

THE FIRST BREWSTER'S WARBLER BELONGS TO NEW YORK STATE

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Hybridization is a phenomenon which has long intrigued ornithologists. In North America the classic example concerns hybrids of the Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers. A century ago two apparently new species of warblers were described, one by Herrick (1874) and one by Brewster (1874). Both bore a marked resemblance to one of the species mentioned above, the one described by Brewster being more like the Golden-winged Warbler. Although he named it the White-throated Warbler, it soon became "Brewster's", while the bird described by Herrick was given the name Lawrence's Warbler.

The initial issue of the Nuttall Ornithological Club Bulletin (1876) has as its leading article Brewster's description of the warbler which was named for him, together with a frontispiece illustration of the specimen he collected. The article is entitled "Description of a new species of *Helminthophaga*".

Although hybridism was suspected at an early date it was some time before it could be fully demonstrated that these were not "new" species but resulted from the mating of Golden-winged with Blue-winged Warblers. At the time of the second AOU Checklist (1895), Lawrence's and Brewster's Warblers were given semi-official status, being placed in the Hypothetical List with the notation "supposed to be hybrids".

The type specimen of Lawrence's Warbler was collected in New Jersey and that of Brewster's Warbler in Massachusetts. A much earlier specimen was collected in New York State and has had an interesting history. It proved to be the first Brewster's Warbler ever collected. It was taken by the well known taxidermist John Graham Bell (1812-1889) in Rockland County in the year 1832. The full story of this specimen can be found in a number of publications including Bent's "Life Histories of North American Wood Warblers" and will not be repeated here. Suffice to say that it ended up at the museum of the Philadelphia Academy of Natural History where it long escaped attention. It was brought to light by Dr. Spencer Trotter during the 1870's.

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THE 1974 CONSERVATION PUBLIC HEARING, NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE

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The conservation public hearing of the New York State Legislature, held on February 28, 1974, was not as well attended as it has been in previous years. With so much attention directed to our energy problems, perhaps many people gave conservation or environmental laws low priority. The method of holding these hearings was changed somewhat for the better. All organizations' representatives registered before the hearings opened. All those attending the hearing received an agenda and one of the cochairman, Assemblyman Larry Lane, following this, called the roll allowing each organization to make comments as it wished. After this step was completed, individuals and clubs or associations wishing to make a more formal statement about any proposed legislation were free to do so after first filling out a form expressing the desire to be so heard. Bills not on the agenda could also be discussed. The business was completed much more quickly under this system than it had been in previous years under different arrangements.

There is a priority in the order of the roll call which is sensible. First the representatives of governmental agencies spoke; at this hearing these were the Environmental Conservation Department, the Legal Department then the Department of Parks and Recreation. After these had made brief comments as to whether their department did or did not support the bill on the floor, the Conservation Council representative made his comments and the other organizations followed as much in alphabetical order as was possible (many delegates were late in arriving). The Conservation Council, of which the Federation is an associate member, is itself a federation of outdoorsmen, hunters, fishermen and other conservation-minded groups and Federation members will be pleased to note that the Conservation Council voted for all bills our representative supported and were also agreed on the bills we opposed.

It is impossible to canvas all member clubs as to which bills before the State Legislature should be supported or opposed and as your representative I had as guide lines the actions taken at our annual meetings and at meetings of the officers of the Federation. This then is a report of my activities at the hearing. Only those bills which had a bearing