

rather than an individual assertion, comprised of 28 of the best site guide articles to appear in the *Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts*, since its inception in 1973. Additionally, there are two more chapters; one dealing with pelagic birding and one treating hawk watching in Massachusetts. Each of these principal articles are small feats of condensation that rarely descend to mere listing. Each is accompanied with a helpful, quite clear, map. The result is a book not only practical but a good read as well. Get it. — S. R. D.

**An Annotated Check-list of the Birds of Illinois.** — H. David Bohlen, Illinois State Museum, Springfield, Illinois. 1978. Illinois State Museum Popular Science Series, Vol. IX. viii + 156 pp. 2 maps. \$2.75 ppd., paperbound. This is a full-scale, official but ungolded synopsis of extant knowledge of the avifauna of Illinois which stands as something special in the genre of the 'check-lists.' It not only chronicles the known distributional information on all species of birds found in the state to date, it does so in a clear, and thoughtful way. Entries are continuously readable. This book is pertinent not only as a testimony to qualitative scholarship; but, should serve as a catalyst to future, quantifiable regional

studies. The deceptively simple species compositions are rendered with clarity and contain a great deal of information that will be useful to the student of Illinois birdlife. A volume that should enjoy a wide readership. — S. R. D.

**Roadrunners and Other Cuckoos.** — Written and illustrated by Aline Amon. Atheneum, New York. 1978. 87 pp. \$7.95. Aimed at the 10-14 age group, this delightful little book is an informed and informative discussion of some of the more fascinating members of this extraordinary family. This adult enjoyed it. Selected for attention, besides the Roadrunner, are the European "cuckoo-clock" Cuckoo, the Yellow-billed and Black-billed cuckoos, the anis, and the Hoatzin, followed by chapters on the family worldwide, and one on the folklore. There is a classification chart and a good bibliography. Ms. Amon's drawings are decorative. Recommended. — R. A.

**Wisconsin's Favorite Bird Haunts. Supplement Edition.** — Compiled and edited by Daryl D. Tessen. The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Inc., DePere, Wisconsin. 1979. vi + 90 pp. \$5.00 ppd., paperbound (available from W.S.O. Supply Department, Harold

Kruse, Hickory Hill Farm, Loganville, WI 53943). Too often excellent first books are followed by inferior second efforts; however, Tessen again stands well above the crowd with this no-nonsense supplement to his 1976 **Bird Haunts** (see *AB* 32:1087). This sequel is meticulously researched and updates 32 of the original 90 haunts, adds 12 new sites, provides a section listing local experts willing to assist visiting birders, has a list of the species accepted on the official Wisconsin checklist and a listing of those species on the hypothetical state list, and includes a thorough index to both the 1976 and 1979 editions. We gladly suggest it for any birder in or traveling to Wisconsin. — S. R. D.

**More About Birdwatchers.** — Gerry Bennett. Privately printed. Available from G. Bennett, R.R. #2, Woodbridge, Ontario, Canada L4L 1A6. 161 pp. 1978. Price modest, not known. The author of "Wild Birdwatchers I Have Known," that amusing collection of birding anecdotes, has put together an even larger collection, interlarded with philosophical and light-hearted commentary on everything from hot-lines to Christmas Bird Counts. Bennett is a born raconteur: you'll find here a mine from which to borrow. — R. A.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

#### *Purple Martin Color-marking*

A large scale continent-wide Purple Martin color-marking project was initiated in 1977. Observers are asked to look for and report any color-marked (plastic leg bands and/or wing tags) Purple Martins. Please record the color of

the bands or wing tags, which leg they are on, age and/or sex (if either is known), where and when observed, and whether the bird was in a roost, staging flock, migratory flock or at a nest site (scouting or nesting?). We are especially interested in the movements of young birds and their return to the parent colony or nearby colonies. All reports will be acknowledged and should be sent to Ms. Kathleen Klimkiewicz, Bird Band-

ing Laboratory, Laurel, Maryland 20811.

### SYMPOSIUM ON ESTIMATING POPULATIONS OF TERRESTRIAL BIRDS

A symposium will be held October 27-30, 1980 at the Asilomar Conference Grounds near Monterey, California to bring together biologists and statisti-

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cians interested in estimating bird populations in terrestrial communities. Expected to sponsor the symposium are the Fish and Wildlife Service and Forest Service, as well as other agencies and organizations. The symposium will focus on: (1) the methods of estimating populations (both absolute and relative measures of density); (2) design of censuses and sampling; (3) data collection and analysis; (4) assumptions and biases; and (5) special problems of species groups.

Additionally, a series of overview papers will assess the validity and applicability of various census methods in areas of current active research. Interchange of ideas will be facilitated by invited and voluntary papers, poster sessions, and field trips. The proceedings of the symposium will be published promptly.

The members of the organizing committee are: John T. Emlen, Joseph Hickey, Cameron Kepler, C. J. Ralph, Fred Ramsey, Harry Recher, Chandler S. Robbins, J. Michael Scott, Jared Verner, and John A. Wiens. For further information contact the co-chairmen, Drs. Ralph or Scott at: Bird Census Symposium, P.O. Box 43, Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, Hawaii 96718.

