



SWAROVSKI BIRDING COMMUNITY E-BULLETIN DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE NORTH AMERICAN SWAROVSKI BIRDING COMMUNITY

Information, communication, and inspiration on birds, wildlife, and nature

May 2005

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MAY JOY

For many of us, May is perhaps the finest month of the year - a month of great birding and great opportunities. A number of important days are regularly scheduled in May, too - birding Big Days, International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD), Mother's Day, Memorial Day, and even Keep Your Cat Indoors Day!

May is also "American Wetlands Month," when Americans are invited to celebrate and focus on the economic benefits that wetlands provide. The Environmental Protection Agency has joined with other Federal, State, and local agencies to recognize the marvelous ways that wetlands enrich the environment and society. Similar to IMBD, wetland events are scheduled all across the country to help educate and involve Americans in better understanding the importance of one of Earth's most valuable and fragile ecosystems. This is particularly meaningful, when it is remembered that in the lower 48 United States over half of our original wetlands have been lost or converted to other uses. [Click here](#) for more information.

Also, [click here](#) to obtain information about IMBD.

The E-bulletin is distributed as a joint effort between Swarovski Optik of North America (SONA) and the [National Wildlife Refuge Association](#) (NWRA). You can access an [archive of past E-bulletins](#) on the NWRA site.

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RARITY FOCUS

We were set to profile two wonderful Flame-colored Tanagers that were found last month at Madera Canyon in southeast Arizona as the rarity focus for April. Far more important bird events took precedence, however!

Toward the end of April, exciting rumors began spreading about the possible existence of Ivory-billed Woodpecker in a remote section of Arkansas bottomland forest. Increasingly convincing stories started to rocket across the Internet, culminating in an official announcement originally intended for mid-May, but ultimately delivered on 28 April. When the event was finally announced at a press conference at the Department of the Interior in Washington DC, the birding world was at once both ecstatic and stunned.

The details of how the bird was discovered, how the secret was maintained, and how the organized searches for the species were conducted have now been widely played in the media. From radio interviews and television spots, to the recent publication of *THE GRAIL BIRD* (Houghton Mifflin 2005), a book by Tim Gallagher (one of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology staff who actually saw the bird), the birding community (and the general public) undoubtedly know more about the Ivory-billed Woodpecker than ever before in the history of the planet! Most encouraging amid all the recent publicity is the implication that there could actually be a population of these birds in Arkansas. In the words of John Fitzpatrick, director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, "We've passed the bottleneck," and are in a situation where habitat for the bird "can only get better."

One little-appreciated aspect of the Ivory-billed story has been that the Migratory Birding Hunting and Conservation [Duck] Stamp has, since 1986, been a major contributor to acquiring habitat at the core site, Cache River National Wildlife Refuge. (So much for the Stamp being "just for ducks.")

Although a great deal has recently been written about the Ivory-bill, the bottom line is that in order to ensure the ultimate survival of the bird, the management of the species will have to be a collective effort on the part of leaders from a number of agencies and organizations, including the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, The Nature Conservancy, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (especially staff involved with the Refuge System and Endangered Species), the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and many others. Teamwork and cooperation are absolutely essential if the species is ever to survive.

In line with this reality, there needs to be concern over "loving the Ivory-billed Woodpecker to death," as noted by Secretary of the Interior, Gale Norton, at the Washington, DC press conference. There are undoubtedly already birders obsessing over how to see the bird. While catching sight of an Ivory-billed Woodpecker might be the ultimate dream of many birders, a considerable amount of restraint needs to be exercised at this point. Rather than fixating over observing the bird, it would be far more appropriate right now to focus on developing strategies for preserving the bird and its habitat.

"Our next step to recover the bird must be as patient and thoughtful as the collection of evidence to confirm the existence of the bird," Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton said. "As we learn more, we will adjust our cooperative management effort." And she's absolutely correct.

Among many key tasks, the Corridor of Hope Cooperative Conservation team and the technical experts assigned to assist them have been asked to "develop and implement plans to manage visitor access. . . The conservation team will carefully evaluate management actions for public access to ensure opportunities to see the areas where the bird has been sighted and to facilitate research without jeopardizing its survival."

