer) and crops and makes his own prints in the darkroom.

Ken Gardiner has been a staff member at SRI (formerly Stanford Research Institute) since 1954. He, his wife Lindy and their three daughters live in Menlo Park, California. His photographic accomplishments are legion and have not gone without recognition. He has many regional camera club awards in his collection as well as those from the Photographic Society of America. One of his most recent accomplishments included winning First through Fourth Prizes together with Best Photograph of the Year Award in the 1975 California Fish and Game Commission annual Photography Award Program. He virtually "cleared the boards" with his sweep of First, Second and Third prizes as well as gaining two Honorable Mentions in the black and white division of the Sixth Salon of Photographs features in *American Birds* (30-793-804, 1976). Rarely does a bird photographer of his skill come along and we who have attempted bird photography should be a little envious.