#### CORRIGENDUM

At least half a dozen communications have been received, pointing out the obvious error in the photograph in *Am. Birds* 33(2):135. The bird shown is a Saw-whet Owl. The error is impossible to explain rationally; both the photographer and the editors well know the differences between the two species, and an otherwise almost error-free issue was thus flawed by careless haste for which the editor takes full blame. Our apol-

ogies to the two authors, the error would have been avoided had they submitted the fine photograph below in time for publication.



*Female Boreal Owl in nest hole. Cook County, Minnesota. June - July, 1978. To replace photo in AB 33:135. Photo/Warren Nelson.*

#### STAFF CHANGES

We take pleasure in announcing the appointment of Will C. Russell, of Seal Harbor, Maine, to the new staff position of Consulting Editor. Russell is well known to birders across America as a top-flight expert in field identification; he is the principal operator of the Northeast Birding tours, and has written extensively on bird identification. His role will be varied and will include the "vetting" of photographs and rare records, an overview of the seasonal reports, and of articles on identification. His expertise will make a distinct contribution to *American Birds*, and we welcome him to the masthead.

We regret to announce the retirement of Ronald A. Ryder and Audrey Ryder as Editors of our ever more extensive Win-

ter Bird-Population Studies. During the last 7 years they have contributed untold hours of editorial supervision and skills to this work, a contribution far more valued than words can convey. After that many years, and 557 studies, there was really no fair way we could urge them to further sacrifice. *American Birds* thanks them; the National Audubon Society thanks them, and all ornithology is indebted to them for a magnificent contribution.

We are pleased, too, that stepping immediately into these outside shoes will be two veteran environmental biologists, who have themselves contributed a number of such studies, Drs. Calvin L. Cink, and Roger L. Boyd, both of the Biology Department of Baker University, Kansas. Cink's first winter study appeared in *AFN* in 1968, since then he has published 4 winter studies and 9 Breeding Bird Censuses. Boyd, too, has a lengthy publications list, and both are members of most of the leading ornithological societies. We are delighted to add them to our editorial staff. Manuscripts for *WB-PS*, which are now *overdue*, should be sent without delay to Dr. Cink, at Baker Univ., Baldwin City, KS 66006.

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To the editor

I would like to call your attention to an error (oversight) that is being perpetuated in *American Birds*. It concerns sightings of the Ross' Gull in temperate North America (outside the Arctic).

Buckley (*Amer. Birds*, 1975) discussed the much publicized occurrence of a Ross' Gull in Massachusetts and pointed out that this was the first one reported outside the Arctic. In *Amer. Birds* 31(3):307, 1977) the Newfoundland specimen was reported as being the second such record, also (interestingly) from the Atlantic coast of North America.

Both accounts overlooked a recent, published record (see Campbell and Stirling, *Syesis* 4:217-222, 1971; photo page 218) of a Ross' Gull seen at Clover Point, Victoria, British Columbia, on November 9, 1966. This would be the first record and (interestingly) is from the West Coast.

—S. G. Sealy, Dept. of Zoology,  
Univ. of Manitoba, Winnipeg R3J 2N2.

To the editor:

I was quite surprised to see, in the recent *American Birds* 32(6), 1139-40, no less than three pictures of a bird presented as a presumed hybrid warbler. It is important that several

points be brought to your attention in relation to this interesting bird

First, the pictures were not taken by Peter Vickery, but by Tom Skaling, at the request of myself and Dave Mehlman. The bird was caught at Coleman Farms, a banding site owned partially by Bowdoin College and operated by Dave Mehlman and by Jeff Cherry. I was assisting at this site at this time.

A more important point is that the bird is, in all likelihood, *not* a hybrid, but a melanistic individual. This is not without interest in itself, and should have been mentioned at least as a possibility. I do not wish to go over points of identification, but it is my belief, arrived at by extensive comparisons to skins here at the museum, and with consultation with other members of the ornithology department, that this is not a hybrid; or at least, if it is, there is absolutely nothing about the pictures which suggests this in a concrete manner.

—Peter Cannell, American Museum of  
Natural History, New York, NY 10024.

To the Editor:

I am moved to write because of a minor but unfortunate detail in the recent excellent article by A. E. Conway and S. R. Drennan, "Rufous Hummingbirds in Eastern North

America" (*Am. Birds*, March 1979, pp 130-132) The detail in question was the mention of two Buff-bellied Hummingbirds (*Amazilia yucatanensis*) at Oak Bluffs, Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, on May 10-11, 1964. The authors cannot be blamed for citing this record which was reported by the always-careful Aaron M. Bagg, who in this particular case had the misfortune to confuse the observer-reporter of these hummingbirds with another observer whom he could never have had any reason to question. Also, the record was never retracted by Mr. Bagg though I personally wrote him my great reservations about it shortly after its original publication and he agreed with them once learning of the confusion over observers. Were he here to do so, I feel sure he would have passed those reservations along to authors Conway and Drennan

In short, under no circumstances should this supposed record of Buff-bellied Hummingbirds at Martha's Vineyard be allowed to stand. It is too bad to have this minor blemish on an otherwise fine and interesting article. This problem for later workers could have been avoided by an early retraction by the regional editor.

—Allan R. Keith, Blue Mill Road,  
New Vernon, NJ 07976

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