

The Ninth Salon of Photographs

A TOTAL OF 82 competitors submitted photographs, either in the color or black-and-white category, for this year's Salon; with several hundred individual entries the judging process was more difficult than ever. The panel's problems were further compounded when it appeared that there was a great divergence of opinion between judges. There was virtual unanimity only for the Grand Prize for color; the startling, gemlike image of the Painted Bunting by William Ray against black background — unfortunately much more vivid when projected than printed — captivated everyone; it simply demanded cover prominence.

Among the other winners, almost each had its partisan, the eventual ranking was an average of the scorings of the judges, not always a totally fair method of selection. (A single "bad" mark from one judge can pull down the overall ranking of an entry liked by everyone else.) We have no doubt that some of our readers will differ somewhat from our own views. But there is variety here to please everyone: razor-sharp portraits (Western Kingbird, Yellow-throated Vireo and Merlin), atmosphere (Roadrunner, White-tailed Ptarmigan), pretty picture (Yellow Warbler, shorebirds) and action (jaeger chase, diving Red-tailed Hawk).

We have one more explanation. In every case, color entries were brighter and truer than what you see on these pages. Getting exact color reproduction on the printed page of transparent color film has seemed more difficult this year than ever before. Each of the winning photographs is *better* than shown.

IT MAY BE THAT this ninth will be our last salon in the near future. Costs of making color separations, and of printing in color, with the special paper it requires, have been soaring. We had hoped that advertising from the various elements of the photography industry might offset these costs, but without an advertising sales staff, these hopes have not been realized. An announcement of our decision will be forthcoming.

Once again, to all competitors — winners and non-winners alike — we congratulate you for the continued excellence of your work, and thank you for your interest and cooperation.

About the winners — Color —

GRAND PRIZE winner is William Ray, of Portland, Oregon. Ray has been photographing birds for about four years; to date his species list stands at 250. The beautiful Painted Bunting was snapped at a feeder in Olviedo, Florida, in March, 1979.

'The photograph was obtained by using a remote flash placed above and to the left of a favorite perch near a feeding station. I used a tripod but no blind and simply waited for the better part of two mornings until the bird showed up and struck a dramatic pose. The major problem was blackbirds harassing the bunting!'
Camera: Olympus OM-1. Lens: 400 mm. Film: KM 25. Exposure: f/5.6 at 1/60 second.

SECOND PRIZE is somewhat of a comedown for Adrian Dignan, of Freeport, New York, who was our Grand Prize winner last year with his memorable Cape May Warbler. But the immaculate Western Kingbird had strong support on the judges' panel, and having two straight years of winning entries and two recent *American Birds* covers further secure Dig's reputation as a very superior bird photographer. The kingbird was shot at Fire Island, New York, November 4, 1977. The camera was a gunstock-mounted Nikon with Novoflex lens. Film: Kodachrome. Exposure: f/8 at 1/250 second.

