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Ornithological Literature

Edited by Mary Gustafson

BIRDS OF OREGON: A General Reference. Edited by David B. Marshall, Matthew G. Hunter, and Alan L. Contreras. Illustrated by Elva Hamerstrom Paulson. Oregon State University Press, Corvallis, Oregon. 2003: 752 pp., line illustrations. $65.00 (cloth). This voluminous tome, covering Oregon and its coastal waters, is an excellent reference on the spatial and temporal distribution of birds in Oregon. It is also a rich natural history of birds with useful habitat and foraging descriptions included in most species accounts.

This is an important reference for professionals, students, and birders interested in Oregon's avifauna. Breeding Bird Survey, Christmas Bird Count, and Oregon Breeding Bird Atlas data are compiled, along with anecdotal reports and capture results, to illustrate species distributions. The book covers 486 species recognized by the Oregon Bird Records Committee as having occurred in the state. Atlas-style distribution and abundance maps, derived from the Oregon Breeding Bird Atlas, are presented for 205 Oregon-breeding species. Species nomenclature and sequence follow the 7th edition of AOU's *Check-list of North American Birds* and subsequent checklist supplements. Coverage at the subspecies level is based upon specimens verified by the Taxonomic Editor, M. Ralph Browning.

The editors recognize that their book is the successor to Gabrielson and Jewett's *Birds of Oregon,* published in 1940, and which used data through 1935. The 2003 publication begins with a synopsis of avifaunal change in Oregon since 1935. The first and second chapters, which describe avian habitats in Oregon Ecoregions, document vast changes in land use, avifaunal distribution, and coverage by investigators and birders since 1935 that made this new Oregon avifaunal reference necessary.

Contributions from 100 authors, including many of Oregon's most accomplished and expert ornithologists, make up the body of this reference. Each species account begins with an introductory section that provides a physical description and any notes of interest. Each account includes a section on *General Distribution, Oregon Distribution, Habitat and Diet, Seasonal Activity and Behavior, Detection, and Population Status and Conservation.* The species accounts are a blend of occurrence and population data (site specific and county locations, dates, population estimates) and anecdotal snippets that are quite readable.

The treatments of extirpated, introduced, escaped, and unaccepted-record species in the Supplemental Species List (Chapter 4) are thorough and provide a satisfying historical perspective. The concise Glossary is very useful in defining or clarifying ornithological and biological jargon without the excessiveness often found in such reference books. A vast list of citations, personal communications, and unpublished reports and data documents the information provided.

A minor criticism of *Birds of Oregon: A General Reference* is the inconsistent presentation, among species accounts, of unpublished data from research and monitoring projects and the reference to museum specimens. Some account authors included many such resources while others included few. Whereas all authors produced excellent accounts, it is disappointing that greater effort was not made to seek out unpublished data. Again, this is a minor criticism and is, perhaps, more appropriately directed toward those who have not published their results!

Overall, the book's illustrations are accurate and a pleasure to view. The line drawings of birds that embellish the species accounts in Chapter 3 are beautiful renditions, although occasionally stylized to the point of minor inaccuracies, such as the Black Phoebe's (*Sayornis nigricans*) shortened tail. It is obvious that some of the drawings are intended as joyful celebrations (usually a species is represented from each major group) that add spice to the rich narrative.

Although a sturdy shelf, desk, and lap are necessary for this large book, it will serve well the professional, student, birder, and oth-

ers interested in Oregon's avifauna. I highly recommend it as a thorough regional reference.—ROBERT I. FREY, Klamath Bird Observatory, Ashland, Oregon; e-mail: bif@klamathbird.org.