Since Ivory-bills have seemingly been able to hold out in remote Arkansas (i.e., Cache River and White River NWRs and surrounding areas) for decades, perhaps there is a chance that with man's help, they will continue to live and breed (and perhaps even spread) in the future, if they remain relatively unmolested.

Although there are already a number of web sites devoted to the wonder, appreciation, and survival of this most spectacular of woodpeckers, we especially recommend that all readers of the E-Bulletin visit these two: [The Big Woods Conservation Partnership](#) and NWRA's [Lessons of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker](#).

And while you are cheering for the recovery of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, we encourage you to also track the future of other bird rarities, possibly closer to home. A great place to begin your vicarious search is the new [North American Rare Bird Alert \(NARBA\) Gallery](#) of recent rare birds. It's a feast for the eyes and for the imagination. There's lots of wonderful birding out there, so have a look.

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WOODCOCK CONSERVATION PLAN

In 2002, the Migratory Shore and Upland Game Bird Working Group of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA) formed a Woodcock Task Force to address long-term declines in American Woodcock populations. The Task Force is currently developing a Woodcock Conservation Plan with specific recommendations and action plans for reversing the decline of this species' population.

Both the short- and long-term objectives of the plan are aimed at halting the decline of American Woodcock populations by the year 2012, along with achieving positive population growth by 2022. Biologists have witnessed annual long-term declines of 2.1% in the East, and 1.8% in the center of the country since surveys began in the late 1960s. It is widely believed that the loss of old field and early-succession forest habitat is the main cause of these decreases. A draft recovery and management plan is scheduled for completion this summer. For further information, contact James Kelley at james_r_kelley@fws.gov.

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CATS INDOORS... OR ELSE!

We mentioned above that National Keep Your Cat Indoors Day occurs on 14 May. But a different kind of cat-related news crackled last month with reports from Wisconsin on efforts to make feral cats an unprotected species in the state. Apparently, some residents in that state have had their fill of free-roaming cats, especially those that visit residential bird feeders.

The Wisconsin proposal would allow people with a valid small game license to shoot any free-roaming cat (in rural areas), either not under an owner's direct control or without a collar. By a vote of 6,830 to 5,201, Wisconsin residents approved the proposal at statewide hearings of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress, a citizen's advisory group. Before the proposal can take effect, the state legislature would have to pass a law, and the law would have to be signed by Governor Jim Doyle. However, the governor told the media, "I don't think Wisconsin should become known as a state where we shoot cats." Interestingly, however, both Minnesota and South Dakota have had similar statutes in effect for many years. [Click here](#) for more details.

The Wisconsin controversy clearly illustrates that the issue of how to humanely manage the nation's stray and feral cat populations remains a complex, emotional, and strongly divisive issue. There are no simple solutions. This most recent action may encourage more people in Wisconsin to embrace a stronger "cats indoors" policy, without actually declaring an open season on feline residents.

Finally, since National Keep Your Cat Indoors Day is 14 May, it might be an excellent time to publicize the day in your local community or state. The opportunities for publicity, including a children's poster competition, at the community or state level are considerable. For example, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Nongame Wildlife Program has sponsored a statewide competition for the past two years. They awarded prizes to 45 regional and 3 state winners. Articles announcing the competition appeared in many newspapers across the state, and stories ran about the winners in the media. [Visit here](#) to see a sample competition announcement and press release.

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REDUCING POWERLINE BIRD KILLS

In line with this year's theme for IMBD - birds and collisions - we draw your attention to an agreement reached last month between the Edison Electric Institute, Avian Power Line Interaction Committee, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). This agreement is aimed at encouraging utility companies to take steps to reduce harm to birds that might come in contact with power lines.

Under the terms of the agreement, electric power companies are urged to develop and implement avian protection plans (APP) that will specifically address construction design and line-siting standards to better protect birds.

Electrocutions are a particular threat to birds with large wingspans, such as eagles, hawks, and even the larger owls. In addition, wire strikes are a problem for many different bird species. "For an electric utility, launching a comprehensive, long-term APP is not just good for the environment, it's good for business," said Quin Shea, executive director, environment for the Edison Electric Institute, an organization which represents investor-owned utilities. "Outages that occur as a result of birds and other animals coming into contact with power lines or electric infrastructure are costly to both customers and the companies themselves."

The latest industry guidelines for preventing avian power line interactions are available [here](#).

