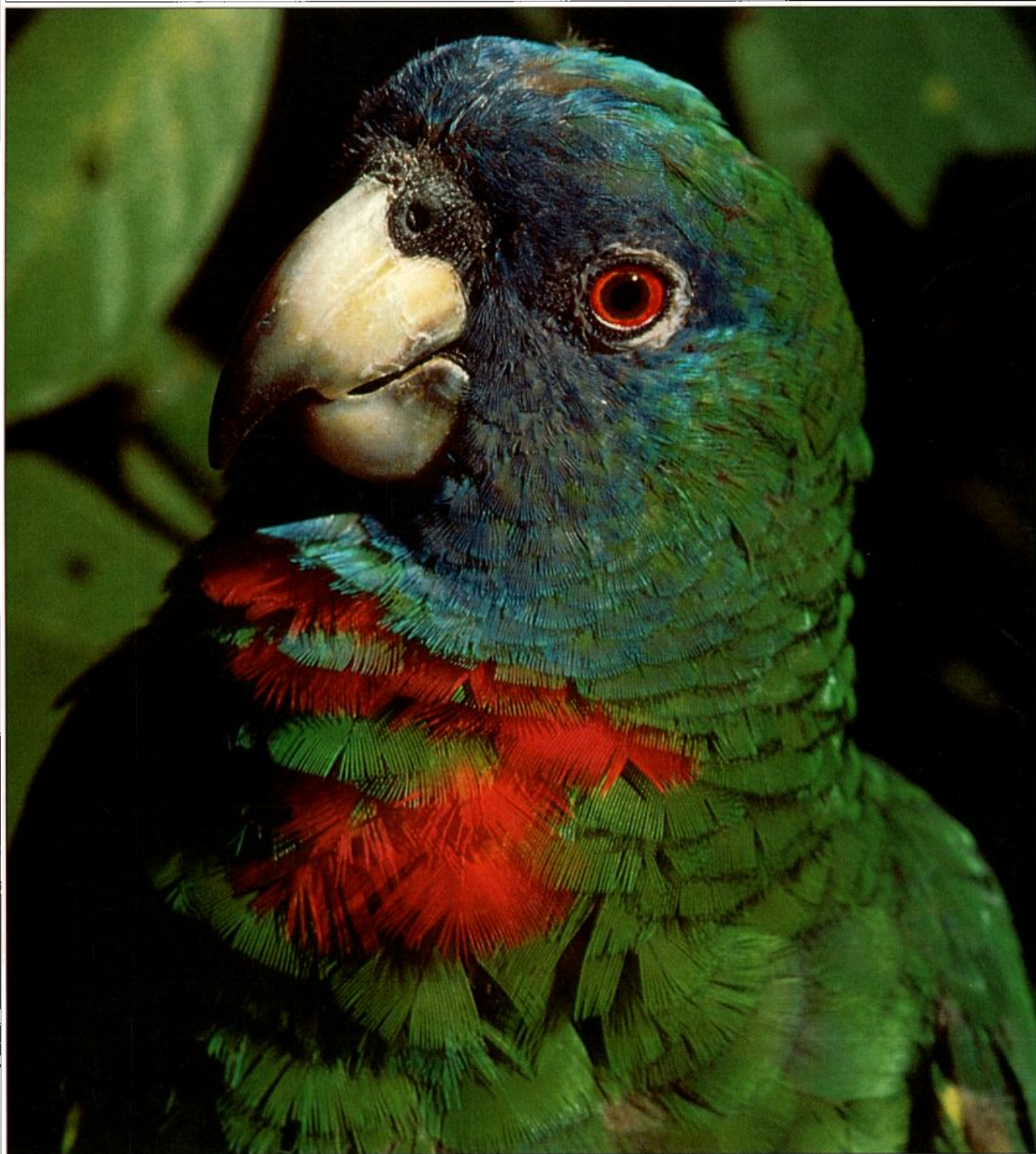


Paul Butler: Parrot Man of the Caribbean · Birders at War · The Sex Life of Birds ·  
The Shiny Cowbird Reaches Oklahoma · Barn Owls in Desert Mines · Yellowish Warbler Identification

# American Birds

THE MAGAZINE OF RECORD AND DISCOVERY · SPRING 1991



THE ENDANGERED RED-NECKED PARROT OF DOMINICA, PAGE 26





The moment you lay eyes on a pair of Nikon binoculars you'll fall in love.