CONSERVING BIRD BIODIVERSITY: GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND THEIR APPLICATION. Edited by K. Norris and D. J. Pain. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom. 2002: 337 pp. $100.00 (cloth), $38.00 (paper).—In the preface, the editors state that the goal of this book is to bridge the gap between textbooks focused on general principles of conservation biology and the practical techniques used by avian conservationists. The target readership is broad; the book is designed as an entrée to the literature, as well as an up-to-date review for graduate and advanced undergraduate students, researchers at all levels, and policymakers. The 900+ references associated with the 12 chapters will certainly benefit any reader. Topics progress from defining avian biodiversity (Chapter 1) and reasons to conserve it (Chapter 2), to monitoring bird populations (Chapter 3) and setting conservation priorities for species and sites (Chapters 4 and 5). Chapter 6 emphasizes critically imperiled birds. Chapters 7–10 focus on diagnosis and causes of population declines. The book closes with discussions on the interface between research, education, and teaching (Chapter 11) and the policies and programs affecting birds (Chapter 12). The chapters have little overlap and the book advances nicely with few typographical errors (although citing www.birdlife.org as www.birdlite.org in Box 5.3 did strike my sense of humor). The chapters provide topical overviews with additional details in tables, figures, footnotes, and text boxes. The text boxes, which contain useful information or interesting case studies, are a feature of the book that I enjoyed greatly.

The majority of the 19 contributing authors hail from the United Kingdom, or its former Eastern Hemisphere colonies, and many of the highlighted examples are from these areas. From my North American viewpoint, these examples added richness to the book. This richness, however, comes at the expense of adequate coverage of avian conservation programs and issues in North, Central, and South America (the area of greatest avian richness); thus, American readers may not find mention of case studies or research programs familiar to them.

Although all of the chapters are relevant, I would have liked the editors to include a chapter on adaptive management (briefly mentioned at the end of Chapter 7). Presenting a case study of this current conservation/management paradigm could have benefited readers.

Overall, this book achieves its goals and could serve well as the basis for a course in avian conservation for graduate and undergraduate students, if supplemented with additional readings from the primary literature.—PAUL F. DOHERTY, JR., Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado; e-mail: doherty@cnr.colostate.edu

AVES DE LA SABANA DE BOGOTÁ, GUÍA DE CAMPO (BIRDS OF THE SABANA DE BOGOTÁ, FIELD GUIDE). By F. G. Stiles, C. I. Bohórquez, C. D. Cadena, S. de la Zerda, M. Hernández, L. Rosselli, M. Kelsey, I. D. Valencia, and D. Knapp. Asociación Bogotana de Ornitología, Bogotá, Colombia. 2000: 276 pp., 16 color plates, 15 habitat photographs, 3 color maps. $25.00.—This field guide deals with the approximately 200 bird species that have been recorded on the mountain plateau where Colombia's capital, Bogotá, is located. For those not familiar with the region, the Sabana de Bogotá forms part of Colombia's eastern Andean range, or Cordillera, at 2,550–2,600 m elevation. It is of international importance to bird conservation because it is, essentially, the only home to two globally threatened endemic species, *Rallus semiplumbeus* and *Cistothorus apolinari*, as well as to several threatened endemic subspecies. These taxa are largely restricted to the Sabana's marshland habitats or *humedales*, which formerly characterized much of the Sabana.

The lack of conservation attention to the Sabana de Bogotá over recent decades is a national and international disgrace. Most of its globally unique marshlands have been drained

for farmland and urban development; just a few small patches of such habitat subsist today. The few remaining *humedales* continue to be threatened by road-building programs, development of ''country clubs'' and other resorts, government-endorsed drainage for additional houses and urban development, as well as illegal encroachment. Andean forest is now restricted to just a few steep mountains bordering the Sabana. One bird species (Colombian Grebe, *Podiceps andinus*) and two subspecies (Yellow-billed Pintail, *Anas georgica niceforoi* and Bearded Tachuri, *Polystictus pectoralis bogotensis*) endemic to the Sabana and adjacent wetlands are already extinct; doubtless more will follow if government and industry continue to shun conservation of biodiversity.

The authors of *Aves de la Sabana de Bogotá* aim to raise awareness of conservation issues in Colombia's capital and surrounding region, to foster an interest in birds amongst Bogotá's people, and to educate them so that the mistakes of the past are not repeated. Conservation entities in Colombia have often ignored the sad realities of conservation mismanagement. It is, therefore, paradoxically refreshing to read the forward by William Eduardo Morales Rojas of Bogotá's government environmental agency, in which he draws attention to ''the lack of an environmental ethic'' amongst Bogotá's inhabitants. His foreword, an eloquent, clarion call to conservation action in the region, merits attention by politicians and other decision-makers.

