From the Editor

Because of the decision made by officers of The American Ornithologists' Union, you are reading the last number of *Ornithological Monographs*. This is not, of course, an appropriate venue for me to express my feelings about that specific decision. The first *OM* appeared in 1964, and this last number in 2014. Ironic this is the 50th anniversary. Over time we have seen a loss of other similar publications that provided an outlet for research that usually offered a synthesis of many interrelated aspects of the behavior, ecology, and phylogeny of a species or group of species. The clear trend in publishing has been to promote multiple articles—often spread across several outlets—rather than single, longer, more synthetic works. Editors seem to like this, and authors usually benefit from a longer publication list. Regardless of the reasons, I do hope that current and future editors will allow for the longer—often natural history in nature—studies that present a synthesis of findings. To facilitate such papers, *The Auk* removed page limits for submissions because of the loss of *OM*. Here is hoping future editors will minimize the slicing and dicing of a single work into its many component parts.

Now to the monograph at hand. This work by Joseph Wunderle and co-authors is a fine example of why *OM* was established, and thus an especially good way to end the series. Using the federally endangered Kirtland's Warbler, they tested hypotheses related to responses to winter food variation in multiple ways including testing the effects of winter period and study site as factors affecting food resource abundance; diet changes in relation to winter period and sex and age; overwinter site persistence and annual return to quantify the warbler's use of space including potential sex and age differences; body mass and fat scores to test for effects of winter season and sex and age differences; and yes, even more. Ultimately, they were interested in how these various factors impacting individual condition and food resources in the winter translate to the breeding grounds. A major strength of this work is that they worked across six winters.

As someone who studies warblers that undergo long-distance migration, we are always left wondering what happens on the wintering grounds. There has, of course, been much debate on the relative impacts of breeding grounds versus wintering grounds on survival and ultimately fitness. We all know that searching for banded birds on the usually vast wintering grounds is, indeed, worse than the proverbial needle in the haystack. Fortunately, there are an increasing number of direct and indirect techniques that are allowing us to help sort out what happens once they leave the breeding grounds. Nevertheless, actually going to the wintering grounds and spending multiple years studying a species remains a seldom attempted yet fundamentally important component of piecing together the life history of these species.

By piecing together various parts of the winter ecology of this species, Wunderle and co-authors have provided a much needed example of what warblers do on the wintering grounds and how multiple factors impact individual performance. This work also exemplifies why we need to keep promoting such work, and subsequently the publication of synthetic works that paint an interesting and informative overall story of a species.

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