



## **Roland C. Clement, 1912–2015**

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IN MEMORIAM

## Roland C. Clement, 1912–2015

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Roland Clement was born on November 22, 1912, in Fall River, Massachusetts, the first son of Germain A. Clement of Iseghem, Belgium, a musician, and Angelina Desjardin of Sorel, Quebec, Canada. In 1947 he married Muriel Crowley of Brooklyn, New York, a Yale nurse, who predeceased him in 1998. Roland is survived by three children: Charles (a botanist in Manaus, Brazil); Connie, a public health professional in Toronto and in Nova Scotia, Canada; Alison (Lawrence, a computer programmer in Shelton, Connecticut, now living in Bar Harbor, Maine), three granddaughters, and two great-grandchildren. Roland died comfortably on March 21, 2015, at his home in Hamden, Connecticut. Family and friends held a celebration of Roland's life in late March.

Roland became interested in birds at age 8 because of a close-up look at a male Black-and-white Warbler. He met no one else interested in birds until age 14, when he joined the Boy Scouts, in which he served as camp naturalist and merit badge examiner for 12 years. Roland won a New England Garden Club scholarship to the Audubon Camp of Maine (1938), where he met Allan D. Cruickshank and Roger Tory Peterson, and returned as second birdman under Cruickshank in 1950.

Roland attended parochial schools, skipped high school, did 2 years of business school, and then worked as a bookkeeper/secretary for 12 years. "Released" by the Great Depression in 1933, he started a new career, first banding birds with Maurice Broun at the O.L. Austin Ornithological Research Station, North Eastham, Cape Cod, Massachusetts, then doing 2 years of vocational wildlife management study at the Stockbridge School, University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Roland edited the New England *Bulletin of Bird Life* for the Boston Museum of Natural History (1942), where he was mentored by Ludlow Griscom.

Roland served as U.S. Air Corps weather observer from 1943 to 1945, training in Illinois, Louisiana, and Colorado, before spending a year at Goose Bay, Labrador, and another at Indian House Lake, New Quebec, during which he conducted intensive studies of bird distribution and initiated life history studies. Roland returned to central Labrador for the Carnegie Museum in 1957 and 1958, where he was codiscoverer of the nesting grounds of the

Eastern Short-billed Dowitcher. The faunal work from that period was published in W. E. Clyde Todd's *Birds of the Labrador Peninsula* (1963) and the life histories (Common Redpoll and Eastern White-crowned Sparrow) in A. C. Bent's series on *Life Histories of North American Birds* (1968). Roland twice gave papers at AOU Meetings during those years.

Roland returned to school on the "G.I. Bill" and obtained degrees from Brown University (B.S. in Botany, 1949) and Cornell University (M.S. in Wildlife Conservation, 1950). Subsequently, he became the first executive secretary of the Audubon Society of Rhode Island (1950–1958). He then served the National Audubon Society as membership secretary, headquarters biologist, and vice president (1958–1977). He was a principal advocate for the banning of DDT, was personally active in early recovery programs for the California Condor and the Eastern Peregrine Falcon, and was a catalyst in numerous initiatives, including the founding of the Environmental Defense Fund. Roland served as chairman of the U.S. Section of the International Council for Bird Preservation, and later served as Secretary for the Americas, International Committee for Bird Protection (now Birdlife International). Having attended the first international conference of the International Union for Conservation of Nature in Nairobi in 1963, he became so enthralled with African environments that he organized and led small wildlife and birding tours to see the world for a dozen years.

In retirement, Roland served as president of the Connecticut Audubon Society and of the Connecticut Ornithological Association and was a visiting fellow at Yale University for several years. In retirement, he became a skilled watercolorist, most often painting birdlife and landscapes, wrote essays shared through a blog, "Reflections of a Naturalist" (<http://rolandcclement.blogspot.ca/>), and continued traveling. He hosted lecture series in the retirement complexes where he lived, guiding others to reflect upon conservation and environmental challenges, and as recently as 2013 was involved in inventorying birds of a local wetland. Roland's papers are housed in the Linda Lear Center for Special Collections and Archives at Connecticut College.