

National Audubon Society

Summer 1997 Vol.51 No.3

Field Notes



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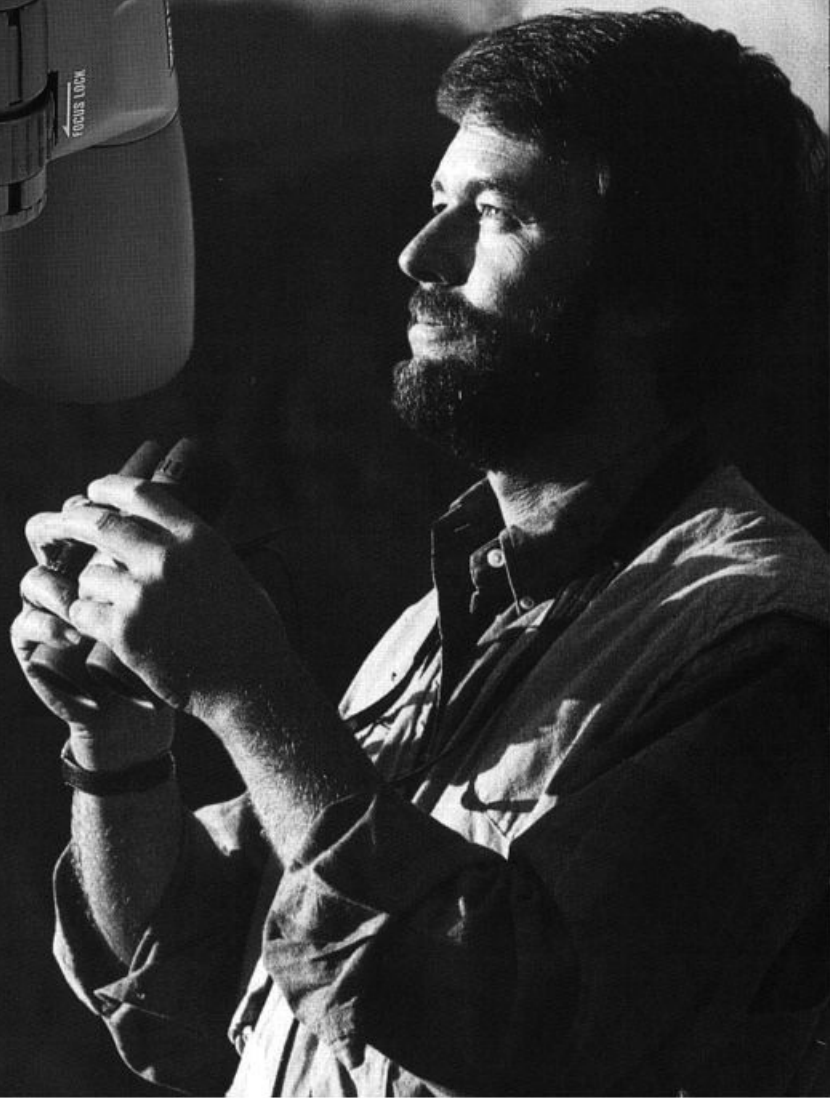
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From the Editor

In my last editorial, I announced our newly established alliance with the American Birding Association. Our agreement calls for the National Audubon Society and the American Birding Association, for a transition period of two years, to jointly publish *Field Notes*. After that two-year period, the ABA will publish *Field Notes* on its own. The ABA is currently assuming responsibility for *Field Notes*: that is, all editorial, design, layout and production, along with planning, subscription fulfillment, and promotion, effective with the fall 1997 issue. We feel that in this way, the content and distribution of *Field Notes* will be strengthened and we will facilitate a more smooth and thorough flow of information within the birding community.

National Audubon Society will continue to manage the Christmas Bird Count as a separate programmatic, financial, and editorial entity from *Field Notes*.

We have, of course, received many telephone calls from our subscribers as to how to proceed, especially in getting the four quarterly issues and the Christmas Bird Count issue.

The transition is in full swing. If you wish to subscribe to *Field Notes*,



a one-year subscription (\$20/year US and US\$25/year Canada) brings you four issues of *Field Notes*: Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter. To newly order or renew, please call the following telephone number located in the offices of the Ameri-

can Birding Association:
1-800-850-2473.

If you wish to continue receiving or newly subscribe to the Christmas Bird Count issue for an annual fee of \$10, please call the number below.
1-800-690-1669.

Stay tuned!!

During 1995, our nation will observe the 50th anniversary of Franklin Roosevelt's death. You are invited to plant a tree grown from seeds hand-picked from the trees that grow at Franklin Delano Roosevelt's home. In your own yard, you can plant a white oak from Hyde Park, New York, or a red-bud or southern magnolia from Warn Springs, Georgia. The small trees are the direct offspring of FDR's own trees and are guaranteed to grow. Each small tree comes in a complete planting kit with a special certificate issued in observance of the 50th anniversary of FDR's death.

As Governor of New York during the Great Depression, Franklin

Roosevelt arranged for thousands of unemployed people to work on reforestation projects and as president he made the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) a centerpiece of his strategy for putting people back to work. Thus the tree symbolizes FDR's effort to rebuild the country and his faith in the future.

To mark the 50th anniversary of his death, the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute and AMERICAN FORESTS are sponsoring this commemorative tree-planting program and you are encouraged to join us. Place a toll-free call to 800-320-TREE and receive information at no cost.

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OF OUR LAND, PURIFYING
THE AIR AND GIVING FRESH
STRENGTH TO OUR PEOPLE."

