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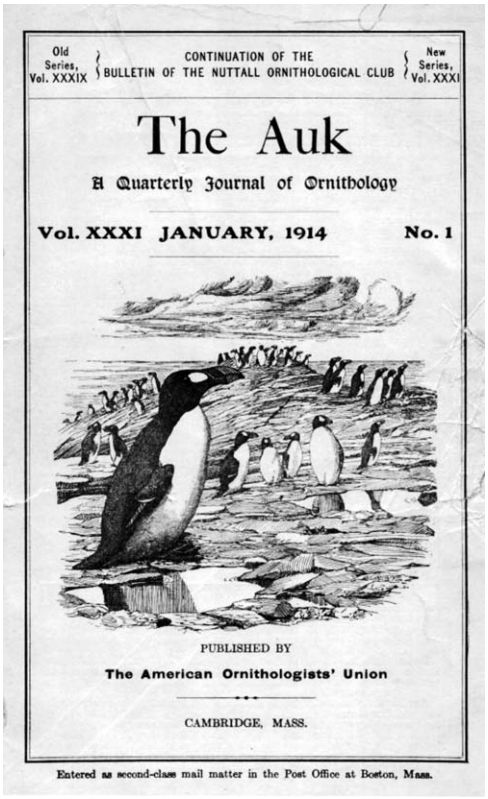
100 Years Ago in the American Ornithologists' Union

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Just five months after the 31st stated meeting of the AOU, the 32nd meeting was held in April of 1914 in Washington, D.C. With the exception of the 5th Congress in 1887, which was held October 11–13 in Boston, all the first 24 congresses (as they were called) were in November. The name was changed in 1907 to "stated meeting," and the 25th was held in early December, as was the 27th stated meeting in 1909. All the other stated meetings were held in November. There were two reasons for holding a spring meeting. The first was to allow members who, for various reasons, could not attend a November meeting to attend a spring meeting. The second was to allow members to plan a year ahead to attend the 1915 meeting in May that was to coincide with the Panama–Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco, a world's fair that celebrated the completion of the Panama Canal and the recovery of San Francisco from the earthquake of 1906. The second week of April was chosen for the Washington, D.C., meeting because the city would be "at its best," meaning that the cherry trees planted in 1912 might be in bloom and spring migration should be peaking. The local committee proposed "short field excursions" led by local members, and the hope was expressed that field trips would become an important part of future AOU meetings.


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The business meeting was called to order by President Frank M. Chapman on Monday evening, April 6, at the New Ebbitt, at the time one of the most popular and elegant hotels in Washington (now the site of the National Press Club). Twenty-six Fellows were present. Albert K. Fisher was elected President; Henry W. Henshaw continued as Vice-President, and Witmer Stone was elected as a Vice-President; John H. Sage continued as Secretary for the 25th year; Jonathan Dwight, Jr., continued as Treasurer for the 11th year; and Ruthven Deane, William Dutcher, Frederic A. Lucas, Wilfred H. Osgood, Charles W. Richmond, Thomas S. Roberts, and Joseph Grinnell were members of the Council, in addition to previous presidents. The society had 1,101 members in the following categories: 50 Fellows, 4 Retired Fellows, 14 Honorary Fellows, 57 Corresponding Fellows, 74 members, and 902 associates. In the preceding five months, 3 members had died and 24 had resigned. Ora Willis Knight (1876–1913), a Member since 1907, died on November 11 from pneumonia at the age of 37. A chemist by trade, he was also an accomplished ornithologist and botanist, and he published *The Birds of Maine* in 1908.

No new Fellows in any category were elected, but five were elected to Member. Egbert Bagg, Jr. (1850–1915), a successful businessman in Utica, New York, and an amateur ornithologist, was an original member of the AOU, elected as an Associate in 1883. He was an authority on the birds of Oneida County, New York. Robert Thomas Moore (1882–1958) was also a successful businessman, who turned his attention to ornithology when he moved from Maine to California. Elected as a Fellow in 1940, he amassed a large collection (now >64,000 specimens), primarily of Mexican birds, that is housed at the Moore Lab of Zoology, which he built on the campus of Occidental College in Los Angeles in 1951. He was a coauthor of the two-volume set, *Distributional Check-list of the Birds of Mexico*, published

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in the Pacific Coast Avifauna series, Nos. 29 and 33. He also was an accomplished poet. John Treadwell Nichols (1883–1958) was an aspiring ornithologist in 1914, but Frank Chapman told him that there would not be a position for him at the American Museum of Natural History, so he became an ichthyologist there. He founded the journal *Copeia* and edited a journal called *Birds of Long Island* from 1939 to 1954. Thomas Barbour (1884–1946) was also interested in ornithology, but he had a distinguished career as a herpetologist, eventually becoming director of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard University from 1927 to 1946 and a Fellow in the AOU. He was instrumental in establishing the Brewster Medal given by the AOU and the establishment of the research station on Barro Colorado Island in Panama. I read his book, *Naturalist at Large* (along with *Lady with a Spear* by Eugenie Clark), as a young boy and became fascinated with ecology. The last elected member was Robert Cushman Murphy (1887–1973), who had a long association with the American Museum of Natural History. Stimulated by a voyage on possibly the last whaling ship powered by sails (the "Daisy") to the southern Atlantic, the museum published his magnum opus, *Oceanic Birds of the Southern Atlantic*, in 1936. In 1937, the AOU awarded the Brewster Medal to him for that work. (Originally, the Brewster Medal was awarded for the most important book published on Western Hemisphere ornithology within the past 6 years.) Murphy held several offices in the AOU and served as president from 1948 to 1950.

A total of 26 people were elected as Associates, including teenager Joseph A. ("Archie") Hagar (1897–1989), who would become the State Ornithologist of Massachusetts in 1934. Another young man who would go on to have a stellar career in wildlife management and conservation was Olaus Johan Murie (1889–1963). Considered the father of elk management, Murie was a tireless champion of wilderness and for expansion of national parks. He and his wife were primarily responsible for the creation of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. Curiously, E. F. Pope, who had been elected an Associate at the previous meeting, was listed as being elected again as an Associate at this meeting.

A subtle but important change in the bylaws was approved: Associates shall be residents of America and shall not be limited in number. This change allowed people in Central and South America to join the AOU, which they could not do under the previous bylaws.

Public sessions followed for two days at the auditorium in the "new" building at the U.S. National Museum. One intriguing presentation, made by Frank M. Chapman, was titled "Are insectivorous birds decreasing?" It must have been stimulating, as remarks were made by Drs. C. Hart Merriam, Chapman, and Witmer Stone; Professor W. W. Cooke; Mr. Waldron DeWitt Miller; and Albert K. Fisher. Alas, the answer to the question was not recorded.

Members dined Tuesday night at the Willis Café, two blocks from the New Ebbitt at 617 12th Street NW. Short field excursions were made around Washington on Thursday and Friday by members under the guidance of Professor Wells W. Cooke (1858–1916) and Edward A. Preble (1871–1957) of the Biological Survey, both Fellows in the AOU.

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