



ELLIOTT COUES AWARD, 1988

RALPH W. SCHREIBER

Ralph W. Schreiber was a world authority on the ecology and breeding biology of seabirds. At the time of his death in March 1988, at the age of 45, he had authored and edited over 100 publications. He was head of the Section of Birds and Mammals at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.

Schreiber's specialty was the biology of the Pelecaniformes. His dissertation on maintenance activities and communication in the Brown Pelican was published in *Ornithological Monographs*. Schreiber conducted research on seabirds of the central Pacific islands for more than two decades. His view was that seabird populations are regulated largely by stochas-

tic catastrophic events rather than by competition for food or nest sites. This was documented in an article in *Science* in 1984 in which he, with his wife Betty Anne, reported the devastating effects of the El Niño Southern Oscillation on seabirds in the central Pacific.

Schreiber was interested in conservation. He served on advisory panels and recovery teams for the Brown Pelican and the California Condor and was active in the International Council for Bird Preservation. In view of his varied contributions to ornithology as a scientist, conservationist, and curator, the American Ornithologists' Union awards Ralph W. Schreiber the Elliott Coues Award for 1988.