Turning to the text itself, it is evident that this book is more than just a field guide. Much of the book (72 pages) is devoted to descriptions of the various habitats in the Sabana, a rationale for the book's publication, interpretative notes on species and bird taxonomy, and how to observe birds. There are, of course, books entirely devoted to ''how to watch birds,'' but this is the first book written for Colombians in Spanish that covers topics such as how to watch and observe birds, how to ''pish,'' and what to look for when choosing binoculars. This book provides a good and concise summary, although at times veers toward the patronizing; for example, apparently, a 12-year-old should be expected to identify only 25 or so species. By comparison, my own life list at that age was about 180 (in Europe, not the tropics), and this is not exceptional.

The various species accounts appear to have been based on translations of Hilty and Brown's accounts in *Birds of Colombia*, and then embellished with much additional ecological and Sabana-specific information gleaned from the authors' field experiences. The species accounts are accurate and interesting, and include information on identification, vocalizations, habitats, nesting, status in the Sabana, overall geographical and elevational distribution, and various additional notes on taxonomy or ecology. More than 50 species of vagrants, accidentals, or birds that typically occur only in the margins of the Sabana are treated in short notes; most of these species are not illustrated, however. Localities in which species have been recorded, or can be regularly encountered, and species' abundances in different habitats of the region are detailed. The species accounts are extremely well-written, concise, and accurate, as one would expect from publications by Gary Stiles and his team.

Generally, the plates are good, and in most cases should suffice for identification purposes among both beginning and advanced users of the book. The illustrations of Nearctic migrants, in particular, mark a fresh and welcome change from many other significant Neotropical ornithological publications in recent years; the plates of these species are among the book's best and most accurate. However, the plates depicting the waders are blurred, and plates of some groups, such as nightjars and tapaculos, appear dull, vaguely defined, or washed out.

Who will find this book appealing? As a basic introductory text to birds in Bogotá, *Guía de las Aves en el Jardín Botánico* by Enrique Zerda Ordoñez describes and illustrates most species one is likely to encounter in Bogotá. For those interested in going further afield, one formerly had to understand English and use Hilty and Brown's *Birds of Colombia*. *Aves de la Sabana de Bogotá* replaces *Guía de las Aves en el Jardín Botánico* as the leading text for the region. It is likely that publication of *Aves de la Sabana de Bogotá* was due, in part, to frustration with the 16+ year delay in publishing the translated version of *Birds of Colombia* (*Aves de Colom-*

bia). Now that *Aves de Colombia* is published, one wonders how much *Aves de la Sabana* will be used in the field, as *Aves de la Sabana de Bogotá* is restricted to a very narrow elevational and geographical range. Outside of the *humedales,* perhaps the most accessible and high-quality bird habitat near Bogotá is Reserva Natural Chicaque, 45 min south of the city by bus. Although a species list for Chicaque is included, and there are various in-text references to it, several species found there are not illustrated or described fully, as they do not occur in the Sabana *sensu strictu.* Thus, a Bogotá-based newcomer to the world of birding is likely to outgrow *Aves de la Sabana de Bogotá* rather quickly. Perhaps this outcome is inevitable when one considers Bogotá's geographical position and transport links: within a 2-hr drive, one could be birding in the hot, dry Magdalena Valley or Colombia's eastern plains, and, within a short flight one could be in any of three Andean cordilleras, the Chocó, the Carribean, or the Amazon.

Despite its geographical limitations, *Aves de la Sabana de Bogotá* will serve as an exemplary text for beginning birdwatchers through students to expert ornithologists in Colombia's capital. Let us hope that, because of this book, more Colombians are encouraged to take an interest in birds, and to work actively toward the conservation of Bogotá's threatened endemic bird species and their habitats.

