

EMANUEL LEVINE, 1921-2014

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Emanuel Levine passed away on March 21, 2014, at the age of 92. A stalwart of Long Island birding for more than seven decades, Manny bridged generations of birders and connected us 21st Century birders to the famous but ever more remote names of the pre-War era. His impacts as mentor, editor, compiler, pioneer of world birding, and unforgettable personality will come easily to mind to all who knew him.

Born in 1921, he began birding at a very young age, accompanying such early figures of New York birding as Bernie Nathan in his early field trips. Manny served in the Second World War and survived a serious injury. He married Miriam Berkowitz in 1943 and fathered a daughter and two sons. Despite his injury, Manny was active in all facets of life, working as a fabric sales representative and freelance salesman until the age of 71. He kept meticulous bird notes from the post-war years, detailing frequent trips to Plumb Beach, Barren Island, Canarsie, Paerdegat Basin, Floyd Bennett Field, Jacob Riis Park, Breezy Point, Atlantic Beach, Jones Beach, and Oak Beach, as well as longer trips to Moriches Inlet and Montauk Point. His companions in those days included Ed Whelen, Gerry Soll, Bob Grant, and Arnie Weinberg.

It would not be possible to name all the people who birded with Manny over the years. A noteworthy dimension of his fieldwork involved pioneering trips overseas to countries well known now in today's information age, but little known to American birders when Manny and Mickey explored them, often with Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Mudge, and Dick Soffer. His trips to South America (Guyana, Suriname, and Trinidad) and Africa (Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya) paved the way for countless international birders.

Back home on Long Island, Manny settled into a routine that presaged the currently fashionable concept of patch birding, by assiduously covering the Jones Beach Strip and Hempstead Lake State Park, with such companions as Dick Sloss, Al Wollin, and Sy Schiff. Always tuned in to the scientific dimension of birding records, Manny logged countless days at the Fire Island Hawkwatch. He anchored the crew there on Tuesdays with Steve Dempsey, Walter Chaskell, and Patricia Lindsay for many years after his retirement.

Many Long Island birders can't think of the Southern Nassau County Christmas Bird Count without thinking of Manny Levine. From its beginnings in 1930 under Bob Arbib, through the mid-late 20th Century under Dick Sloss and Manny, this count has been one of the most productive in the state, and Manny was always a major part of the fun and excitement. Even in recent years, when

health problems finally prevented him from fully participating in the field work, Manny was still able to be part of the Baldwin team. Mickey's unstinting care created an environment that allowed us to carry on our traditions, including our pre-compilation count-downs over a late afternoon cocktail, prior to the compilation dinner at Otto's Seagrill in Freeport.

Manny played central roles in New York's ornithological organizations. He was Vice President of the Linnaean Society of New York from 1962-1963, President from 1963-1965, and was named a Fellow of the Society, the highest honor bestowed on members. He was Editor of the *Linnaean Newsletter* from 1959-1962 and was for many years the Linnaean Society's representative to the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs.

His work at the Federation, now known as the New York State Ornithological Association, was perhaps unmatched in depth and breadth. He was twice Editor of *The Kingbird*, the organization's quarterly journal: from the May 1975 through Summer 1985 issues (with John Farrand, Jr.), and from the March 1999 through June 2003 issues—a total of 64 issues. In between these stints, he conceived and edited the multi-authored update to our statewide bird book, *Bull's Birds of New York State*, published in 1998. For these and other accomplishments, Manny has been the only individual to be honored twice with the Federation's award for distinguished service, receiving what was then called the Certificate Award in 1985, and then the Gordon M. Meade Award in 2004.

Manny was an unforgettable figure; his knowledge, humor, and capacity for enjoyment have left a unique legacy in New York State ornithology.



Manny Levine, with Al Wollin (left) and Patricia Lindsay (right), August 2002.