

Birder, not watcher

I agree with Tim Hahn's letter regarding the name change of your publication from *Birder's World* to *BirdWatching* ("Your Letters," June 2011, page 55). I am a birder, and as such, the connotation of the new title does not reflect that. It puts the magazine into the category of a nice magazine but for the armchair reader/watcher.

Birder's World said it all. Was there a temper when Coca-Cola changed its recipe? Enough said! — Sue Wetmore, Brandon, Vermont

Good enough for Peterson, good enough for me

Rather than add my thoughts on your name change, let me quote Roger Tory Peterson:

Are you a bird watcher, an ornithologist, an ornithophile, an aviphile, a bird lover, bird fancier, bird bander, birder, bird spotter, lister, ticker, twitcher—or what? As for myself, I am primarily a bird artist and a bird photographer, a visual person

obsessed by birds. I watch them, and they undoubtedly watch me; their eyes are better than mine.

I favor the term bird watcher [emphasis his] for general use because it is inclusive. It describes almost everyone who looks at birds or who studies them — at nearly every level, from the watcher at the window who simply feeds birds all the way to elitists like the fellows at the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) and even Nobel laureates such as Konrad Lorenz and Nikko Tinbergen, who have won distinction for their behavioral work on birds.

If the inclusive term *bird watcher* was good enough for the man who (literally) wrote the book on bird identification, who was a master of both field marks and bird songs, who traveled all over this country and the world to see birds, and whose obsession for birds led him to become one of the most fervent voices for bird conservation of his time, then I know it is good enough for me. — Sharon Kennedy, Racine, Wisconsin

Enjoys watching

I am upset about what Tim Hahn said about the term *bird watcher* in "Your Letters" because that's what I enjoy most often: birdwatching. I'm no expert, but I'll bet most others started out being watchers first. I enjoy watching all kinds of wildlife, including birds in our area, deer, groundhogs, and others. I have no objection to your new name; I think it's better. I may be lazy, but I love watching the birds. Thank you. — Anne Libeer, Osage Beach, Missouri

Burrowing Owls

I decided to re-subscribe to *Birder's World*, now *BirdWatching Magazine*, because of Neil Losin's article about Burrowing Owls ("Underground Owl," February 2011, page 18). I hope to take a trip soon to Davis, California, to see the owls in person! I had never thought much about them before. Please thank the author for a wonderful article and the beautiful photographs. — Cynthia Brennan, Valencia, California, survey comment

More hand-feeding

I read with interest Julie Craves's column on how to feed birds by hand ("Since You Asked," June 2011, page 10). I am surprised how you neglected to mention the easiest bird by far to feed in this manner, the scrub-jay (in my case, the Western Scrub-Jay). For years I have been feeding them peanuts in my front and backyard. They are bold, and many will come up to you and feed out of your hand if you toss peanuts closer and closer for several weeks. I feel more effort should have been put into this cursory article on a subject that one rarely reads about. I hope you will follow up with more pointed information on this subject in the future. — Stanley Weiser, Santa Monica, California

Outraged by \$1 fine

I want to thank Matt Mendenhall for his posts in the *BirdWatching Field of View* blog about the Whooping Crane shooting in Indiana. I was the person primarily responsible for raising that bird from hatch, training it to follow an ultralight airplane, and leading the migration ground crew from Wisconsin to Florida, where the birds were released. This was a long and difficult process involving many people working for peanuts and making huge personal sacrifices to protect an awesome legacy of natural enjoyment for the future. I am outraged by the complete and utter failure of our legal system to recognize this situation as so trivial and meaningless that a \$1 fine suffices as punishment for a crime that concerned citizens and agencies put up \$10,000 in reward money in hopes of finding justice. — Dan Sprague, USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Patuxent, Maryland



Richard Urbemek/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

TRAILBLAZERS: Whooping Cranes 17-02 and 11-02 were the first birds in the eastern migratory population to raise a chick.

Editor's note: Whooping Crane 17-02 was shot and killed in Indiana in November 2009. In March of this year, an Indiana man and a juvenile pleaded guilty to the crime. The pair was charged approximately \$550 in legal fees and court costs, and each received one year of probation and was fined \$1. You can read BirdWatching Field of View at www.BirdWatchingDaily.com.

Let's hear from you

Write to BirdWatching Letters, P.O. Box 1612, Waukesha WI 53187-1612; mail@birdwatchingdaily.com. Please include your name and postal address. Letters may be edited.