Franklin Roosevelt



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ON THE COVER: Sage Grouse by
Brian E. Small

How to Read the Regional Reports

Birds have no respect for range maps. Bird distribution in North America is constantly changing, as birds expand their ranges into new areas, disappear from former strongholds, or alter their patterns of migration.

Our knowledge of bird distribution is also changing constantly, as discoveries continue to come in. Keeping up with all these developments is a challenge for ornithologists, conservationists, and birders.

The Regional Reports, published four times a year, contain a wealth of information about our dynamic birdlife. To those seeing the reports for the first time, they might appear difficult or technical, but they are not; anyone with any birding experience will find the reports easy to understand. We invite you to read the report from your area of the continent; we predict that the information there will alternately surprise you and confirm your ideas about birdlife in your region. To help you get started, here are answers to some questions that may occur to first-time readers.

What kind of information is included, and do the Regional Editors report everything that's reported to them?

Regional Editors do not report every sighting of every bird. Such a list would be huge, unwieldy, and not very useful. Instead, they solicit reports from as many observers as possible, screen the records for accuracy, choose those that are most significant, look for trends and patterns of occurrence, connect scattered bits of information, and ultimately come up with a concise, readable summary of the real bird news—the important avian events and trends of the season throughout their region.

Why are there abbreviations in the text?

We abbreviate some frequently used words and phrases to save space. Most are easy to understand and remember. (See the following list of abbreviations.) In addition, some Regional Editors use shortened versions of the names of birding hot spots; they list these local abbreviations in a separate paragraph, just after the introductory comments and just before their main species accounts.

What do the initials in parentheses mean?

Most records published in each report will be followed by initials, to indicate the source, the person(s) who found or reported the bird(s) mentioned. The initials may be followed by *et al.* (short for *et alia*, meaning “and others”), or preceded by *fide* (literally, “by the faith of”—meaning that this is a second-hand report, and the person cited is the one who passed it to the Regional Editor).

There are good reasons for giving credit to the observers involved. Readers may be reassured about the accuracy of surprising sightings if they know who the observers were; researchers who want to know more about a certain record may be able to contact the observers directly.

Who sends in their sightings?

All observers are invited to send in notes to their Regional Editors: details on rare sightings, species that were scarcer or more numerous than usual during the season, unusual concentrations on migration, and so on. Reading the reports for your region for a few seasons is the best way to find out what kinds of information are desired. Although the Regional Editors cannot cite every record that they receive, every contributor helps them to produce a more thorough and accurate summary.

Why are some bird names in heavier type?

We use boldface type to draw attention to outstanding records of rare birds. General categories of birds that the Regional Editors would place in boldface would include: any species that has been recorded fewer than 10 times previously in a given state or province; any new breeding record for a state or province; or any bird totally outside established patterns of seasonal occurrence. (For the most part, records are not boldfaced unless they are backed up with solid details or photographs.) Birders who like to know about rare birds (and most of us do) can get a complete rundown of the season's outstanding rarities by scanning all the Regional Reports for those boldfaced birds.

What are the sections marked “S.A.”?

“S.A.” stands for “Special Attention” (and, by coincidence, is pronounced “essay”). The purpose of the essays is to draw attention to noteworthy phenomena or trends.

Likely topics include new population trends or new patterns of bird distribution, unusual invasions or migration events, field research projects that have yielded new data, specific conservation problems that have an impact on birdlife, or detailed discussion of some outstanding (or perplexing) rare bird record. Experienced readers make it a point to flip through all the reports and read all the S.A.s, even in regions where they do not read the rest of the text.

Standard Abbreviations used in the Regional Reports

Abbreviations used in place names:
In most regions, place names given in italic type are counties. Other abbreviations:

Ct.	Creek
Ft.	Fort
Hwy	Highway
I.	Island or Isle
Is.	Islands or Isles
Jct.	Junction
km	kilometer(s)
L.	Lake
mi	mile(s)
Mt.	Mountain or Mount
Mts.	Mountains
N.F.	National Forest
N.M.	National Monument
N.P.	National Park
N.W.R.	National Wildlife Refuge
P.P.	Provincial Park
Pen.	Peninsula
Pt.	Point (not Port)
R.	River
Ref.	Refuge
Res.	Reservoir (not Reservation)
S.P.	State Park
W.M.A.	Wildlife Management Area

Abbreviations used in the names of birds:

Am.	American
Com.	Common
E.	Eastern
Eur.	European or Eurasian
Mt.	Mountain
N.	Northern
S.	Southern
W.	Western

Other abbreviations and symbols referring to birds:

ad.	adult
imm.	immature
juv.	juvenile or juvenile
sp.	species
v.t.	video taped
†	means that written details were submitted for a sighting
*	means that a specimen was collected
♂	male
♀	female
CBC	Christmas Bird Count

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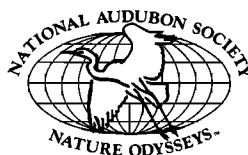
Our voyage leader will be **Fred Baumgarten**, Audubon's national coordinator of the Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program, part of a worldwide initiative to identify and protect key bird habitats. Fred will lecture on birds of the area, scientists and artists in Latin America, and the IBA Program, and will be a great asset to your educational travel experience.

Join National Audubon Society Nature Odysseys on this very special holiday program. Or ask about other Audubon winter Caribbean travel opportunities in the Virgin Islands or the Grenadines, Windward & Leeward Islands. For detailed brochures, or to borrow a 21-minute video, *The Beauty of Small-Ship Adventure Travel*, **at no charge**, call **Beth Ryan** at 212-979-3066, send an email message to travel_programs@audubon.org, or fax us at 212-353-0190



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Detail from "Piping Plover" painted by naturalist Cindy House, who uses Bausch & Lomb optics for her field observations.

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