In addition to being an important reference in its own right, the detailed summaries of species ecology and distribution in *Aves de la Sabana de Bogotá* will be of interest to all who work with Colombian and other South American birds. *Aves de la Sabana de Bogotá* is thorough, contains a wealth of interesting and useful information, and is reasonably priced. Hopefully, it will give Colombia's amazing birds a wider national following, and bring conservation issues to the forefront of decision-making in the Bogotá region.—THOMAS DONEGAN, ProAves Foundation, Reading, United Kingdom; e-mail: foundation@proaves.org

A CONCISE HISTORY OF ORNITHOLOGY. By Michael Walters. Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut. 2003: 255 pp., 93 black-and-white figures. $30.00 (cloth).—Written by a British ornithologist, this book describes people and their ideas from a classical world perspective, including not only the advances, but the backwaters and diversions that delayed the progress of ornithological thought. It is written in a pleasant, narrative style and has a substantial reference list. The book's themes include tragic losses of specimens before they could be described for science; the medical training of the majority of the observers (although Walters fails to mention that William Turner was a physician); and new descriptions of species by men such as Pennant and Latham, after whom species were not named due to their delay in adopting the Linnaean system of binomial classification.

Walters seems obsessed by systems of classification, and although no book that highlights centuries of history can be perfect, he uses 70 pages to list (only roughly in chronological order) classifications devised by 30 different authors. Perhaps the Index is representative of his obsession; for some taxonomic authorities, it lists the page of the classification but not the page where species' authority is discussed. Walters begins with Walter Charleton, who in 1668 classified birds as Land or Water birds, and then, by what they ate and whether they sang; his sequence began with eagles and ended with cranes. Walters chose Hans Gadow as his 30th and final authority, whose 1892 classification approaches that of current systems, beginning with ratites and ending with Passeriformes. Surprisingly, American sequences, such as those of Elliott Coues and Alexander Wetmore, and the seven consecutive check-lists of the American Ornithologists' Union, receive no mention whatever. In addition, Walters categorizes Anton Reichenow's system, developed in 1914, as ''absurd . . . never used by any ornithologist'' yet that is the sequence followed worldwide by the decimalized library system.

The main advantage of Walter's book over the much longer, out-of-print, 1951 book by Stresemann, (translated into English in 1975 as *Ornithology from Aristotle to the Present*) is the numerous portraits of ornithologists that he included. One advantage of Stresemann's book is his scholarly use of footnotes and endnotes, which Walters' book lacks. Stresemann

also explains that Emperor Fredrick developed his attraction to ornithology through the ''noble art of falconry,'' while Walters categorized the man as the first ''thinker of significance'' in ornithology.

Walters' historical treatment is accurate, yet at times differs from that of Stresemann. Stresemann fails to mention Johannes de Cuba, who published the first printed book with bird illustrations at Mainz in 1475, and Walters omits Theodorus Gaza, who translated *The History of Animals* from Greek into Latin in 1476. Stresemann overlooked Nehemian Grew, who used binomial Latin names for birds and named the Gannett, *Anser bassanus*, in *Museum Regalis* in 1681. Both authors give short shrift to Linnaeus; in fact, Walters characterized Linnaeus' contributions to ornithology as ''almost paltry'' compared to those of Brisson and Buffon.

Even those who own Stresemann's book may wish to add Walters' to their collection—for its readability, illustrations, availability, and relatively low price. It provides a wonderful opportunity to learn about a large number of interesting and innovative people, whose names are retained in check-lists as describers of new species, or who made other contributions to our knowledge about birds. Buy a copy for yourself and another for your department or museum library.—C. STUART HOUSTON, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Canada; e-mail: houstons@duke.usask.ca

THE HISTORY OF ORNITHOLOGY IN VIRGINIA. By David W. Johnston. University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville, Virginia. 2003: 219 pp., 25 black-and-white illustrations, 7 tables. $35 (cloth).—Virginia, known as the birthplace of North American ornithology, has a long and rich history in ornithology, with bird reports dating back to colonial times. *The History of Ornithology in Virginia* traces this rich history—from 65 million-year-old fossil birds, to the visits of such luminaries as Mark Catesby, Alexander Wilson, and Audubon, to the present.

