

IN MEMORIAM: JOHN L. BULL, 1914-2006

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reserves. One example is the “Teppes de Verbois” near the city of Geneva, where meanders of the Rhône River had created a habitat mosaic harboring a high biotic diversity. The area had been severely damaged by a dam and gravel pits. In addition, the government wanted to install a nuclear power plant there. Conservationists in Geneva, led by Géroutet and others, stopped the planned nuclear plant and reduced the gravel extraction. Further, they persuaded the authorities to finance the ecological restoration of the area. Recreated environments include ponds, one of which was named “The Géroutet Pond.” A second involvement stemmed from his belief, which he backed by aggressive action, that species that had become extinct through human activities could be reintroduced. The Lammergeier was his prime objective for reintroduction. A program similar to the one that saved the California Condor succeeded, and the Lammergeier breeds again in the Alps.

Géroutet was my mentor in ornithology. He emphasized field techniques, note taking, and how to write papers, and introduced me to the ornithological literature and to figures like Lars von Haartman, Reginald Moreau, and Alexander Wetmore. Under a gruff demeanor, Géroutet hid a softer side. Even though not wealthy, he donated thousands of dollars from book royalties to worthy causes in ornithology and conservation. Carmen, his wife since 1950, was the ideal companion. Although she liked operas and he preferred operettas, they shared a love of travel and a passion for food. As a result of Paul’s oenological knowledge, he was inducted in 1964 into Burgundy’s illustrious group of wine connoisseurs, the “Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin.” Paul and Carmen Géroutet had no children. Detailed appreciations of Géroutet’s extraordinary life and work have appeared in *Nos Oiseaux* (54: 3–28, 2007, with a partial bibliography) and *Der Ornithologische Beobachter* (104:70–74, 2007).

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John Lewis Bull, who chronicled the birds of New York City and State, was born in Manhattan on 28 February 1914. Self-taught in natural history, John’s first job after graduating from high school in New Rochelle was in the Bronx studio of the taxidermist, James Clark. John exhibited an early interest in both birds and butterflies and volunteered in the Entomology Department of the American Museum of Natural History. He was an active field naturalist, spending scores of hours in the field, often with other self-taught naturalists. In 1949, John was with banker–lepidopterist Sidney Hessel in Lakehurst, New Jersey, when Hessel discovered the striking Hessel’s Hairstreak.

Childhood tuberculosis left John medically unfit for military service during World War II.

In 1942, he joined the United States Customs Service and served as an examiner and specialist in feathers at the Port of New York until 1959. After two years in southern Florida as a special investigator with the National Audubon Society, John returned to New York City. From 1962 until his retirement in 1983, he held a number of positions in the Department of Ornithology at the American Museum of Natural History: research assistant, field associate, scientific assistant, and senior scientific assistant.

John joined the AOU in 1947, became an Elective Member in 1965, and served on its membership committee in 1963–1965. His *Birds of the New York City Area* (1964) drew on the observations of numerous local birders, particularly members of the Linnaean Society of New

York. John was active in the Society, became President (1953–1955) and was elected a Fellow of the Society (1964). John was also a member of the Cooper and Wilson ornithological societies and the Northeastern Bird Banding Association, and served on the Council of the Eastern Bird Banding Association (1954–1955).

Always cheerful, John was extremely helpful to New York birders. His personal files contain many friendly, helpful letters to both new and experienced birders. I well remember my thrill as a young birder on receiving a note from him identifying an escaped waxbill, in response to a letter I sent to the Museum describing a strange bird seen in Brooklyn. Years later, after we had become colleagues and friends, I surprised him with the story, how much it had meant to me, and that I still had his note. He enjoyed working with beginning birders and for many years taught an introductory class on birds at the Museum and classes on the ornithology of New York at the New School for Social Research.

In 1974, his major work on the birds of New York State was published. He drew information from the observations of amateurs, as well as from the unpublished Ph.D. dissertation by Kenneth C. Parkes. It was the first book-length

survey of the state's birds since E. H. Eaton's in 1914. The book became the basis for the state's most recent survey of its avifauna, titled *Bull's Birds of New York State*, edited by E. Levine and published by Cornell University Press (1998).

His photographic field guide to the birds of the eastern United States, coauthored with John Farrand (1977), was so successful when published that it reached nonfiction bestseller lists and spawned a series of photographic field guides; a revised edition is still in print. Together with his wife, Edith, he published introductory field guides to the birds of eastern (1985) and western (1989) North America. Both volumes were reissued in 2006.

Until his mobility was limited by ill health, John traveled extensively, leading birding trips and studying birds on his own. His travels took him to all the continents except Antarctica. John died at a hospital near his home in Far Rockaway, New York, on 11 August 2006. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Edith, his daughter Doris Kraus, a marine biologist in Miami, and three grandchildren. John will be missed by his many friends in the New York birding community and elsewhere. I thank Edith Bull for sharing her memories of John.