

1669–1673, with G. F. Barrowclough) represent incisive thinking and important perspectives molded by a decade of empirical studies in this field.

Although he received his Ph.D. more than 30 years ago, Dr. Johnson continues to add the latest in analytical techniques to his repertoire. At the time he finished his dissertation, statistical techniques were no more sophisticated than computation of *t*-tests and regression coefficients, sonographic analysis of vocalizations was in its infancy, spectrophotometry had not been applied to birds, and biochemical systematics was just a rumor. Dr. Johnson, however, added techniques to his repertoire as they became available and relevant to his research questions.

Because of his record of excellence in field research and his influential publications, the American Ornithologists' Union takes great pleasure in presenting the William Brewster Memorial Award for 1992 to Ned K. Johnson.

Award criteria.—The William Brewster Memorial Award is given to the author or coauthors (not previously so honored) of the most meritorious body of work on birds of the Western Hemisphere published during the 10 calendar years preceding a given AOU meeting. The award consists of a medal and honorarium provided through the endowed William Brewster Memorial Fund of the American Ornithologists' Union.

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ELLIOTT COUES AWARD, 1992:

FRANCES C. JAMES



The American Ornithologists' Union is pleased to present the 1992 Elliott Coues Award to Frances C. James. According to its guidelines, the award is given to one whose "contribution . . . has had an important impact on the study of birds within the Western Hemisphere." Fran James' contributions to our understanding of avian intraspecific morphological variation and of avian habitat relationships more than

meet this high standard. In fact, her work has influenced ornithology in both hemispheres and the impact of her ideas has not been confined to the study of birds.

In 1970 (*Ecology* 51:365–390) she described complex but congruent patterns of intraspecific variation in the sizes of birds, some of which were not closely related phylogenetically nor similar in trophic ecol-

ogy. She suggested that this high level of covariation among species was unlikely to be attributable to synecological processes associated with species interactions, as the dominant paradigm of the time would have predicted. Instead, she thought that influences related to geographic variation in climatic factors were more likely to be at work. Recently, she has extended this theme by showing a highly significant correlation between size variation in North American passerine birds and variation in absolute humidity in summer (*Am. Zool.* 31:694-706, 1991) and by documenting for adult Red-winged Blackbirds how covariance matrices of size and shape variables vary geographically (*Proc. XX Int. Ornithol. Congr.*, pp. 2454-2461, 1991, with NeSmith and Laybourne).

In the 1980s Fran conducted an imaginative series of reciprocal-transplant experiments in which eggs of Red-winged Blackbirds were exchanged during incubation between distant nests within both the United States and Mexico (*Science* 221:184-186; *Proc. XIX Int. Ornithol. Congr.*, pp. 1424-1433, with NeSmith). Measurements of young reared by foster parents showed that the displaced birds acquired some similarities in shape to birds in the foster population. Although the genetic component of geographic variation is very important, a full understanding of patterns of geographic variation must include variation due to direct environmental induction. This work is part of our current understanding of and interest in the role of phenotypic plasticity in the evolutionary process.

Fran's initial work on habitat relationships was another departure from the prevailing community approach to ecology of the 1970s. In a major paper that introduced the concept of the "niche gestalt" (*Wilson Bull.* 83:215-236, 1971), she explored the value of the Gleasonian more individualistic approach to interpretations of patterns of bird distribution. In making comparisons of bird assemblages, her recommenda-

tions about field methods (*Am. Birds* 24:727-736, 1970, with Shugart), standardization of samples to equal size, and avoidance of diversity indices (*Condor* 83:34-41, 1980, with Engstrom; *Auk* 98:785-800, 1981, with Rathbun; *Ecology* 63:159-171, 1982, with Wamer) have been influential. Most recently she has extended her distributional studies to analyses of intraspecific variation in population trends (Pages 43-56 in Hagan and Johnston, Eds., Smithsonian Inst. Press, 1992, with Wiedenfeld and McCulloch).

In carrying out this body of research, Fran has contributed to current standards of data analysis, including multivariate methods and experimental design (*Curr. Ornithol.* 2:1-63, 1985, and *Annu. Rev. Ecol. Syst.* 21:129-166, 1990, both with McCulloch). Her work has been especially valuable for the training of graduate students, but many seasoned ornithologists have profited from studying it. To return to the Coues Award, the guidelines recommend recognition of "work including important innovative ideas." With these words in mind, we confidently offer this award to Frances C. James.

Award criteria.—The Elliott Coues Award is given for meritorious contributions having an important influence on the study of birds in the Western Hemisphere, but which have not been recognized through a Brewster Award. Contributions to ornithology not eligible for recognition with a Brewster Award by virtue of its geographic limitations may be honored through a Coues Award, as may works including important innovative ideas that through brevity or publication outside the primarily ornithological literature may not have been selected based on Brewster Award criteria. However, the Coues Award is not necessarily limited to such works. The award consists of a certificate and an honorarium provided through the endowed Ralph W. Shreiber Fund of the American Ornithologists' Union.