The book contains 12 chapters, the first describing fossil evidence and the observations of 16th Century Native American peoples, who created cave paintings of birds and used birds for decoration, clothing, and food. The second chapter describes 16th Century reports of Europeans who traveled to Virginia; it includes photographs of the first paintings of North American birds by John White, and one of the first lists of North American birds compiled by Thomas Hariot. Both White and Hariot were members of Sir Walter Raleigh's expeditions. Also included are Captain John Smith's descriptions of Virginia birds. Chapter 3 deals with 17th Century bird lists, explorers, and naturalists, including John Banister and John Clayton. Chapter 4 traces the 18th Century history of Virginia ornithology, including the reports and correspondence of Mark Catesby and other naturalists that led to international recognition of Virginia's bird life. Chapter 5 recounts activities of 19th Century collectors, development of local bird lists, and ornithological reports by Alexander Wilson, Audubon, Thomas Nuttall, and Thomas Jefferson (who compiled a list of all known Virginia birds).

Chapter 6 focuses on contributions made by members of the Smithsonian Institution and federal government in the 19th and 20th centuries, including Spencer F. Baird, Thomas Burleigh, Elliot Coes, Arthur Howell, Waldo McAtee, C. Hart Merriam, Harry Oberholser, Robert Schufeldt, and many others. Chapter 7 describes in detail several special places that are rich in birds, including the Great Dismal Swamp, Shenandoah Valley, and the Virginia Eastern Shore. Chapter 8 includes a history of the conservation movement—in particular, the emergence of game laws and the development of organizations such as the Virginia Society of Ornithology and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

Chapter 9 concentrates on bird artists such as Edward Topsell, John Abbot, William Bartram, Alexander Wilson, and Audubon, as well as more recent artists—Francis Lee Jaques, Walter Weber, and Roger Tory Peterson, all of whom either lived in, or visited, Virginia. Chapter 9 also reviews the ornithological activities of several presidents of the United States (e.g., Theodore Roosevelt's 1907 observation and report of Passenger Pigeons, *Ectopistes migratorius*). Chapter 10 deals with extirpated and non-native species, including the Passenger Pigeon, Carolina Par-

akeet (*Conuropsis carolinensis*), and Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*). Chapter 11 concerns raptors and banding, including an account—about Mitchell Byrd and others—on the reintroduction and recovery of Peregrine Falcons (*Falco peregrinus*) and Bald Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) following the DDT disaster. The final chapter discusses Virginia ornithology in the 20th Century, and includes brief biographies of more than a dozen ornithologists who made important contributions. The chapter also highlights significant ornithological accomplishments and published bird lists and books. The book's appendices include Algonquian Indian bird names, principal bird collectors (compiled by Roger Clapp), and a bibliography of nature writings from Virginia. The references are extensive and a valuable resource for those interested in Virginia's natural history.

This book is well written, jargon-free, and nicely illustrated. It is a welcome addition to the literature on the history of ornithology—especially because Virginia has been so important in the long and prominent history of North American ornithology.—WILLIAM E. DAVIS, JR., Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts; e-mail: wedavis@bu.edu

PERU: THE ECOTRAVELLERS' WILDLIFE GUIDE. By David L. Pearson and Les Beletsky, with contributions by Martha L. Crump. Illustrations by Priscilla Barrett, David Beadle, David Dennis, Daniel Lane, John Meyers, Colin Newman, David Nurney, John O'Neill, and John Sill. Academic Press, San Diego, California. 2001: 502 pp., 99 color fauna plates with detailed legends, 13 color figures (12 flora and 1 fish), 30 color photographs (21 habitat and 9 fauna), 3 maps, and 1 table. $29.95 (paper).—This nicely sized (5.5 × 8.5″; 1.5 lb.) *Ecotravellers' Wildlife Guide* (hereafter Ecotravellers' Guide) is a must in the suitcase of anyone traveling to Peru to observe nature. The highlight for any birder is the 61 plates of beautifully painted birds of 324 different species, many illustrating both sexes and some illustrating immatures. The true ecotraveller, however, also will appreciate the 8 plates of amphibians (39 species), 11 plates of reptiles (48 species), 15 plates of mammals (73 species), and 4 plates of arthropods (29 species).

Last August, while I was traveling in Peru, this guide was a constant reference for all my observations. We visited the coast (Paracas National Reserve), Andes highlands (Cusco and Machu Picchu areas), and the Amazon lowlands (Manu National Park). I recorded 139 bird species and found that 96 (69%) were illustrated in the Ecotravellers' Guide. My colleague, Peter Osenton, who is a better bird observer and spent more time birding, recorded 242 bird species, 131 (54%) of which were in the Ecotravellers' Guide. For more serious birders like Peter, the *Field Guide to Birds of Peru* (hereafter Birds of Peru) by James F. Clements and Noam Shany is certainly recommended. However, many of the other naturalists with our group appreciated the simpler Ecotravellers' Guide and, therefore, were not too overwhelmed by the large number of species Peru has to offer.

