

We dedicate this book to the memory of Theodore A. Parker III

Ted was renowned for his knowledge of bird sounds, especially in the Neotropics, and could identify nearly 4000 species by their vocalizations alone. An expert on Neotropical biodiversity in general, not just birds, Ted was committed to applying his knowledge of bird sounds to conservation issues. Eager to begin his work, he bypassed a formal graduate education (for a personal glimpse of Ted in action, see Stap 1990). As the leader of Conservation International's Rapid Assessment Team, Ted used his extensive knowledge of bird sounds to help chart and preserve the biodiversity of Latin America. His thousands of tape recordings (about 20,000 recordings of more than 1600 species, housed at Cornell University's Library of Natural Sounds) and his field efforts are the most extensive in the Neotropics to date, and they alone could provide the basis for theses and research projects for decades. More important, Ted was an inspiration, both personally and by reputation, in every country he visited—for conservationists, for politicians, and for young ornithologists interested in understanding bird sounds or using them to promote conservation. Ted bridged disciplines and boundaries: academic and popular ornithology, ornithology and conservation, and the north temperate scientific establishment with the emerging scientific community of Latin America. Those of us who knew Ted remember him best for his boundless generosity in sharing his knowledge with others, for his sheer enjoyment of all our planet's riches, and for doing all he could to help preserve that biodiversity (see Remsen and Schulenberg in press).

Ted was killed in action, in a plane crash on 3 August 1993, while surveying a coastal forest 350 miles southwest of Quito, Ecuador (see Kaufmann 1993, Myers 1993, O'Neill 1993, K. J. Zimmer 1993, Collar 1995, Schulenberg 1995, and Remsen et al. in press). By dedicating this book to Ted, we salute both his extraordinary efforts and his success in a life that was all too short. His painstaking efforts to record Neotropical birds, species by species, enabled him and others to locate and identify taxa far more efficiently. In his explorations, he uncovered a wealth of exciting biological issues of the type featured in Chapter 15 of this volume. Perhaps most important, his knowledge of bird sounds and his subsequent surveys allowed the avifauna and related biodiversity of the Neotropics to be inventoried in a more rapid and systematic manner (Parker 1991). This volume celebrates the diversity of birds and their styles of vocal communication in a way that we think Ted would have appreciated. We hope that the book will also help readers to appreciate the magnitude of our planet's riches and the responsibility we all share to preserve that great wealth.

