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# *In Memoriam*



*The Auk* 117(4):1029–1030, 2000

## IN MEMORIAM: LARS VON HAARTMAN, 1919–1998

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Professor Baron Lars Arvid Axel von Haartman passed away in Helsinki on 28 October 1998 in his 80th year. He was born on 24 March 1919 (exactly 60 years after the publication of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*) at the family manor Lempisaari in Askainen, 32 km west of Turku, Finland. His ancestors belonged to the Swedish-speaking Finnish nobility; in the middle of the 19th century, his great-grandfather, Lars Gabriel von Haartman, was the most influential person in Finland and the Finnish counselor at the Russian court. Lars A.A. von Haartman, or LvH as he was called by friends and colleagues in Finland, became a Corresponding Fellow of the AOU in 1954 and an Honorary Fellow in 1963.

As a student, LvH was influenced by Margaret Morse Nice's studies on the Song Sparrow, published first in German in 1933 and 1934, and then by David Lack's studies on the behavior of the European Robin in 1939 and 1940. In 1941, LvH began his lifelong studies of color-banded Pied Flycatchers breeding at his estate. In his first detailed study (*Acta Zoologica Fennica* 56:1–104, 1949), LvH stated (in German): ''To study the biology of a bird species three things, I think, are necessary: a telescope, colour bands, and diligence.'' He also worked on many other bird species and especially on general problems such as biology of coastal birds (doctoral thesis in 1945), adaptations to hole nesting (*Evolution* 11:339–347, 1957), clutch size and polygamy, territoriality, bird migration, population dynamics (*Avian Biology* 1:391–459, 1971), and changes in the Finnish avifauna. LvH was eager to gather details of birds' lives, but he also had an exceptional ability to see the central features and factors, to synthesize. He started a nest-card project in Finland in the early 1950s, ran it for decades, and sorted and analyzed tens of thousands of nest cards by hand! As a result, he published ''The Nesting Habits of Finnish Birds. I. Passeriformes'' (*Commentationes Biologicae Societas Scientiarum Fennica* 32: 1–187, 1969). The same material was also used in a new handbook ''The Birds of the North I-II 1963 to 1972'' (in Finnish), for which LvH wrote the chapters titled ''Breeding'' and ''Behavior.''

LvH became a Professor of Zoology at the University of Helsinki in 1968. From 1963 to 1969, he was chairman of the Finnish Ornithological Society, and from 1972 to 1976, he was Editor-in-Chief of *Ornis Fennica.* He was Secretary-General of the 12th International Ornithological Congress held in Helsinki in 1958, Vice-President of the 17th Congress in Berlin in 1978, and President of the 18th Congress in Moscow in 1982, therein serving as an important connection between Eastern and Western ornithologists. An issue of *Ornis Fennica* (no. 56[2–3], 1979) was dedicated to him to celebrate his 60th birthday and provides additional information about his work.

As a polyglot (besides his native Swedish, he was fluent in Finnish, English, and German and knew some French) and cultured person, LvH was Finnish ornithology's best ambassador. He had a wonderful dry British sense of humor and often included subtle offhanded comments in his lectures and conversations that were much appreciated by those who were listening.

Not only was LvH the leading star of Finnish ornithology for decades, but he resembled bright Jupiter in his own nocturnal charcoal drawing entitled ''Way to Lempisaari, Jupiter.'' His other passionate interests were literature and art. A many-faceted personality, artist, art connoisseur, art critic, painter and drawer, essayist, poet, and bibliophile, LvH could equally well have become a writer or a professor in art



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or the history of literature. He published four collections of poetry, two of which have been translated into English. The last collection (1990) was named *In Memoriam.* Below is a poem entitled ''Autumn's Joy'' from the collection *Black Sails* (Svarta segel, 1969), which was translated from Swedish by Doris Huestis Speirs in 1976:

''Strange is the joy of autumn,—
a marine-blue wind, a birch's
nerve-fine branch in light. The eye smiles
but the song of the heart is smoke.''

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# IN MEMORIAM: BISWAMOY BISWAS, 1923–1994

ERNST MAYR
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With the death in Calcutta of Biswamoy Biswas on 10 August 1994, India lost its foremost bird taxonomist. Born there on 2 June 1923, son of a professor of geology, Biswas was a brilliant student and gold medallist at his graduation. S. L. Hora, director of the Zoological Survey of India, recognized his promise and in 1947 awarded him a three-year fellowship. This allowed Biswas to study at the British Museum in London and with Stresemann in Berlin, but mostly at the American Museum in New York where he worked with me. He was an indefatigable worker, often staying in the museum far into the night after everyone else had gone home. The results were numerous clarifications in our understanding of Indian genera of birds, including *Psittacula* and *Lanius.*

On his return from abroad, Biswas obtained his Ph.D. from the University of Calcutta (1952) and took charge of the Bird and Mammal Section of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI). Later, until retirement in 1981, he was Joint Director of the ZSI, and then Emeritus Scientist until 1986. A member of the AOU from 1948, he was elected a Corresponding Fellow in 1953.