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# FAMILY PORTRAITS

Number Six



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.

**W**ARBLEDERS ARE OFTEN CALLED "BUTTERFLIES OF THE BIRD world," and with good reason. Like butterflies, they are small, fast-moving, and brightly colored. Like butterflies, they seem to be lovers of sunshine. More than fifty kinds of warblers flit through the woodlands of North America in summer—but almost all of them go to the tropics for the winter. When they return in spring, their arrival is the event of the season for birdwatchers in the eastern states, where twenty or more different kinds of warblers may crowd into a single woodlot on a spring morning. Fluttering through the branches, hiding behind leaves, warblers can be hard to see...but the observer who makes the effort necessary to see these little gems will be amply rewarded.

## WARBLERS

- 1. Cape May Warbler
- 2. Blackburnian Warbler
- 3. Prothonotary Warbler
- 4. Townsend's Warbler
- 5. Cerulean Warbler
- 6. Red-faced Warbler

Painting by  
JOHN DAWSON

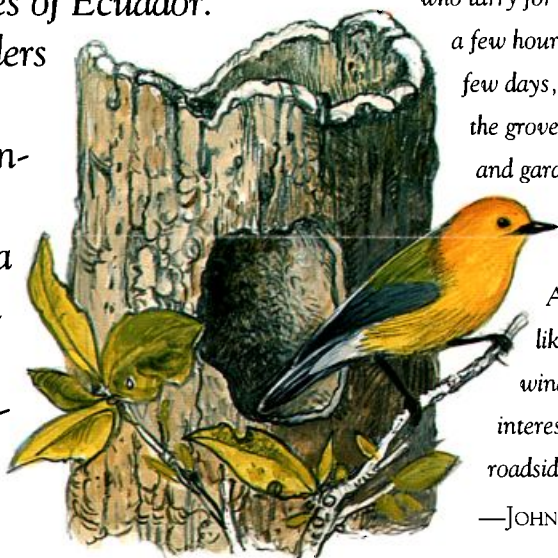


# WARBLERS



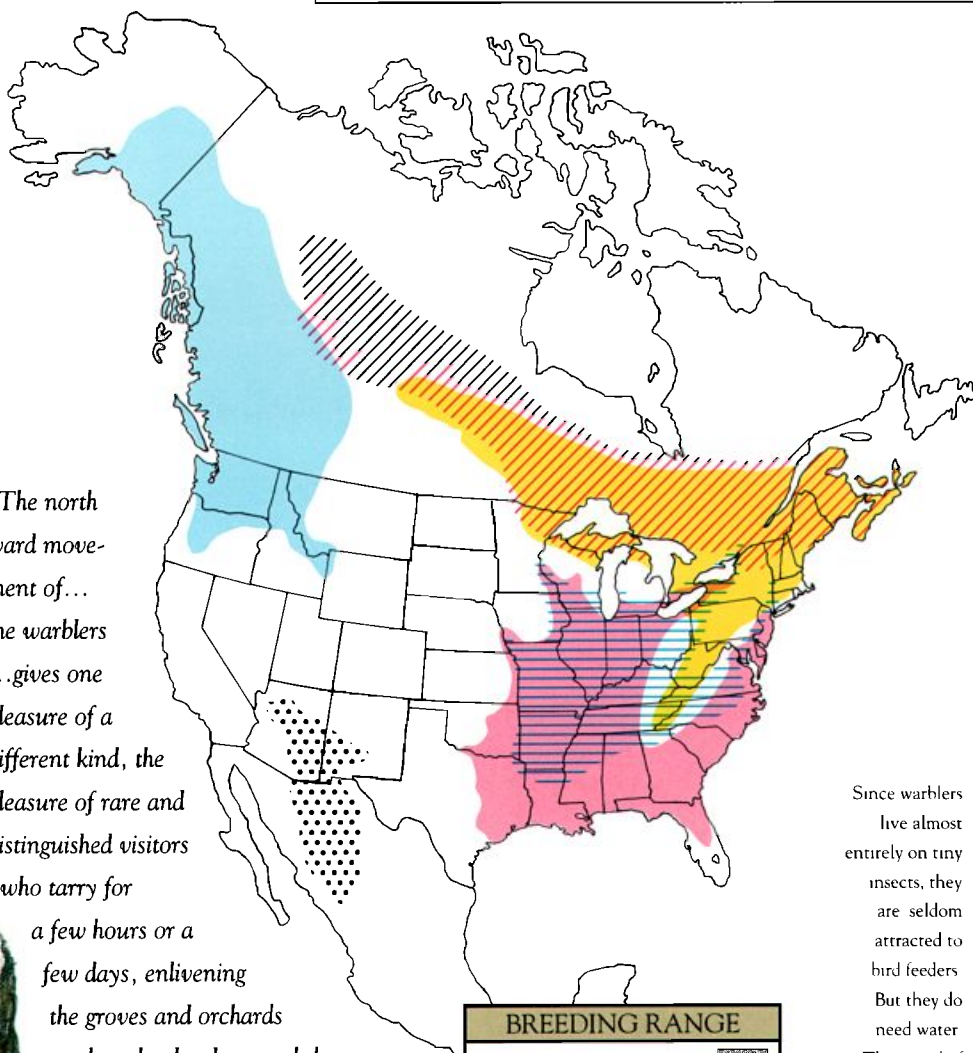
To avoid the rigors of the northern winter, all of our warbler species are migratory. Some undertake journeys that are remarkable for such tiny birds. The blackburnian warbler, a Canadian bird in summer, travels to South America, where it becomes a common winter bird in the Andes of Ecuador. Most Cape May warblers spend the winter in the Caribbean, while Townsend's warblers from Alaska may go to Costa Rica. To protect North American warblers, therefore, we must protect natural habitats in the American tropics.

The rainbow parade of warblers takes on muted colors in fall. At that season many young warblers are about, making their first southward migration and wearing drab plumage. Even the adults of many species change into autumn plumages that are relatively plain. Sorting out the "confusing fall warblers" is an annual challenge for birdwatchers.



"The northward movement of... the warblers... gives one pleasure of a different kind, the pleasure of rare and distinguished visitors who tarry for a few hours or a few days, enlivening the groves and orchards and garden borders, and then pass on. Tiny guests from Central and South America drop out of the sky like flowers borne by the night winds, and give unwonted interest to our tree-tops and roadside hedges."

—JOHN BURROUGHS



BREEDING RANGE	
TOWNSEND'S WARBLER	[Light blue box]
CAPE MAY WARBLER	[Yellow box with diagonal lines]
CERULEAN WARBLER	[Pink box with horizontal lines]
RED-FACED WARBLER	[Yellow box with dots]
BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER	[White box]
PROTHONOTARY WARBLER	[Dark blue box with vertical lines]

Since warblers live almost entirely on tiny insects, they are seldom attracted to bird feeders. But they do need water. The sound of dripping water can be an irresistible lure. Rig a bucket with a pinhole in it to drip water into your birdbath, and migrant warblers may pause in your yard in spring and fall.