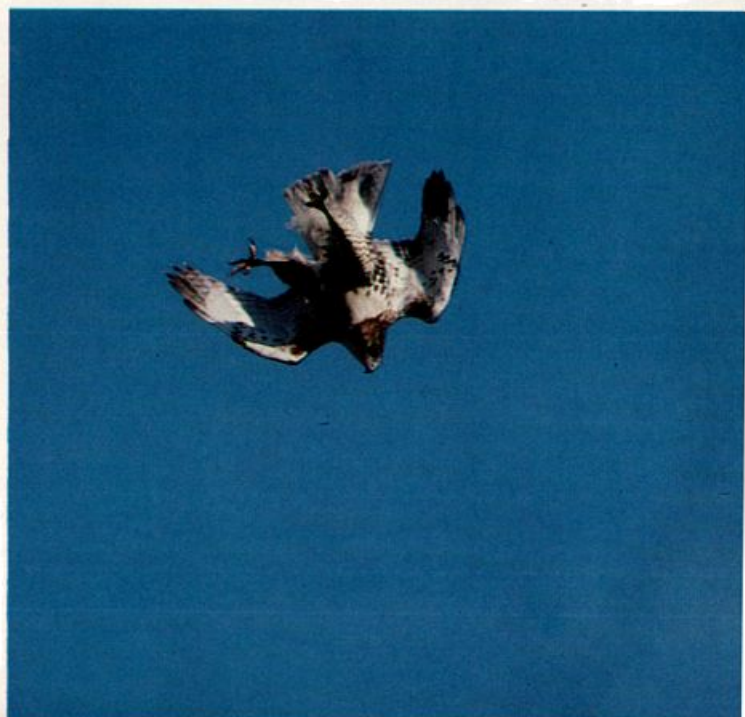




THIRD PRIZE, *The Merlin*, by Ron Kimball, was at first thought to have been a portrait of a hand-held bird, but when details of its photographing arrived, it could not be deprived of a prize. Kimball is a professional photographer who has shot birds for only three years, but already his prints are winning wide reproduction (*Audubon Bird Calendar*, 1980). *The Merlin* was shot from a blind, while Kimball was waiting to photograph ducks. "I had my 400 mm lens on the camera and had to scramble to put on the shorter lens." Camera: Nikon F. Lens: 105 Micro Nikor. Film: K 64. Exposure details unknown.

HONORABLE MENTION winners are *not* shown in any order of rank.

HARRY N. DARROW is well known to readers of *American Birds*, with two covers (Sept. 1977, Jan. 1979) and a shorebird selection; most recently (May, 1979) with *Accipiter* photographs. The immature Red-tailed Hawk was captured in mid-plunge along the Kittatinny Ridge, New Jersey, in October, 1978. This splendid unusual action shot is reproduced correctly here with the ground, or target (a papier maché owl) directly beneath the diving hawk. Camera: Nikon. Lens: 400 mm Novoflex. Film: K 64. Natural light. Exposure was at f/8 at 1/500 second.





DOUG DANFORTH, of Bizbee, Arizona, is relatively new in the photography of birds, but his keen eye for the pictorial is evident in this poetic surfside shot of Sanderlings and Black Turnstones, with their shadow play. Danforth, a biology teacher who has ventured far afield for his photography — to Manitoba, Costa Rica, Texas — caught the scampering shorebirds on a Monterey, California beach one morning. Camera: Pentax Spotmatic. Lens: Soligor 200 mm. Film: Kodachrome. Exposure data not recorded.

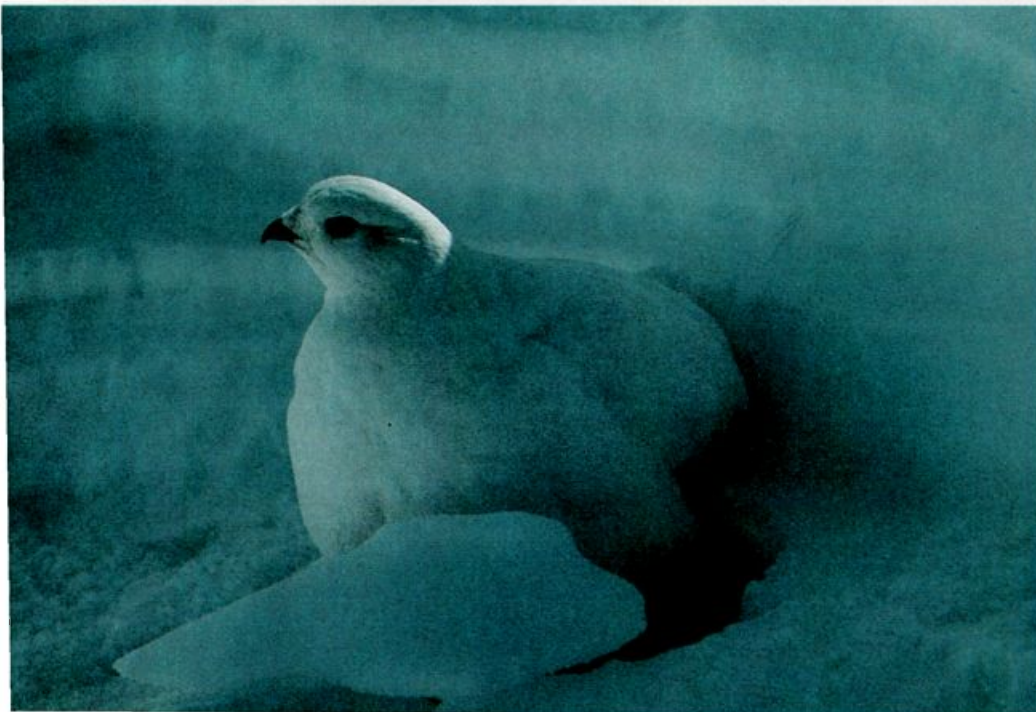
WILLIAM B. FRAY, of Arlington, Virginia, came very close to one of our top prizes for his feather-sharp portrait of a Yellow-throated Vireo. Very similar in quality to our second prize winner, this portrait suffers by comparison only in the visible effect of the flash, and in the slightly less attractive foreground. Fray, who has been winning prizes in Virginia for his nature photography, took the vireo in Carroll County, Virginia. The bird was free, the nest 10 feet high in a cherry tree. Camera, tripod and flash were on a photographic ladder 5 feet from the bird. Camera: Nikon FM. Lens: 200 mm. Film: K 64. Flash with two heads. Exposure at f/11 or f/16 at 1/25 second.





