

THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Who should be members of the Wilson Ornithological Club? This is a question for frequent discussion at meetings of the Club's Council, and at informal gatherings of members. Perhaps we all need to consider carefully just what individuals and groups the Club is designed to serve.

Of course we welcome the professionals in the field of ornithology and its related disciplines. Staff members of museums, universities, and colleges who are working in ornithology certainly have a place in the organization. This is also true of persons in federal and state agencies which deal with wildlife management. Throughout the years *The Wilson Bulletin* has published its share of important technical papers. Its reviews have done much to mold professional opinion on outdoor writing. Its graphic material has been excellent, and, in many instances, unique. Its columns have been open to articles and notes dealing with bird protection in particular, and conservation in general.

But the vast majority of bird students are not professionals. Fortunately, the amateur in the field can, and often does, make contributions which are as accurate and scientifically significant as the work of the best professionals. It may well be that the Wilson Club makes its greatest contribution through bringing the amateur and the professional together, and in upholding standards of scientific accuracy and effective presentation toward which they both may work.

The larger portion of our membership is, and will probably continue to be, in the amateur field. Our dues have been kept lower than in most comparable organizations. This enables the student or younger worker who is at the beginning of his career to affiliate with a scientific bird group, and to grow with it.

In the Wilson Ornithological Club there are various classes of membership. The privileges of membership, however, do not differ in the slightest. The associate member has exactly the same privileges as does the life member. Persons who join the Club as members other than associate simply contribute more toward making *The Wilson Bulletin* attractive and stimulating.

Like other scientific societies, the Wilson Club is having its difficulties in this time of increasing printing costs and lowered returns on investments. Our journal is costing so much more that we have simply been forced to reduce its size. This is not pleasing to any of us, and for the situation there is only one remedy. We need new members who will maintain a loyalty to the Club throughout the years, and we need more members who will feel that they can join as other than associates. Many present associates could, perhaps, increase their contributions through membership in one of the other classes.

The Club is conducting an active membership campaign through its Membership Committee, of which Seth Low, Patuxent Research Refuge, Laurel, Md., is Chairman, and Ralph Edeburn, Marshall College, Huntington, W. Va., is Vice-Chairman. In the last analysis, however, we must depend not on this committee but on the loyalty and services of individual Club members. You can be of great assistance if you will send to any member of the Committee the names of persons who should be in our ranks. Elsewhere in this issue is published the personnel of the Membership Committee. May we count on your help?

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