SPECIES	SIZE/APPEARANCE	HABITAT	NEST	VOICE	FOOD
<b>TOWNSEND'S WARBLER</b> <i>Dendroica townsendi</i> Several warblers with black throats and golden faces divide up North America among themselves. Townsend's is the representative in the Pacific Northwest.	Length: 5" Male: bold black patch on yellow face, black throat, black stripes on yellow underparts; upperparts green. Female: similar but duller, black replaced by gray.	Coniferous and mixed forest.	A cup of grass, twigs, and bark, lined with moss and other soft materials, placed on a horizontal limb of a conifer.	The song is a musical series of five to ten buzzy whistles.	Most warblers live almost entirely on insects, but some will also eat berries, nectar, occasionally small seeds.
<b>CAPE MAY WARBLER</b> <i>Dendroica tigrina</i> First discovered at Cape May, New Jersey, this warbler is only a migrant there, nesting far to the north.	Length: 4.75" Male: yellow below with black stripes, yellow face with chestnut ear patch. Female: duller, gray and yellow, heavily striped below.	Northern spruce forests and bogs.	A compact cup of weeds and moss, placed high in a spruce or fir.	Song is a quick series of very high-pitched thin notes.	
<b>CERULEAN WARBLER</b> <i>Dendroica cerulea</i> Staying high in the treetops of eastern deciduous woods, this warbler is often difficult to observe.	Length: 4.75" Male: blue above and white below, with black streaks and a thin black chinstrap. Female: similar but duller, more grayish or greenish blue.	Tall deciduous forest, especially of sycamore and oak.	A small cup of bark fibers, twigs, and mosses, placed far out on a horizontal branch.	Song consists of rapid flat buzzy notes stuttering along on one pitch and then running up the scale.	
<b>RED-FACED WARBLER</b> <i>Cardellina rubrifrons</i> A specialty of the southwestern mountains, patterned unlike any other North American bird.	Length: 5.25" Gray above, white below, with a black "scarf" on the head and bright red face.	Mountain forest of pine, oak, spruce, and douglas-fir.	A cup of twigs, leaves, pine needles, and plant fibers, on ground under a log or low bushes.	The song is a series of clear sweet notes on different pitches.	
<b>BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER</b> <i>Dendroica fusca</i> Though named for an English botanist, Anna Blackburne, this warbler's name could also reflect its pattern of black and burning orange.	Length: 5" Male: black above with pale stripes, orange and black face, bright orange throat. Female: duller, orange replaced with yellow.	Tall coniferous or mixed forest.	A cup of weed stems, twigs, lichen, and plant fibers, placed high in a spruce or fir.	Song is a rapid buzzy series of notes going up in pitch and ending on a high wiry trill.	
<b>PROTHONOTARY WARBLER</b> <i>Protonotaria citrea</i> A denizen of the southeastern states, most often seen as a flash of bright gold over the dark waters of southern swamps.	Length: 5.5" Male: bright orange-yellow head and underparts, blue-gray back and wings. Female: similar but duller, more greenish.	Swampy woodlands and riverside trees.	A cup of twigs, bark, leaves, and moss, placed in a cavity in a tree.	Song is a loud, clear <i>wheat wheat wheat</i> , all on one pitch.	

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# American Birds

*The Magazine of Record and Discovery*

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

BIRDING CAN BE THE PASSION of a lifetime or the whim of a Sunday morning when you go on a simple birdwalk. This passion or whim is intriguing, challenging, interesting, a solitary pursuit or a community activity. Everyone acknowledges the presence of birds whether they live in a city, suburb, on a mountain-top, or on the coast. This spring, Auduboners nationwide are mobilizing to protect local wetlands in their communities. These wetlands provide essential habitat for birds and other wildlife. They act as natural buffer zones against flooding and filter pollutants from water. These folks are participating in training workshops, identifying local wetlands and the threats to them, and are successfully using state and federal laws to protect them. These efforts take on added urgency in light of the fact that early in the year, despite the President's avowed "no net loss" policy for United States wetlands, the De-

partment of Agriculture scuttled an interagency agreement that gave protection to small wetlands on farms. We continue to lose wetlands at the rate of 450,000 acres a year. This is serious for the serious birder. Where will birders go to experience some of the most fascinating birdlife if wetlands continue to decrease at this rate? To a certain extent, everyone is a birder, whether juggling a pair of binoculars, studying a field guide, or sloshing through a mist shrouded marsh at dawn. It really cannot be helped. Birds are abundant. Birds are obvious. Won't you, as a serious birder join the efforts of Audubon people and act as the catalyst for this new wetland preservation initiative. We need your help.



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# American Birds

Spring 1991, Vol. 45, No. 1

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### OVERVIEW

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Front cover: Red-necked Parrot (*Amazona araucana*), the smaller of the two endangered endemic parrots found on Dominica. Photograph/© Robert Rattner 1988.