DENNIS PAULSON gives this photograph the title "It takes one to know one." Paulson, one of the birding leaders of the Seattle area, has photographed about 600 species of birds, but his subjects range over all natural history. He is a recent co-author (with Terry Wahl) of "A Guide to Bird Finding in Washington." He says that he has never approached photography in a professional manner, using his photographs mainly as a teaching tool. The Long-tailed Jaeger, chasing the Parasitic from its nesting area, was taken at Cambridge Bay, N.W.T., Canada, in June, 1975. "My luckiest / most successful flying bird photograph!" Camera: Nikon F. Lens: 450 mm Soligor. Film: Ektachrome 160. Exposure was at f/8 at 1/1000 second.

WILLIAM IRVIN, of Boulder, Colorado, has been photographing birds for four years, and hopes soon to become a professional. A Master's degree candidate at the University of Colorado, Irvin has had two record shots published in *American Birds*. The White-tailed Ptarmigan in its snow cave shelter was taken at Guanella Pass, in the Colorado Rockies, last February: "The bird was free." Camera: Nikon F2. Lens: 200 mm. Film: Ektachrome 200. Filter: Haze 2A. Natural light. Exposure was at f/11 at 1/1000 seconds.





KATE NICHOLSON, of Oberlin, Ohio, was our only double winner in color. After the winners were picked, and their key numbers matched with contest entrants' names, it was discovered that both the prey-successful Roadrunner and the spring-evoking Yellow Warbler were by the same photographer. A relative beginner, Kate has roamed continental United States for pictures. The warbler was shot at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, Oregon, while the Roadrunner posed in southeastern Arizona, both in June 1979. Both birds were free, both shots hand held. Camera: Olympus OM-1. Lens: Zuiko 200 mm. Exposure data not recorded.



BLACK-AND-WHITE

IS THE INTEREST IN black-and-white photography of birds waning, or is it just that color transparencies are so much more easily handled, stored, and projected? Whatever the reasons, each year brings fewer entries to this category of our salon competition, and we deplore the trend. This year, the sheaf of entries was slim indeed, and if we had not announced a competition and received entries sent in good faith, we might well have cancelled the black-and-white salon.

As it turned out, we found a rather high standard of quality among the entries, as the six winners exhibited here testify. Each is a photograph with artistic merit; the coincidence of the two top prizes going to the same photographer was perhaps no coincidence; they are outstanding.

We regret that we have no details on the circumstances surrounding the taking of these photographs. Perhaps they speak for themselves.

FIRST PRIZE in the black-and-white competition goes to this beautifully composed and framed Solitary Sandpiper, taken near its nest at Churchill, Manitoba, by Joseph R. Jehl, Jr., of San Diego, California. Jehl, who is affiliated with the Hubbs Sea World Research Institute there, is familiar to readers of *American Birds*; his striking photograph of a flying Marbled Godwit was our cover for November, 1978.