Among other things the agreement includes corporate commitment to protect migratory birds, training in avian protection, permit compliance guidelines, risk assessment issues, mortality reduction measures, and public awareness and education. This cooperative network has a long history of working together on avian power line issues (e.g., in 1983, an associated ad hoc group began addressing Whooping Crane collisions with power lines in the Rocky Mountains).

More information on powerline issues can be found [here](#).

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WATCH THE HORICON MARSH WIND-POWER SITUATION

On another power issue, Americans will increasingly be faced with the option of wind-power, especially as the price of electricity generated by wind-turbines decreases and the spread of wind-farms increases. The growth of wind-power is potentially very beneficial since clean, renewable, energy is both attractive and desirable, especially in light of our ongoing dependence on troublesome fossil fuels. Unfortunately, much remains unknown about the impact of wind-power on wildlife, especially birds.

A proposed wind energy generating facility in Wisconsin has especially drawn recent notice. This proposal entails 133 wind turbines located in a project area of 32,400 acres near Brownsville, in Dodge and Fond du Lac Counties. Horicon National Wildlife Refuge is located approximately 1.2 miles west of the project area boundary, and the entire system - both the refuge and the adjacent state-managed Horicon Marsh State Wildlife Area - has been designated as a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance and deserves special conservation attention.

While the initial proposal by Forward Energy called for the location of wind-power units to be approximately 4 miles from the refuge, the plan then doubled the number of proposed turbines and would locate them closer - within 1.2 miles. Such a shift could potentially increase wildlife impacts.

In a 1999 study done for the Wisconsin DNR, it was stated that bird activity is much reduced at distances of 8 kilometers (approximately 5 miles) of the edge of Horicon Marsh, and that the placement of "generators at distances 8km or greater will have significantly lower impacts than generators closer to the marsh." Unfortunately, the most current proposed turbine placement by Forward runs counter to this recommendation.

While the total elimination of avian mortality is impossible even under the best of circumstances, concern for some species is particularly troubling. For example, Sandhill Cranes at Horicon not only use the marsh itself, but also surrounding farmland for feeding and assembling. Concern for this operating buffer is vital since hundreds of Sandhill Cranes use some of the same fields in the fall where turbines are now planned. It is unknown how the cranes will adjust, if at all.

At the end of April, a three-mile-radius turbine ban was barely approved by the Dodge County Planning, Development, and Parks Committee, but the state Public Service Commission could override the county committee's decision.

The Horicon scene may prove to be an important case in determining future guidelines for the siting of wind farms - and what should be clearly avoided - in the area of wind-power proximity to refuges. The whole issue merits continued and watchful scrutiny.

For more information [click here](#).

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FUTURE OF STATESIDE LWCF SERIOUSLY THREATENED

Five years ago this month, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA) by a stunning two-thirds majority. This bill would have used offshore oil and gas revenue (royalties going into the U.S. Treasury) to guarantee \$3 billion annually for wildlife and wild places. Central to this bill were a state wildlife funding title at \$350 million yearly, and full funding annually for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to the tune of \$450 million for federal lands and \$450 million for stateside lands. The bill was challenged by congressional appropriators who didn't wish to guarantee funding into the future. It was particularly opposed by property-rights ideologues who saw "black helicopters" almost everywhere, and was even resisted by some environmentalists who were loathed to rely upon what was perceived to be tainted money obtained from offshore oil and gas revenues.

The CARA bill never reached the floor of the Senate and, unfortunately, the needs addressed by CARA still go a-begging.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) continues to move along, although it is outside CARA and without guaranteed funds. It is a vehicle that has been responsible for the creation and development of more than 40,000 national, state, and local parks, refuges, forests, and recreation areas in all fifty states (and 98% of all U.S. counties). Many birding hotspots have been preserved or enhanced through this program.

As Congress considers the funding options for the year, it looks like the stateside LWCF will be starved again, and the federal portion is also under assault.

Just last month, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) prepared a fine reminder about the importance of the stateside portion of the LWCF. In a "White Paper" addressing the LWCF, NRPA stated that the plan "to terminate the LWCF state assistance program in the 2006 budget would cause irreparable harm to the ability of states and local communities to create new parks, develop recreation facilities, conserve open space, and to provide permanent outdoor recreation opportunities for the health and enjoyment all Americans on

and to provide permanent outdoor recreation opportunities for the health and enjoyment of Americans on public lands." Recently, the Administration and Congress have "broadened" the use of LWCF funds to support a variety of conservation and land-partnership programs. This action constitutes a foray into these funds which, in the words of the NRPA "repudiates one of the fundamental purposes of the LWCF Act."