Having adopted a modern genus concept, Biswas published in 1953 *A Check-list of Genera of Indian Birds,* the basis of all future taxonomic papers for the subcontinent. He also published on avian anatomy, particularly the vascular system, and on mammalian taxonomy. Of greater importance, he wrote the fundamental 12-part *The Birds of Nepal* (1960–1967), and, jointly with Salim Ali and S. Dillon Ripley, *The Birds of Bhutan* (1995).

A born naturalist and conservationist, Biswas spent as much time as possible in the field, visiting every state in central and northern India. He helped establish the Salt Lakes and Narendrapur wildlife sanctuaries near Calcutta. He was a member from 1958 of the International Ornithological Committee that directs the International Ornithological Congresses, and he also attended congresses of the International Council for Bird Preservation. For years he edited the *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of Calcutta.* The Asiatic Society awarded him the Joy Govinda Law Memorial Medallion in 1975. A new genus of flying squirrel, *Biswamoypterus,* has been named in his honor.

His associates believe his greatest contribution was as a teacher. Numerous students obtained their Ph.D. under his supervision; he infected all of them with his enthusiasm and taught them the critical and meticulous approach that characterized his own work. A lifelong bachelor with a retiring, almost shy personality, he nevertheless made many friends during his years abroad. He lived frugally and donated most of his savings to charity. In all respects, he was an admirable human being.

A longer memorial, with portrait and partial bibliography, appeared in *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 92:397–402 in 1995.

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*The Auk* 117(4):1031–1032, 2000

# IN MEMORIAM: ERNST SUTTER, 1914–1999

RAFFAEL WINKLER[1] AND LUC SCHIFFERLI[2]
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[2]*Swiss Ornithological Institute, CH-6204 Sempach, Switzerland*

Ernst Sutter died on 9 November 1999 after a short illness. He was born in Basel, Switzerland, on 7 August 1914 and was educated there. As a schoolboy, he was in the field well before the first morning lessons started. In the 1930s, together with the Swiss Ornithological Institute, he participated in the first pioneering field courses to band and measure birds in their migration through the Alps. He completed his Ph.D. thesis on growth and development of the avian brain in Galliformes and Passeriformes in 1943 under the supervision of Professor Adolf Portmann. Two years later, he became Curator of the Bird Collection of the Natural History Museum in Basel. Following his retirement in 1980, he continued his scientific work on an honorary basis until his death, thus serving the Basel museum for 55 years.

In 1949, Sutter organized a nine-month field expedition to Sumba in Indonesia, together with ethnologist Alfred Bühler. Among 65,000 zoological specimens were 770 birds. Based on these specimens, the races of two species of buttonquail were revised and five new subspecies described. A list of the taxa was published in White and Bruce's *The Birds of Wallacea* (BOU Checklist No. 7, 1986).

The Sumba trip was Sutter's only collecting expedition. From his excellent contacts with the Swiss Ornithological Institute, Sutter obtained specimens found dead within Switzerland. He expanded the bird collection at the Natural History Museum to become one of the important collections in Europe.

In 1954, Sutter encountered radar technology at the Zurich airport and realized that this could be a unique tool for studies of bird migration. Shortly thereafter, in 1956, Sutter conducted one of the first systematic studies of nocturnal migration by radar. The presentation of a radarfilm at the International Ornithological Congress in Helsinki in 1958 made him world renowned.

Sutter's other main interests concerned avian growth patterns. As a student of Professor Adolf Portmann, a leading zoologist and anthropologist involved in juvenile development of birds in an evolutionary context, Sutter originally worked on growth and functional development of the brain and body as well as on molt and feather growth. His major publications covered woodpeckers, the White Stork, and growth and molt in buttonquails and galliforms. Late in life, Sutter reanalyzed some of his original data, and in his last days he completed editing a final manuscript in the hospital. An enormous amount of information on molt and feather growth was incorporated in the *Handbuch der Vögel Mitteleuropas* by Glutz von Blotzheim and Bauer, and Stresemann and Stresemann relied on his unpublished data on molt of megapodes in their book on molt.

