

## **IN MEMORIAM: H. LEWIS BATTS, JR., 1922–2001**

Author: Evans, Monica Ann

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## IN MEMORIAM: H. LEWIS BATTS, JR., 1922–2001

MONICA ANN EVANS

3614 Woodcliff Drive, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49008, USA

H. Lewis Batts, Jr., AOU member since 1948 and Elective (Life) Member since 1959, died on 9 October 2001 in Kalamazoo, Michigan. He was born on 24 May 1922 in Macon, Georgia; his family moved to Kalamazoo when he was in his early teens. Birds piqued his curiosity on walks with his dad through fields and woods.

Lew earned a B.A. at Kalamazoo College in 1943, was a medical technician in the U.S. Army Medical Department until 1946, and received his M.S. in 1947 and Ph.D. in 1955 from the University of Michigan, under Harry W. Hann. In 1950, Lew returned to Kalamazoo College, where he taught ecology and ornithology until 1977, when Parkinson's disease caused his early retirement.

In 1965, the Batts family joined Eleanor and Sewall Pettingill on a trip to New Zealand, where Lew and Sewall made two 16-mm films about New Zealand birds. In addition to Hann and Pettingill, Roger Tory Peterson and George Miksch Sutton influenced Lew to pursue a career in ornithology. Lew, in turn, mentored Larry W. Walkinshaw and Raymond J. Adams, Jr., both from Michigan. Lew's early papers were ornithological, but he later focused on pollution, using birds as indicators of the health of the environment.

Lew participated actively in the AOU as a member of the Council (1960–1963 and 1968–1970) and on the Committee on Endowment (1962–1964). He edited *The Wilson Bulletin* from 1959 to 1963 and served on the Wilson Ornithological Society Council from 1963 to 1970, finishing as president. He was on the board of directors of the National Audubon Society

(1961–1970) and on its President's Council (1980–1982). He was associate editor and then editor of *The Jack-Pine Warbler* from 1947 to 1958 and held various offices, including president, in the Michigan Audubon Society between 1960 and 1968. He was treasurer of the Michigan Bird Banders' Association for 25 years, and president of the Audubon Society of Kalamazoo.

Throughout his life, he banded birds, with special emphasis on the American Goldfinch. He took award-winning photographs, especially of birds and their habitats, and his athletic ability permitted him to photograph oceanic birds on the wing from the decks of rolling ships.

In 1967, he and friends established the Environmental Defense Fund, now Environmental Defense, and with others he established the Kalamazoo Nature Center in 1960.

Lew received many awards for his photography and for his services to mankind. Western Michigan University and Nazareth College awarded him honorary degrees. The Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters cited him for "meritorious contribution to science and research in Michigan."

Locally, he and entrepreneur Burton Upjohn developed an ecologically planned residential community on 290 acres of marginal farmland, saving woodlands and waterways. The 34-year-old development, Parkview Hills, illustrates how people can live in harmony with their environment in a community that benefits wildlife, residents, and developers. With his level-headed, rational thinking, Lew enriched the world that we live in and that future generations will inherit.