

WHAT'S IN A NAME:

A great deal to an oriole - or a Baltimorean.

In 1973 the American Ornithological Union (AOU) - the ultimate arbiter of common and scientific names for North American Birds - wiped out the Baltimore Oriole. Research showed that the bird, found in the eastern United States, and the Bullock's oriole, found in the western U.S., interbred where their ranges overlapped in the plains. So the AOU merged the two species into one, the Northern oriole.

Residents of Baltimore, Maryland, especially the fans of its baseball team, the Orioles, were outraged. More recent studies offer them hope. The data shows no gene flow east or west, suggesting that there really are two species. And now an AOU committee is debating whether to split the birds again and restore their old names.

There is a precedent. The AOU's *Checklist of North American Birds* and its 1994 supplement identify 1,968 species, including some revisions. The Blue-rumped Parrotlet again is the Mexican Parrotlet; four honeycreepers got back old Hawaiian names; and the Black Petrel was renamed the Parkinson's Petrel (adapted from *National Geographic*: Oct. 1994 by Donald Wilkinson).

ENVIRONMENTAL CALENDAR:

- Feb. 7 - The Society's first guest speaker for 1995 will be David Lemon. He will speak on his nest box and banding program for Kestrels on P.E.I. The meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. at the Farm Centre on University Avenue.
- Feb. 14 - Garden Club of Prince Edward Island meets at the Farm Centre at 7:30 p.m.
- Feb. 20 - Lieutenant Governor Marion L. Reid will proclaim Heritage Day on Monday, February 20th at 10 a.m. at Eptek Centre. The Proclamation will be followed by a greeting from Major Basil Stewart, the presentation of the Meritorious Achievement Award, and a Heritage Morning Coffee Party hosted by the Friends of Eptek.
- Feb. 21 - Prince Edward Island Museum and Heritage Foundation Annual Awards Banquet at the Charlottetown Hotel will feature Dr. Michael Bliss, a renowned Historian, as the guest speaker. Phone 368-6600 for ticket information.
- Feb. Mar - There will be a public meeting of the Canadian Coast Guard and Community Coastal Action Plan (date not supplied with notice)
- Mar. 7 - Jim Jenkins will be the Society's guest speaker and will speak on Marine Mammal strandings and the new policy. The meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. at the Farm Centre on University Avenue.
- Mar. 14 - Garden Club of Prince Edward Island meets at the Farm Centre at 7:30 p.m.
- Mar. 18 - The Piping Plover Guardian Workshop will be held at the Ravenwood Island Nature Trust's boardroom on the Agricultural Research Station off Mount Edward Road. The meeting is scheduled from 10 am to 2 pm.
- Mar. 31 - The deadline for the receipt of nominations for the Island Nature Trust's Natural Areas Award. This award celebrates the work of individuals or organizations who have contributed in a significant way