

Nesbitt, S. A. 1993

IN MEMORIAM

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LAWRENCE H. WALKINSHAW, 1904-1993

Dr. Lawrence "Larry" H. Walkinshaw died 15 January 1993 at the age of 88. He was born 25 February 1904 in Calhoun County, Michigan, and graduated from the University of Michigan School of Dentistry in 1929. Though a dentist by training, he was a leading authority of cranes of the world. During his adopted career in ornithology that spanned over 60 years, he published 61 technical articles on cranes. He also was the author of two books on cranes: *The Sandhill Cranes* published in 1949, and *Cranes of the World* published in 1973. In 1965, he published the description of a new subspecies of Sandhill Crane, the Canadian Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis rowani*). His ornithological interests extended to the Kirtland's Warbler on which he published several articles and a book. Other interests included genealogy, but he was first and foremost a "crane man."

His nearly 89 years notwithstanding, Dr. Walkinshaw remained an active field ornithologist throughout his life. After retiring from his dental practice, he divided his time between homes in Lake Wales, Florida; and Holt, Michigan, both of which were close to prime Sandhill Crane habitat. He found great delight in even the slightest new discovery; I remember his enthusiasm upon finding the first Florida Sandhill Crane nest constructed of water hyacinth. He was indefatigable in the pursuit of information on Sandhill Crane clutch sizes, egg measurements, and nest characteristics. His understanding of cranes and their behavior was encyclopedic. For many years there were few papers on cranes published in North America for which he did not serve as a refereeing authority. The proceedings of the First International Crane Workshop were dedicated to Lawrence H. Walkinshaw "The Father of International Studies on *Gruiformes*." His knowledge and avuncular nature assured he was the constant mentor to succeeding generations of crane researchers.

One of Dr. Walkinshaw's abiding concerns was the conservation and recovery of the Whooping Crane. He was supportive of the initial efforts to sustain and restore the species to its former habitat. During his lifetime he saw the species climb back from a perilous low of 22 birds to nearly 250, with two sustaining captive populations and plans underway for reintroduction into its former range.

This kind and gentle man, whose contributions to science never flagged, will be missed by those of us who benefited from his counsel and were inspired by his spirit. The Dr. L. H. Walkinshaw Memorial Scholarship Fund has been established in the Department of Ornithology at Cornell University. He is survived by his wife, and sometimes field companion of 62 years, Clara; one daughter, Wendy; a son, James; and four grandchildren.—  
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