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OBITUARY

CHARLES BLAIR COURSEN, a Member of the A.O.U. since 1928, died on April 6, 1974 after long illness. Born on July 2, 1899, at Salem, Pennsylvania, he spent most of his boyhood at Daytona Beach, Florida, later establishing his home in Chicago. He graduated from the University of Chicago in 1922 with a major in Business Administration and a minor in Biology. While an undergraduate, Coursen was employed by Morris M. Wells, then a doctoral candidate, for the preparation of biological specimen slides for sale. This student enterprise was the forerunner of General Biological Supply House (Turttox), of which Wells was founder and first President. After graduation Coursen joined the fledgling organization and on the death of Wells in 1930 became its President, a post he held with distinction until retirement in 1964.

Although circumstances dictated a business career, Coursen was dedicated to the study of natural history, especially birds, from earliest childhood. His formal training in ornithology was limited to the undergraduate course conducted by R. M. Strong at the University of Chicago. This early interest, sustained throughout his life, was expressed in meticulous field observations both in this country and in tropical America. Coursen published several bird papers, of which the most notable (with E. R. Ford and C. C. Sanborn) is the authoritative "Birds of the Chicago region" (1934). He served on the Board of Trustees of the Chicago Academy of Sciences (1940) and was for many years an active member of the Kennicott Club, a society limited to biologists of the Chicago area. In recognition of Coursen's diverse (often anonymous) contributions to the biological sciences, a unique Peruvian Spinetail (Furnariidae) was named *Synallaxis courseni* (Blake 1971, *Auk* 88: 179) in his honor.—EMMET R. BLAKE.