The White Paper summarizes the importance of the LWCF and rebuts the justifications made in the 2006 budget proposed to Congress to permanently eliminate this invaluable program. The full report can be accessed [here](#).

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A LOOK AT THE MEXICAN BIRD TRADE

A Mexican colleague, Manuel Grosselet, recently passed on a report from a bird-market in Toluca, a municipality west of Mexico City. Working in cooperation with Wildlife Enforcement in Mexico (PROFEPA), last month a visit was made to the markets to check on the activities of the bird sellers.

From our understanding Mexico permits two kinds of legal bird harvest: subsistence harvest and harvest through UMA (i.e., Unidad de Manejo Ambiental). However the illegal harvest sector looks very strong in Mexico. In the case of bird harvest managed by the UMA, the trader can ask to collect a certain number of birds, supported by a survey of the local population, with the assumption that this harvesting is, in theory at least, sustainable. Other kinds of bird harvests are apparently illegal.

Some of the trade at Toluca was legal; however, much was illegal and was shut down. The commonest illegally kept cage birds found were Painted Buntings. How many birds (legal or otherwise) died before the investigation is unknown.

A list of species found in one Toluca market included: Green Jay, Curve-billed Thrasher, Northern Mockingbird, Slate-colored and Brown-backed Solitaire, White-throated and Rufous-backed Robin, Cedar Waxwing, Phainopepla, Red-legged Honeycreeper, Grasshopper and Chipping Sparrow, Painted, Indigo, and Orange-breasted Bunting, Northern Cardinal, House Finch, Blue and Black-headed Grosbeak, Blue Bunting, Lesser Goldfinch, and Scott's, Black-backed, and Altamira Orioles.

Bird traders are normally poor people. The government will give permitted individuals a variable quota of birds to catch - around 250 per person. Given the cheap market price for the birds (between 20 cents and \$1.50 per bird), the bird trappers need to capture far more than 250 birds to earn something reasonable.

After talking with local bird trappers in different places of Mexico, it was calculated that they caught approximately 2,000 birds per season per trapper. The wildlife authorities in Mexico City have around 1,000 trappers registered, but it is estimated by researchers that the true number is more around 15,000 to 18,000 in Mexico. Even with 10,000 trappers capturing only a thousand birds each, the number of birds removed from the wild yearly is easily 10 million birds.

Gives one pause, doesn't it?

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ARANSAS NWR CRANES NOW HEADED NORTHWARD

Regular readers of this E-bulletin will remember that in November we reported on the expected arrival of record numbers of Whooping Cranes to the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge and vicinity on the coast of Texas. Remember also that in December we reported the tragic shooting of two Whoopers in Kansas.

As predicted, Whooping Cranes wintering in and around Aransas NWR topped over 200 birds this past season, the highest number, presumably, in the last 100 years. The 2004-05 winter season was splendid for the Whooping Crane population, stretching out over 35 miles along the Texas coast. Although one youngster and one adult crane, from the population of 217, died while at Aransas NWR, that still left 215 individuals by spring, an encouraging increase of 22 birds from the 193 at Aransas and vicinity the previous spring.

Aerial surveys have confirmed that all the Whooping Cranes, except for one injured bird, have left Aransas for the season as of this writing. In fact, numerous Whooping Cranes had been confirmed by the end of April on the northern edge of the agricultural country in Saskatchewan, and some presumably have already completed the migration to Wood Buffalo National Park, a two-day flight farther north across forest lands.

If you want to review the excellent survey results for the past season at Aransas NWR, check [this informative site](#).

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UPS AND DOWNS AMONG ARIZONA CONDORS

While Whooping Cranes have been doing well, it's been a very tough year so far for the experimental Arizona cluster of California Condors in and around the Grand Canyon.