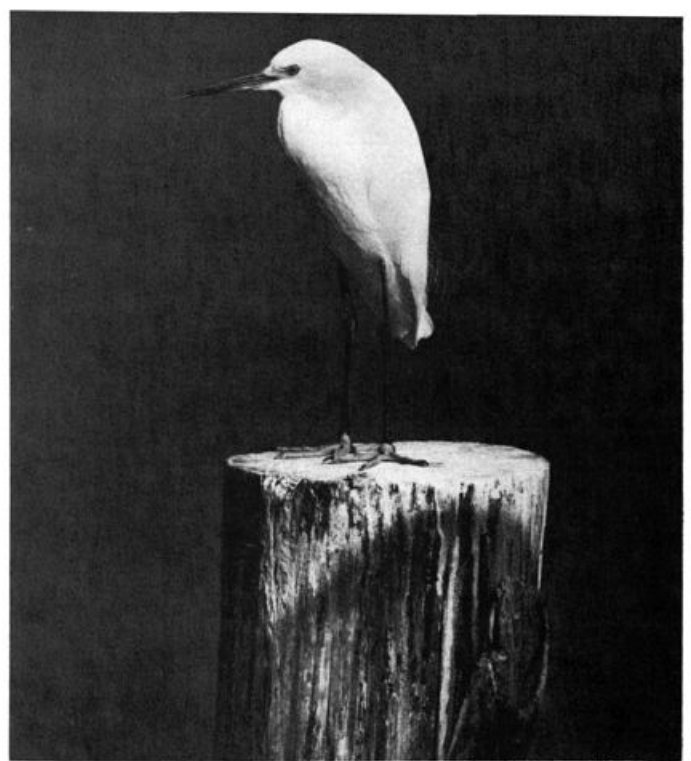
SECOND PRIZE was awarded to Joe Jehl again, for this dreamy, misty image of an Arctic Tern, also taken at Churchill, Manitoba. Jehl is one of three double prize-winners this year.

THIRD PRIZE goes to this evocative scene of tranquility, submitted by photographer Walter J. Marcisz, of Whiting, Indiana. The female Blue-winged Teals were photographed on July 24, 1976, at Powderhorn Marsh, Chicago.

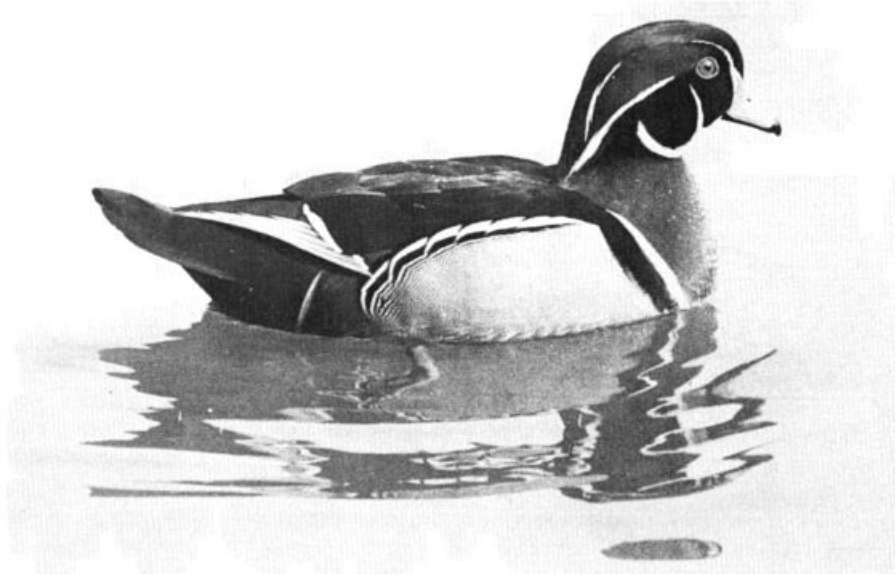


HONORABLE MENTIONS

We held our prejudice against heron photographs (because herons are so photogenic) in abeyance, because this Snowy Egret is so cleanly and simply presented. It is by Horst K. Droeger, of Boulder, Colorado.



More like artwork than photography, this Wood Duck by Robert K. Henschel, of Neptune, New Jersey, shows what can be done with a straightforward portrait shot by imaginative darkroom technique.



Harry N. Darrow, of Bronxville, N.Y., whose plunging Red-tailed Hawk was a selection in the color competition, adds another winner with this Wilson's Phalarope, taken at Seaford, Long Island. We know, in this case, the identity of camera and lens: the same as for the hawk.