

## **Marion Jenkinson Service Award 2016, to James Herkert**

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AWARD

## Marion Jenkinson Service Award 2016, to James Herkert

Published January 11, 2017

The 2016 recipient of the Marion Jenkinson AOU Service Award is Dr. James Herkert. When he received the award, Dr. Herkert was director of resource conservation, Illinois Department of Natural Resources (DNR). He is currently executive director of the Illinois Audubon Society, Springfield, Illinois.

While Herkert has been a steadfast member of the AOU throughout his career, he took a monumental leap in commitment to the society when he agreed to run for the office of treasurer in 2009, soon after we developed our future vision and prepared to embark on new initiatives. Herkert demonstrated his myriad leadership skills as a long-standing member of the AOU Council, and served as an outstanding and forward-thinking steward of the society's financial assets, his actions always well researched and planned. He put the interests of the members of the society at the forefront of policy and decisions, and how best to advance ornithology as a profession while shaping AOU's strategic approach to financial oversight. During his time as treasurer, Herkert developed a portfolio of long-term projections that helped position the society when it entered into new partnerships in publications and other core programs. These partnerships eventually lay the groundwork for the 2016 merger of the AOU and the Cooper Ornithological Society. As a respected ornithologist, Herkert is well known for his trend analyses and research on the ecology and conservation of grassland birds, including long-term studies of breeding-bird population trends in the midwestern United States, the ecological causes of long-term declines in grassland birds, and effects of prairie fragmentation and changes in land-use practices on biodiversity. While at the Illinois DNR, Herkert cochaired the steering committee of the Upper Midwest–Great Lakes Large Landscape Cooperative Steering Committee, a public–private partnership of natural resource agencies and organizations working to connect science and natural resource management across this dynamically changing landscape.

In recognition of his outstanding service to the American Ornithologists' Union over the past decade, the society is very proud to name Dr. Herkert as the recipient of the 2016 Marion Jenkinson AOU Service Award.

**Award criteria.** The Marion Jenkinson AOU Service Award is given to an individual who has performed



James Herkert

continued extensive service to the AOU, including holding elected offices but emphasizing volunteered contributions and committee participation. The officers of the AOU select the awardee on behalf of the society. The award, consisting of an honorarium and framed certificate, honors Marion Jenkinson Mengel, a former treasurer of the AOU and a council member who gave generously of her time, her good humor, and her prodigious administrative expertise to the society. Marion's efforts given during her lifetime, and the significant bequest she left the AOU after her death, have together created a lasting legacy for the ornithological profession in the Americas.