For example, in January young condor #342 needed to be captured and then operated on for what turned out to be a blockage in its gizzard. That operation turned out well, but it had field biologists worried. Then there was the unfortunate loss of two sub-adult birds: condor #235 died in mid-January, and condor #249 about two

weeks later. Each condor died of lead poisoning, both showing extremely high lead-levels in tissue, as well as having pellets of lead shot in their digestive tracts. (Lead poisoning has been a recurring problem for condors, since condors regularly ingest carrion with imbedded lead shot.) In early February, male condor #246, was captured because he was exhibiting odd behavior. The bird was found to have an unidentified mass near his breast, a result of an infection, probably due to a puncture wound. Fortunately he was released two days later.

Although the loss of condors #235 and #249 was discouraging, the rest of the population continued to provide field biologists with hope at least through February, when three new members were introduced into the population: #297, #302, and #314.

In late March, however, field biologists located the dead body of the first California Condor chick hatched in the wild in Arizona in more than 80 years, #305. On 26 March, the bird's body was found inside Grand Canyon National Park. The bird, just under two years old, had hatched in May 2003 in a nest cave near the South Rim of the park. The bird had been doing well since it began flying on 5 November 2003.

There is a silver lining, however. Two other chicks that fledged in the wild last year seem to be coping with their environment. Moreover, numerous courtship activities have been observed and at least two pairs of breeding-age birds have been exhibiting signs of nesting behavior. It is hoped that multiple pairs will produce wild chicks in 2005.

The historic Arizona reintroduction is a joint project among The Peregrine Fund, the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, Southern Utah's Coalition of Resources and Economics, and other partners.

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NEW PACIFIC REGION SEABIRD CONSERVATION PLAN

In case you missed it, the USFWS has recently published its Seabird Conservation Plan for the Pacific Region. The 262-page Plan includes a thorough review of habitat, threats, and management issues. It documents population status of 60 species of seabirds breeding in the Pacific Region. The Plan lists conservation concerns for each species along with recommended actions, and it is available on line [here](#). Just click on the "Seabird Conservation Plan."

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ARCTIC REFUGE DRILLING CREEPS CLOSER

In late April, Congress voted to approve a nearly \$2.6 trillion federal budget that opens the way for oil and gas drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The measure passed the House by a vote of 214 - 211 and the Senate by a vote of 52 - 47.

Although the budget resolution conference report does not explicitly mention the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, it would allow drilling in the refuge through the subsequent budget reconciliation process, which is protected from a Senate filibuster.

There are still multiple steps that could stop the drilling, however, the next of which will probably come in a couple months when the Senate energy committee and House resources panel must provide the budget with reconciliation language.

In the meantime, the coastal plain of the Arctic NWR will soon burst into springtime glory, what with migrating birds returning and nesting, and the spectacular flowering of tundra wildflowers. Shorebirds, terns, jaegers, and waterfowl aplenty will be especially noticeable. To review what colleagues at the Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences are doing in that region, especially with shorebirds, [click here](#).

Manomet is also working on producing a book called "Arctic Wings" a publication which will highlight the wonderful birds of this spectacular refuge and the connections they maintain with the rest of the hemisphere. Stay tuned for more details.

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NEW WHSRN SITE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

On 29 April, British Columbia's Fraser River Estuary celebrated a highly successful dedication ceremony in honor of being recognized as a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) Site of Hemispheric Importance. Among the many attendees at this event were area mayors and local city council members.

The Fraser River Delta is known as a major stopover site for Western Sandpipers and an important wintering site for Dunlin. In 2004, the site hosted some 600,000 Western Sandpipers and 30,000 Dunlin. Counts in previous years have been even higher. The Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection of British Columbia, and Environment Canada are the entities responsible for the nomination of this 31,000-hectare site. Each organization, along with the local city government (i.e., the Corporation of Delta), expressed its support for the declaration of the area as a WHSRN site, along with making a commitment to future shorebird conservation at the area. The Fraser River has previously been recognized as a Ramsar Wetland of International Significance.

WHSRN designation carries no legal weight, but it draws attention to the need to conserve important shorebird sites. There are now over 60 WHSRN sites recognized between Alaska and the top of South America, including, now, six in Canada. For more information: visit <http://www.birdsonthebay.ca/hrd.html> and <http://www.manomet.org/WHSRN/viewsite.php?id=79>.