# FROM THE EDITOR

COMING UP WITH JUST EXACTLY THE right combination of articles to publish is something like a puzzle wrapped in a riddle inside a mystery. Therefore, we think about the newly formatted *American Birds* as a pioneering project. As we go to press with our Spring issue, the letters are still pouring in with your reactions to the Winter issue (also see page 163). Let me warmly thank you for taking the time to write.

Whether your remarks affirm or oppose the changes, we read and seriously consider every one. As always, we rely heavily on the comments of our subscribers in guiding our editorial product. Let me practice the art of "friendly persistence" and encourage you, once again, to communicate to us your feelings about each issue. We are itchy to grow because we know we've got a winner publication.

## WINNERS TAKE ALL

There are days when it takes all you've got just to keep up with the winners. We've had exactly those kinds of days around here lately as the high-performance, game-playing readers among us submitted their responses to our first That's Bird Entertainment quiz.

But winning is like drinking salt water; it will never quench your thirst. So play this season's bird and baseball spring quiz with us also. Unrestrained applause to all who spent the modest amount of time required to send us your answers and your wry, witty, prodigiously annotated letters.

And the winners are: Joe Bartl, J. F. Charbonneau, Carolyn Garber, Dennis Martin, the Nears, Steve Pollock, and Peter Rosmarin who all got all the questions correct; James E. Cardoza, Judy and Tim Cox, Kathleen Hanson, Roy A. Ickes, Cathleen Moore, Bill Robertson and John Curnutt, and Rosemary Seidler who all got 19 out of 20 questions correct; Gina A. Buckey, Melinda Droege, Richard P. Frechette, Norbert Gresey, Alan Richards, Russell Stone and Dorothy Nemanich, the Technical Services Division of the Trexler Library (Barbara Bollinger, Linda Bowers, Jo Ellen Chistiansen, Barbara Eastland, Barbara Howard, Kathy Lilly), and Paul Woronecki who all got 18 out of 20 questions correct; Greg Butcher, Janel Thompson, and Elizabeth Wells who all got 17 out of 20 questions correct; Natasha Antonovich, Martin Floyd, Frank Murphy, and Brian Stern who got 16 out of 20 correct; Robert Rufe who got 14 correct; and finally, Al Guarente who got 13 correct. Congratulations to one and all!

## AN ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND BIRDATHON

Because most massive birding efforts are accomplished in cars and are therefore very energy-expensive, we have initiated a new twist on the normal birdathon concept. This year, the *American Birds* birdathon team of Drennan (Editor), Kenn Kaufman (Associate Editor), Geoff LeBaron (Christmas Bird Count Editor), and Phil Whitney (Associate Publisher), have decided to conduct the *entire* birdathon on bicycles and on foot. We will restrict ourselves to Cape May County, New Jersey.

We expect that we won't get as many species as in previous years, but we are hoping that you will take that into account and make up the slack for us when you submit your



pledge per species card. These cards were mailed to you recently. If you haven't gotten yours, send your pledge to us on a postal card. May 20th is the date we've set for our annual birding extravaganza. We'll be combing Cape May County from before dawn to well after dark. We are really depending on you to help us out with this with your

good will, best wishes and your dollars. This is our single-most important, annual fund raising effort. Every penny we raise on birdathon day helps pay for the improvement and publication of *American Birds*.

We urge you to support us in our fund raising efforts by pledging as much as you can per species. Help us prove that an environmentally sound birdathon is one of which you approve and will support. Make our birdbikeathon a success.

Have an absolutely great time birding this spring!!

—S. R. Drennan

## ANSWERS TO THAT'S BIRD ENTERTAINMENT, VOLUME 44, NUMBER 5, WINTER 1990 *AMERICAN BIRDS*

1. Hawkeye
2. The Maltese Falcon
3. Scarlet and Peacock
4. Bye Bye Birdie
5. One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest
6. Birdland
7. Sweet Bird of Youth
8. To Kill A Mockingbird
9. The New Yardbirds
10. Alsinio and the Condor
11. A Duck
12. Falcon Crest or Knot's Landing
13. The Falcon and the Snowman
14. El Condor Pasa
15. Jenny Wren or the Dove
16. Birdy
17. Torrid Zone
18. The Penguin
19. Jonathan Livingston Seagull
20. Jay, robin, swallow, chickadee, crow, raven, buzzard, owl, oriole



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Explore one of the most pristine boreal/montane forests remaining in the Adirondacks.

