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IN MEMORIAM: MARY KATHLEEN KLIMKIEWICZ, 1943–2008

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Mary Kathleen (Kathy) Klimkiewicz, a key member of the U.S. Geological Survey Bird Banding Laboratory, died unexpectedly on 6 November 2008. Kathy was born on 17 April 1943 at Washington, D.C., and earned a B.S. in Biology and Education (1965) at Radford University. While an undergraduate, she helped Professor Donald Messersmith establish a Radford chapter of the Virginia Society of Ornithology, of which she became secretary. Her Master's thesis focused on the *agrestis–pennsylvanicus* group of the genus *Microtus* (Rodentia: Cricetidae). She then accepted a teaching position in the Maryland public school system. She obtained her master bird-banding permit in 1966, joined the AOU in 1972, and became an Elective Member in 1985.

Her real interest was not in classroom teaching but in studies of natural history in the out-of-doors. Her first banding project was to set up a fall-migration monitoring station at Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge in Virginia, where she ran 30 nets and banded nearly 1,850 birds of 76 species in the autumn of 1970, publishing the results in the *Atlantic Naturalist*. Her interests were not limited to birds, however, and over the next two years she published papers on the mammals (with Gwilym Jones), reptiles, and amphibians of Mason Neck Refuge, all in the *Atlantic Naturalist*.

From 1972 to 1976, she conducted an annual breeding-bird census of an abandoned field in Piscataway Park, Maryland, to reveal changes in populations of breeding birds as the site reverted to forest by natural succession. She conducted studies of winter bird populations at the same site (1973–1976). Her 1974 breeding-bird censuses in mature forest plots at the site of a proposed nuclear-power generating station at Douglas Point in Charles County, Maryland, were published in *American Birds*.

Kathy, a frequent visitor, began volunteering at the Bird Banding Laboratory (BBL) in the early 1970s, obtained a part-time job in 1973, and was hired as a full-time biologist in 1974. One of her early assignments was to revise the *Bird Banding Manual*. She and I devised the four-letter code for English names of North American birds. In 1974, she organized the Mid-Atlantic Bird Banding Group to train local banders and promote collaborative studies. In 1976 and 1985, this group sponsored annual meetings of the Eastern Bird Banding Association. From 1982 to 1987, she authored or coauthored four papers in the *Journal of Field Ornithology* summarizing the longevity records of North American birds, and she published updates in 1989 and 2001.

Locally, Kathy is remembered for her contagious enthusiasm for banding, her many educational talks, and her encouragement of young teenagers who later became professionals, including Sam Droege, John Weske, and David Bridge. She ran a banding station at the BBL as a training program for new and experienced banders and to educate BBL personnel. In the early days, a single dachshund named Melanie was her constant companion both at home and when she was running mist nets (later she raised prize-winning basenjis, and finally switched her attention to raising pedigree dachshunds).

For three and a half decades, Kathy's voice spoke for the interests of songbird banders during various administrative changes at the BBL. Hers was the institutional memory that tracked the many procedural changes as the banding program evolved from a paper-based program to an electronic process. She drafted procedural changes and memos to banders, maintained high standards for incoming banding data, admonished delinquent banders, and handled data requests from banders and other researchers.

Kathy began running Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) routes in 1977 and continued to do so for the rest of her life. In 1988, as a coauthor with John Sauer and Sam Droege, she used BBS data to show year-to-year population changes in her favorite species, the Purple Martin. She also coauthored major papers with Stuart Houston, James Karr, Robert Whitcomb, and others. In February 1985, she was one of a team of four American biologists who flew to São Paulo state in Brazil to spray wintering Purple Martins with a harmless solution that contained small particle markers that fluoresced under ultraviolet light. Several of the martins were sighted at their nesting sites in the United States in the following breeding season.

Kathy organized the first breeding bird atlas in the New World as a pilot project in Montgomery County, Maryland, and served on the editorial committee for the first breeding bird atlas of Maryland and the District of Columbia (1983–1987), for which she wrote the Purple Martin species account. She received a special achievement award from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for a display on aging and sexing of birds and a scientific achievement award from the Maryland Ornithological Society for her work on the breeding bird atlas.

At the time of Kathy's death, I was serving on the recapture committee she chaired. Over the past five decades, much valuable information was lost because banders were not required to report their station returns on nongame species. This had come about because of continued budget crunches that forced priority to be given to game species. Formerly, station returns had been reported annually for resident species and no more frequently than every 90 days for migrants. Her committee was gradually reducing the 90-day rule to monthly, then to weekly, and then, during the last meeting before her death, we learned of a Peregrine Falcon tracked by satellite that was recorded in New Jersey and Florida on the very same day. That settled the argument. One cannot set an arbitrary limit on the reporting when such a short period can be of interest.

Kathy will be remembered by birders as a woman with strong opinions about following instructions. Rules were to be obeyed,

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records were to be submitted on time, and every care was to be taken to avoid harm to the birds. Just last fall, she admonished me for not putting hard metal bands on Northern Cardinals. I had re-banded cardinals every three or four years as the numbers on their aluminum bands became illegible, and I had avoided using the new hard bands because they were difficult to open. Kathy explained that rebanding the birds caused extra work for the BBL and must be discontinued. She also may have thought that my cardinals were shucking their aluminum bands, but cardinals remain my most commonly banded bird now that they all wear hard metal bands.

I thank Patuxent's librarian, Lynda Garrett, for providing a list of Kathy's 28 publications.

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