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RED KNOT NUMBERS

Also from WHSRN comes news that wintering numbers of Red Knots in Tierra del Fuego this year were down 43% in comparison with 2004. Fewer than 18,000 individuals were seen during aerial. Subsequent ground counts by the International Red Knot Team verified the aerial estimates and determined that there appeared to be no new or significant threats in these non-breeding areas, which supported over 50,000 Red Knots just five years ago. (Similar declines have not been seen in Hudsonian Godwits that share these seasonal habitats, suggesting that the problem most likely lies elsewhere.) Many observers believe the impact of over-harvesting of horseshoe crabs at Delaware Bay is to blame.

Later this month, Red Knots will be stopping at Delaware Bay and elsewhere along the Mid-Atlantic Coast to harvest horseshoe crab eggs while on their way north to their arctic breeding grounds. This year, however, the State of New Jersey's Division of Fish and Wildlife intends to substantially increase the availability of eggs by improving the protection of key feeding sites and to control the influence of gulls who compete with shorebirds for eggs. This is because state wildlife authorities have also noticed a recent drop (over 85 percent) in the numbers of Red Knots, compared to numbers in the recent past. Some experts say if the decrease noted in the Red Knot population continues on its current course, at least the North American population could be approaching elimination. "The trajectory of the population might be unstoppable at this point," warned Larry Niles, head of New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection's Nongame Species Program.

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BIRD-FEEDING INDUSTRY FORMS FOUNDATION

The Wild Bird Feeding Industry (WBF) has established the WBF Research Foundation for the purpose of studying wild birds and their seed and feeder preferences.

The intent is to investigate what is good for birds, harmful to birds, and what we can do about it, while, at the same time, enjoy the pastime of bird-feeding in the most responsible way. The first research study into the seed-and-feeder preferences of bird species frequenting backyard bird feeders is scheduled to run from Fall 2005 through Fall 2008. For more information, visit [the WBF website](#).

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JELLY DOUBTS?

And speaking of bird-feeding, there have been warnings in the past about increasing the sugar content at hummingbird feeders. (A four-to-one, water-to-sugar, mixture is usually recommended.) Similar concern over fruit-jelly may also be justified.

Kent Mahaffey, manager of the San Diego Wild Animal Park's famous Bird Show, has more than two decades' experience working with captive birds. When asked about offering jellies to wild birds, such as orioles, he said, "In general, any food that exceeds the balance of sucrose in a bird's natural diet is suspect." Natural nectars contain 12% to 30% sugars, while jams and jellies are more than half sugar.

Unfortunately, a bird that develops a strong liking for jam or jelly may focus on those foods and may give up searching for needed protein-rich insects. This behavior can be especially damaging to fledglings or young birds that still need protein for development.

Our colleague, Kay Charter from Michigan, adds that there may be other negative effects, including the fact that sodium benzoate and other preservatives found in commercial jams are potentially harmful to birds; higher than normal sugar loads may outstrip a bird's ability to adequately process the sugar (as it does in humans); and products high in sugars are an ideal environment for bacterial growth.

She adds that we must not assume that because orioles love jelly, that jelly is therefore good for them - or even that it does no harm. There is a healthy substitute for jams and jellie: grapes. Grapes are natural to oriole diets. An additional benefit is that other birds, such as catbirds, chickadees, and woodpeckers - especially sapsuckers - also enjoy them.

Kent Mahaffey summarized this situation by stating, "Birds developed the way they did by adapting to the environments in which they lived and the foods that sustained them. We do our best for them when we stick as closely as possible to their natural diets."

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FRANK BELLROSE (1916-2005)

Finally, Frank Bellrose, waterfowl researcher, conservationist, and author died in late February, but we

Finally, Frank Bellrose, waterfowl researcher, conservationist, and author died in late February, but we neglected to make note of it in our E-bulletin. Bellrose was an expert in waterfowl biology, a man who held a lifelong interest in these birds and in wetlands. He was instrumental in developing the first predator-proof Wood Duck nest boxes; he also pioneered research in lead poisoning mortality in waterfowl, research that was a major factor in the gradual replacement of lead with non-toxic shot for waterfowling in the U.S. and elsewhere. He published more than 110 scientific papers and popular articles, but he is perhaps best known for his 1976 classic DUCKS, GEESE AND SWANS OF NORTH AMERICA. Bellrose's book sold more than 350,000 copies and remains among the most popular books on waterfowl ever written.

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