Observe nesting Common Loons, Black-backed Woodpeckers, Olive-sided and Alder flycatchers, Common Ravens, Boreal Chickadees, Gray-cheeked Thrushes, and Blackburnian, Blackpoll, and Mourning warblers.

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**1.** With the surname of a swallow and a notorious purple temper, this controversial manager couldn't hold a job.



**2.** On August 4, 1983 in Toronto, Canada, what New York Yankee ballplayer was arrested and fined \$500 for anti-avian behavior?

**3.** This baseball maneuver for getting on base is favored by speedy batsmen.

**4.** His mother named him George Robert Tebbetts, but his baseball buddies called him \_\_\_\_\_.



**5.** A one-season wonder with frizzy hair, quirky humor and an avian nickname, he won the hearts of Motown in '76.

**6.** What does the expression "ducks on the pond," mean in baseball lingo?

**7.** When a pitcher throws a shutout, the line of zeros on the scoreboard looks like \_\_\_\_\_.

**8.** Klinger, the wacky cross-dresser on the TV series M\*A\*S\*H loved his home-town ball team, the \_\_\_\_\_.

**9.** Fast replacing chewing tobacco as the choice of big league managers, this snack is also a favorite among birds.

**10.** He twice led National League relief pitchers in wins and twice in saves. His teammates called him the "Vulture."



**11.** What do you call a batter who consistently strokes the big hit at the crucial point in a ball game?

**12.** His nickname was Hawk, his team was the Red Sox, and he led the American League in RBIs in 1968.

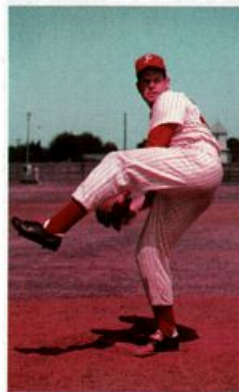
**13.** In George Plimpton's famous baseball novel, the young Met pitching phenom is named \_\_\_\_\_.

# THAT'S BIRD & BASEBALL ENTERTAINMENT

**It seems only natural** that our Spring quiz should be all about our two favorite pastimes: bird watching and baseball!

If you know about one, the other, or both, we think you'll have a lot of fun doing this quiz. So grab a piece of lumber (a pencil), step up to the plate (er, page) and start swinging (or should that be flapping?).

**14.** There's alliteration on his plaque in the Hall of Fame. Name this right-handed hurler from Philadelphia.



**15.** This Pittsburgh mascot sometimes has a lot to say.

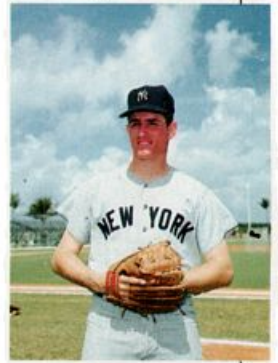
**16.** An outfielder's job is primarily to be a \_\_\_\_\_.

**17.** What were the Brooklyn Dodgers known as prior to 1930?

**18.** What do players call a modestly hit fly ball that falls quickly to the earth between the infielders and outfielders?

**19.** Identify all the major league teams with bird names.

**20.** This Yankee pitcher, with a famous ornithologist's surname, was involved in a wife-swapping scandal.



If you think you answered **less than 10**

questions correctly, you are managerial material. If you think you got **10 to 12** right, you are spending too much time reading the sports section when you should be out birding.

If you believe you were right **13 to 15** times, you're a little batty. If you think you answered **16 or more** correctly, you are definitely standing too close to

the plate. Look out, you could win a prize!

Write your answers on a piece of paper and mail it before June 23, 1991 to: American Birds Quiz, 950 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10022.

The entrants with the most correct answers will win prizes.

*Check the next issue for answers and a list of the winners.*

*Until July...good birding!*





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