BioOne COMPLETE

In Memoriam: Laurence Charles Binford: 1935–2009

Source: The Auk, 129(4) : 789

Published By: American Ornithological Society

URL: https://doi.org/10.1525/auk.2012.129.4.789

BioOne Complete (complete.BioOne.org) is a full-text database of 200 subscribed and open-access titles in the biological, ecological, and environmental sciences published by nonprofit societies, associations, museums, institutions, and presses.

Your use of this PDF, the BioOne Complete website, and all posted and associated content indicates your acceptance of BioOne's Terms of Use, available at www.bioone.org/terms-of-use.

Usage of BioOne Complete content is strictly limited to personal, educational, and non - commercial use. Commercial inquiries or rights and permissions requests should be directed to the individual publisher as copyright holder.

BioOne sees sustainable scholarly publishing as an inherently collaborative enterprise connecting authors, nonprofit publishers, academic institutions, research libraries, and research funders in the common goal of maximizing access to critical research.

Downloaded From: https://complete.bioone.org/journals/The-Auk on 28 Mar 2024
Terms of Use: https://complete.bioone.org/terms-of-use

The Auk 129(4):789, 2012
© The American Ornithologists' Union, 2012.
Printed in USA.

IN MEMORIAM: LAURENCE CHARLES BINFORD: 1935–2009

AOU Committee on Memorials

Laurence "Laurie" Binford, Life Member of the AOU since 1954, Elective Member (1969), died on 21 September 2009 at his summer home in Agate Harbor, Michigan, his longtime summer residence. He was curator of birds and mammals for the California Academy of Sciences. He was a major force in founding both California Field Ornithologists (now Western Field Ornithologists) and the California Birds Record Committee.

Born on 11 January 1935 in Chicago, Illinois, Laurie began birding as a youngster and kept written records from age seven. His interest was encouraged by his mother, especially during his childhood illnesses. He was further supported by a series of sympathetic adults, including local Chicago-area birders, a high school teacher, and his own driving curiosity. After graduation from New Tier High School (1953) in Winnetka, Illinois, Laurie went to the University of Michigan (UM), where he received his B.S. in 1957, and then to graduate school at Louisiana State University (LSU), where he worked under the direction of George Lowery. Lowery was trying to build up the LSU collections and preferred that his students pursue subjects that would further that end. Other students were then working on the birds of British Honduras, Tabasco, and Honduras. The emphasis then was on Mexico and Central America. The only parts of Mexico or Central America that were not being studied by someone were Oaxaca and Hidalgo. Laurie spent a field season in Oaxaca, and it became both his dissertation topic (Ph.D., 1968) and eventually an *Ornithological Monograph* (no. 45: *A distributional survey of the birds of the Mexican State of Oaxaca*, 1989).

For 24 years, prior to his retirement, Laurie was curator of birds and mammals for the California Academy of Sciences at Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. In addition, he was president of the Board of Directors of Pt. Reyes Bird Observatory (1972–1976), president of Western Field Ornithologists (1983–1986), secretary of the Cooper Ornithological Society (1978–1981), and a member of the American Birding Association's checklist committee (1985–1992). Laurie also enjoyed the lighter side of birding and participated in many Big Days throughout the '70s and '80s. He was a member of the record-tying California Big Day in 1983 and of the record-setting California Big Day team in 1984. While working in the Bay area, Laurie discovered an important hawk migration route north of the Golden Gate Bridge, and Hawk Hill in the Marin Headlands continues to be an active hawk watch area. His interests in birds continued in retirement, culminating in publication of *The Birds of the Keweenaw Peninsula, Michigan* (Miscellaneous Publications, Museum of Zoology, UM, no. 195, 2006). He also remained an avid golfer and fan of UM and LSU football.

Laurie was widely respected for his abilities in the field, his beautifully prepared specimens (those from Mexico and Louisiana are housed at LSU along with his notes), and his meticulous approach to records of birds.

Laurie was predeceased by his parents, Wilbur and Irene Binford, and his brother, Barrie. He is survived by Dorothy Beth Binford, wife of Barrie, and their children Mark Binford, Jana Roney, and John Binford and his wife Linda.

Downloaded From: https://complete.bioone.org/journals/The-Auk on 28 Mar 2024
Terms of Use: https://complete.bioone.org/terms-of-use