Although the Ecotravellers' Guide is a great all-purpose natural history guide to many species, the more advanced *Field Guide to Birds of Peru* is especially advantageous for serious birders dealing with large families or genera, such as hummingbirds and tanagers. The Ecotravellers' Guide illustrates 21 species of hummingbirds and 23 species of tanagers, whereas the Birds of Peru illustrates an amazing 135 species of hummingbirds and 92 species of tanagers. Several individuals in our group, however, thought that some of the bird illustrations in the Ecotravellers' Guide were of better quality and more accurate than those in the Birds of Peru.

The legend on the page opposite each plate briefly describes each illustrated species and its habitat; it also provides an icon(s) that identifies the region where the species may be expected, and the species' scientific name. This was especially helpful when we encountered familiar species, such as Black Skimmer (*Rynchops niger*) and American Oystercatcher (*Haematopus palliatus*), and wanted to be sure that it was, indeed, the same as the North American species and not another species with the same common name.

The Ecotravellers' Guide does not illustrate some of the more familiar North American species, such as the Pied-billed Grebe (*Podilymbus podiceps*), Wood Stork (*Mycteria*

americana), Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*), and American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), but it does illustrate other common North American species, such as Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), Great Egret (*Ardea alba*), Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularia*), and Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*).

Our group identified 10 primate species, 6 of which were in the Ecotravellers' Guide. We also saw four other mammals and four reptiles, with three of the mammals and all four reptiles illustrated in the Ecotravellers' Guide. No amphibians or arthropods illustrated in the guide were seen on the trip.

The first four chapters of the book give the reader a good basis for understanding ecotourism, the geography and habitats of Peru, the Peruvian parks and reserves available for nature observation, and the ecology and natural history of Peru. Chapters 5 and 6, edited by Martha Crump, provide a scholarly discussion of amphibians and reptiles. Chapters 7 and 8 discuss birds and mammals, and Chapter 9 features insects and other arthropods.

In addition to the text for each group of animals, the authors also provide erudite ''close-up'' sections on natural history topics pertinent to Peru. These topics include (1) *Why is farming so difficult in the tropics*? (2) *Frog population declines,* (3) *Endemism and high species diversity: why Peru?* (4) *Frugivory: animals that eat fruit and the trees that want them to,* and (5) *Of kingfishers and competition: big bills and little bills and how they got that way.*

The detailed text for each wildlife group includes a discussion about its natural history, breeding ecology, and population status. Information is presented on why parrots eat clay (geophagy) at the famous ''clay lick'' along the Madre de Dios River, and that the Screaming Piha (*Lipaugus vociferans*) is the bird species we often hear in the background of jungle movies. The piha is extremely hard to see; we never saw any despite hearing them on numerous occasions directly overhead in the open canopy of Manu National Park.

The last chapter of the Ecotravellers' Guide includes an important eight-page message regarding the conservation work of the Wildlife Conservation Society (the book's sponsor) in Latin America, followed by an appeal to join the Society. The index is divided into two sections, one for wildlife species and one for general subjects. I noted only a few minor errors.

Birdwatching in Peru is an exciting experience that can be improved greatly by using the Ecotravellers' Guide. When birders hear such exotic names as Black-capped Donacobius (*Donacobius atricapillus*), Peruvian Seaside Cinclodes (*Cinclodes taczanowskii*), and Chestnut-eared Aracari (*Pteroglossus castanotis*), they will be reaching for this book to get a look at these strangely named species. I highly recommend *Peru: The Ecotravellers' Wildlife Guide* for all ecotravellers visiting Peru, although I also advise the advanced birder to pack a copy of *Field Guide to Birds of Peru* for identifying the more difficult, and less common, species not included in the Ecotravellers' Guide.—MATTHEW C. PERRY, USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, Maryland; e-mail: matt_perry@usgs.gov