Ernst Sutter was a modest and quiet person with a profound knowledge in most fields of scientific ornithology. He measured and recorded precisely, almost to perfection. His wide interests, scrutiny, and perspicacity made him eminently qualified to edit *Der Ornithologische Beobachter,* the ornithological journal of German-speaking Switzerland. With his advice, constructive criticism, and support, Sutter transformed this periodical into a scientifically valuable and highly appreciated journal for amateurs and professionals alike. His editing was not restricted to the content of the papers. He took care of the layout, revised the text for clarity and conciseness, and improved the graphs and figures. Although not a staff member of the university, he actively assisted in the supervision of many master's and doctoral theses. His contributions to scientific ornithology, nearly 100 papers, reached far beyond the national scale.

Along with Adolf Portmann, Sutter edited the Proceedings of the 11th International Ornithological Congress held in Basel in 1954. He also was engaged in the posthumous publication of Portmann's scientific material (*Vom Wunder des Vogellebens,* 1984).

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Sutter's open mind and sensitive and intuitive character gained him personal contacts with colleagues throughout the world. His broad biological knowledge extended far beyond ornithology, and his scientific competence and expertise rewarded him with an international reputation. He was elected a Corresponding Fellow of the AOU in 1958 and an Honorary Fellow in 1991, and he was a Corresponding Member of the Deutsche Ornithologen-Gesellschaft, the Nederlandse Ornithologische Unie, and the Asociacion Ornitologica del Plata in Argentina. In Switzerland, he received the Honorary Membership of Ala, the Swiss Ornithological Society. Finally, in 1998 he was elected an Honorary Chairman of the 23rd International Ornithological Congress to be held in Beijing, China, in 2002. Sadly, he will not be able to undertake this task.

Ernst Sutter is survived by his wife Gaby, three children, and five grandchildren. A more extensive memorial, with portrait, appeared in *Der Ornithologische Beobachter* 97:1–6.

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# IN MEMORIAM: COLONEL JACK VINCENT, 1904–1999

JOHN VINCENT
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Jack Vincent was born in London, England, on 6 March 1904. At the age of 21, he emigrated to South Africa and worked on two farms in the Richmond district of Natal before returning to England to work for the British Museum. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, he was sent on a number of bird-collecting expeditions in east, central, and southern Africa, some on his own and others in the company of Admiral Hubert Lynes of the Battle of Jutland fame. In ornithological circles, Lynes perhaps is best known for unraveling the systematics of the cisticolas, a notoriously difficult group of Old World warblers. Jack played a large part in this work, and his own monumental work was a study of the birds of northern Portuguese East Africa (now Mozambique) in 1930. Several subspecies of birds bear his name.

On his return from the last expedition, in 1934, Jack met a Scottish girl, Mary Russell, in Cape Town; he proposed to and married her within a week! After a year in London, Jardine Mathieson Co. sent him to Zanzibar to start the first clove distillery in that most famous of the ''clove isles.'' After three years there, he was transferred to a sisal plantation in Tanganyika, now known as Tanzania. In 1937, Jack bought a farm in the Mooi River district of Natal in South Africa.

During World War II, Jack served with the then Royal Natal Carbineers in east and north Africa, where he was awarded the MBE for his service. In 1942, he was seconded to the British Army in Haifa, Palestine.

In 1949, Jack was asked to take over the fledgling Natal Parks Board. Under his guidance, the Board became one of the most famous of the world's nature conservation authorities, particularly for the role it played in saving the white rhino from extinction. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, he served as editor of *The Ostrich,* the journal of the South African Ornithological Society. He became a Corresponding Fellow of the AOU in 1949.

In 1963, Jack accepted a post with the International Council for Bird Preservation and moved to Morges in Switzerland, where he worked in international conservation for four years. During this time he was awarded the World Wildlife Fund Gold Medal and the Order of the Golden Ark by Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands.

Jack returned to rejoin the Natal Parks Board in 1967 before finally retiring in 1974 to live

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again on his farm. In 1989, Mary died and Jack moved to Pietermaritzburg, where he lived with me until his death on 3 July 1999 at the age of 95. In 1990, he privately published his autobiography, *Web of Experience.* He typed the manuscript himself while suffering a temporary paralysis of his arm muscles. In 1993, the University of Natal conferred an honorary Doctorate on him for his services to environmental conservation.

Throughout his life, Jack Vincent was a leader who had the confidence, respect, and love of his staff. His simple philosophy was that if a job was worth doing, it was worth doing properly. If something was morally and justifiably right, then he pressed on regardless. His achievements were not done for himself, but always in the interests of others. In addition to me, Jack is survived by his daughter Thamar, seven grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren. A longer memorial, with portrait, will appear in *The Ibis.*

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