

EDITOR'S PAGE

MEMO FROM THE EDITORIAL STAFF

During the past five years Bird Observer has established itself as the principal source of ornithological records for eastern Massachusetts. To conserve space and to avoid an increase in the subscription rate, the long-established tabular format for monthly records was changed in the March-April, 1977, issue to a verbal summary (in this same issue the size of the type was increased to improve readability). This new format for the records also permits the compilers to add many comments concerning the relevance of reported sightings.

Beginning in 1978, a seasonal rather than monthly summary will be published; this format has been used successfully for decades by American Birds, the nation's leading journal of field ornithology. This latest modification of the records will further allow the compilers to assess meaningful trends in observers' reports and to avoid the inclusion of marginal sightings.

Thus, only four issues of Bird Observer each year will contain records; of course, each bi-monthly issue will continue to carry a where-to-go article. For the remaining two issues it is planned to stress particular topics of broad interest, such as breeding-bird surveys, species accounts, and other items that have been a traditional part of Bird Observer.

To reflect better the scope of Bird Observer, a new cover design has been adopted and will first grace the January-February, 1978, issue. Drawn especially for Bird Observer by a well-known professional artist, it was selected after an extensive competition in which about a dozen high-quality sketches were submitted.

As always, Bird Observer is pleased to receive well-prepared material on topics relevant to field ornithology. Also, suggestions concerning the scope and content of the magazine are welcome. Bird Observer exists to serve the birding community of eastern Massachusetts; thus, readership participation is not only desired, it is essential.

The editorial staff hopes that in 1978 you will enjoy the new cover, the new records format, and the new content of Bird Observer. We also hope that you will tell your birding friends about the magazine and continue to give it your support. Massachusetts is one of the most heavily birded areas in the United States; it deserves a journal that reflects that exceptional interest in birds. That is our goal; we hope that it will be yours too!

WANTED: Bausch and Lomb Balscope, by enthusiastic young birders. Reasonable price. Contact: Rikki Fowler (or Rick Austin), 661-0847 after 5:30 P.M. or write 79 Harvey Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02140.