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IN MEMORIAM

Stephen W. Eaton, 1918–2017

Ted R. Anderson

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Stephen W. Eaton, who joined the American Ornithologists' Union in 1942 and became an Elective Member in 1969, died on February 16, 2017, at the age of 98. Eaton's biological interests extended beyond birds to plants, and during his 35 years of teaching at St. Bonaventure University, he collected data on the plants of Cattaraugus County, eventually amassing a collection of about 8,000 herbarium specimens at the university. He was also a Life Member of the Wilson Ornithological Society.

Stephen Woodman Eaton was born on December 22, 1918, in Geneva, New York, to Esther (Woodman) and Elon Howard Eaton. Steve became interested in birds at an early age, an interest that came naturally in his family. His father, who was a biology professor at Hobart College, had written the two-volume *Birds of New York* published by the New York State Museum in 1910 and 1914. Steve graduated from Hobart College with a bachelor's degree in 1940. He then earned a master's degree in zoology in 1942 from Cornell before entering the U.S. Army Air Force. He served for three years as a first lieutenant in Burma, China, and India. After World War II, he returned to Cornell to pursue his doctorate in ornithology under the supervision of Arthur A. Allen, completing his Ph.D. in 1949. The title of his dissertation was "The genus *Seiurus*: A comparative study of the species."

After completing his doctorate, Eaton accepted an offer to teach at St. Bonaventure College (now University), where he remained until his retirement in 1984. He continued to pursue his research interests in birds, particularly the Northern and Louisiana waterthrushes and the Ovenbird, and also played a role in the reintroduction of the Wild Turkey to Cattaraugus County. At St. Bonaventure, he met Philotheus Boehner, OFM, a German Franciscan who had been brought to the college science department to teach botany. Boehner became a frequent companion on Steve's field trips to study the birds of the county and fostered Steve's growing interest in plants. Boehner taught Steve how to identify mosses and liverworts on their collecting trips.



Stephen W. Eaton. ca. 1987. Photo credit: Edith Feuerstein Schrot

Steve published more than 100 scientific papers, primarily on birds and plants. He wrote two species accounts for the *Birds of North America* series, on the Wild Turkey and Northern Waterthrush. His 35-year study of the local birds and plants resulted in two publications, *Birds of Cattaraugus County, New York* and *A Flora of the Vascular Plants of Cattaraugus County, New York*, both published by the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences. He also supervised 22 master's and eight doctoral students during his years at St. Bonaventure. He received a lifetime achievement award from the New York State Department of Conservation for his work on the reintroduction of Wild Turkeys into the state.

Steve married Ellen E. "Betty" Allsopp in Newark, New Jersey, on December 22, 1946. They raised a foster son, Robert Weerlein. While Steve was at St. Bonaventure, Betty served in many different capacities in community organizations in the Allegany area. When Steve retired, he and Betty remained in their Allegany home but also spent time at their log cabin on Canandaigua Lake, one of New York's Finger Lakes. Steve continued to pursue his many other outdoor interests, including beekeeping, farming, hunting,

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fishing, and making maple syrup. In 2008, the Eatons moved to a retirement community in the suburbs of Philadelphia to be closer to their foster son. Betty and Robert survive.

Edith Feuerstein Schrot, coauthor of *A Flora of the Vascular Plants of Cattaraugus County, New York*, wrote in a tribute to Steve for the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences, "Steve saw the 'great world' in comprehensive detail through the lens of a particular place, western New York—his center of the world."

I thank Peg Bothner and Dennis Frank for their assistance in acquiring information, and Edith Schrot for commenting on an earlier draft.

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