

A REFERENCE BOOK ON THE INSTALLMENT PLAN

Feedback is an enlightening experience and here's hoping it continues. Several comments seemed to appraise *The Kingbird* as an uninteresting magazine. The problem is that *The Kingbird* is a journal, not a magazine. OK, so what's the difference? The distinctions are many, but the most important is captured in the title above. A journal is a reference book which is published in periodical installments (Unwin and others 1994).

A magazine, on the other hand, does not have such commitments. It is free to cater to reader demands. In fact, it has to or it becomes extinct. As such, a magazine can run any format it wants; whatever works.

A journal, because it is an ongoing reference, is obligated to package its information so that it can be referred to readily, that is, without having to read entire articles. Standard journal format has evolved over the decades to be: Informative Title, Abstract, Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion / Conclusion, References (Huth and others 1994).

Because journal articles are updating previous information, references to that information is mandatory. Magazines, because they are more ephemeral, can be devoid of references. This single characteristic is a good diagnostic field mark for differentiating magazines and journals. Perhaps a few examples will clarify this distinction. These are journals: *The Auk*, *The Condor*, *The Wilson Bulletin*. These are magazines: *Birder's World*, *Bird Watcher's Digest*, *Wild Bird*. *Birding* is a dandy hybrid with features of both.

During my stint as Editor, I have been pushing authors to write in standard journal format and to cite previous literature. Many of the manuscripts I receive come in with no structure and no references. At first I was bewildered, then perplexed. However, thanks to the feedback, I now know why. Most of our readers and authors think *The Kingbird* is a magazine and I think it is a journal. Different mindsets leading to a cognitive dissonance.

Should the Federation publish a magazine? That is up to the membership. Perhaps *The Kingbird* can incorporate some features of magazines. Writing magazine articles is much more difficult. They must be interesting and the rejection rates are very high. Oh, one other distinction, magazines pay their authors; journals do not.

LITERATURE CITED

- Huth EJ, Council of Biology Editors. 1994. Journal style and format. In: *Scientific Style and Format. The CBE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers*. 6th Ed. NY: Cambridge University Press; 1994. p 557-593.
- Unwin G, Unwin PS, Tucker DH. 1994. Publishing. Scholarly journals. In: *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 15th Ed. 1994. Macropaedia vol 26. p 443.

WHY CALL THIS *THE KINGBIRD*?

Have you ever wondered why this journal is called *The Kingbird*? Our namesake is hardly a good representative of New York State. For most of the year, it is somewhere else. If we were to adhere to the spirit of truth in packaging, the Eastern Kingbird would appear on the covers of only the June and September issues. December and March would have blank spaces, or perhaps a note proclaiming "gone south" or "abdicated".

Gordon Meade, one of the founders of the Federation and its first President, tells us how this species was chosen. At the Third Annual Meeting in Watkins Glen in 1950, it was decided that since New York is the Empire State, and since a king is the head of an Empire, they would call this journal *The Kingbird* (Meade 1988). Actually, an emperor is the head of an empire, not a king. We should be glad that this reasoning did not bring us *The Emperor Penguin* or, better yet, *The Empire-donix Flycatcher*. So, right from the very beginning, we have been stuck with a misnomer. Although perhaps not quite, because we have been subscribing to its tyranny ever since. This tyrant flycatcher will certainly rule in spite of the following argument.

Foremost, a true New Yorker stays here in the winter! Any bird that represents New York must be a year around resident. It must also be known to every citizen. Every New Yorker has seen a starling. Our representative bird must echo our collective stereotypic behavior. The starling is street smart, a superb survivor, an overall in-your-face bird, a perfect fit. Of course, all of these characteristics could also apply to the American Crow or to the Blue Jay, except for the real kicker. The European Starling is an immigrant, just like most of us. Although, because New York was covered by ice, as recently as twelve thousand years ago (Titus 1996), any discussion of who is a native and who is not is merely quibbling over when.

Championing the starling for State Bird has been a project of mine for over a decade (Windsor 1986). I bring it up again, using this bully pulpit, because I resent naming our journal after the Eastern Kingbird. Therefore, I would like to change the name of this publication from *The Kingbird* to *The Starling*. I would like to, but I am a realist and know it will not happen. Besides being rejected by the membership, changing a journal's name, no matter how noble the reason, leads to bibliographic confusion. But, stern as vulgar is, the tyrant rules, at least on paper.

LITERATURE CITED

- Meade GM. 1988 Spr. The origins of the Federation and what happened then. *The Kingbird* 38(2): 66-74 (page 70).
Titus R. 1996. The great advance. In: *The Catskills in the Ice Age*. Fleischmanns, NY: Purple Mountain Press. p 14.
Windsor DA. 1986 Jul. Starling for New York State Bird. *New York Birders* 15(4): 5.