

HASA: a projected atlas of breeding birds for North America and Eurasia

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A MAJOR GOAL OF THE HOLARCTIC Avian Speciation Atlas (hereafter, HASA) project is to map accurately the breeding ranges of slightly more than 2000 avian species in the Northern Hemisphere. HASA is a potentially valuable addition to those existing atlas projects covering politically defined regions such as provinces or

This international atlas effort invites additional participants in the Northern Hemisphere.

states. The larger scale of HASA, unlike many existing atlas projects, will cover entire breeding ranges for numerous species and thus provide a unique and useful summary of biogeographic knowledge. HASA is a cooperative, international project of numerous volunteer ornithologists, both amateur and professional, located throughout the Northern Hemisphere. The present article introduces HASA and constitutes an invitation to additional prospective participants.

HASA is to cover the Palearctic and Nearctic regions of classical biogeography. In the Western Hemisphere, the area of primary interest for this journal, coverage extends from the Arctic south to southern Mexico and the montane portions of Chiapas and Guatemala. HASA is to include not only maps of breeding ranges but also commentaries on ecological and systematic relationships including statements, where possible, on the probable effects of geological and climatic changes in the last few million years. HASA is modeled after the definitive two volume atlas of speciation for African birds (Hall and Moreau 1970; Snow 1978). The African atlas has been well received, but HASA

should be even more widely used if only because of its coverage of those global regions in which most ornithologists and biogeographers reside.

Research contributions to HASA are divided into two distinct phases: 1) data collection, and 2) mapping and discussion for the species and genera. For geographic regions with well known avifaunas, recent checklists and atlases are to be the sources of data. For less studied areas, such as in the far north and parts

of Central America, data are to be compiled from museum specimens, field notes, and the published literature. The entire region covered by HASA has been divided into 306 areas to be individually considered. These sharply delineated areas include states, provinces, and islands. Data collection is to be directed by Area Data Collection Organizers, who are to guide Area Data Collectors, who may work on restricted problems of distribution within each area. The data thus assembled for each area are to be provided to the taxonomic group authors who are to depict the ranges on one or more of ten standard maps and to write the associated commentaries. Although four Area Data Collection Organizers and twelve taxonomic authors have already been designated from North America, additional opportunities for participation remain. Persons serving as taxonomic authors should be familiar with general concepts in evolution, speciation, and historic biogeography. Those serving in data collecting should be familiar with the identification of birds in their specific areas, the pertinent literature, and the location of relevant museum specimens. To facilitate the prompt publication of finished

work, the maps and accompanying text are to be published in order of completion in a loose-leaf format. Completion of HASA is estimated to require about a decade.

HASA was formally inaugurated at a Round Table Discussion at the XVIII International Ornithological Congress in Moscow in 1982. HASA is independent of other organizations except the Yorkshire Museum, York, England, which has provided important initiating funding. Additional sources of funding are being sought, and suggestions and offers for funding will be welcomed. Inquiries and offers of participation in data collection, mapping and writing, and fund-raising should be directed to the HASA Organizer/Editor, D.T. Lees-Smith, at 134 The Avenue, Starbeck, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG1 4QF, England, U.K. In addition, copies of checklists of birds for regions of Alaska, Arctic Canada, and Mexico would be useful. Descriptions of vegetation, including the scientific names of plants, are needed for all North American regions except eastern North America.

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LITERATURE CITED

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