**[Christian Cooper](https://www.facebook.com/christian.cooper1?__cft__%5b0%5d=AZXNVHbuSThdR_VVw4mpfPwCeI0Q5COETphDxeqhGzCVKn-0F6Qo8c2s1rW6AFU4gJmK7cAHnLnVcT6a_bq9gc7gMcG5rekx3CCtKm6MC7iSbOC35YCT0P6HMixTsXR1YuRY1djORhtU6PNSPNRrsqHGLJ3XaiRkyMaSq3Q9UgYKQqiXijfh3Jo2y7aB6DDGUlQ&__tn__=-UC%2CP-y-R" \t "_blank) on Facebook Nov 2023**

**About Removing People’s Names from Bird Names**

A FINAL NOTE to the dwindling few \*still\* upset that bird names will be changing to remove the names of people, and a response to their fallacies:

1. "Stability in names is important."

Yes, it is. And yet common names for birds change all the time--from Marsh Hawk to Northern Harrier, from Baltimore Oriole to Northern Oriole and then back to Baltimore Oriole, etc., etc. These have not caused you to have a meltdown. Ask yourself why this change is so bothersome f

or you.

2. "It erases history."

We don't have a Hitler's Warbler, but we still know who he was and what he did. The history will still be there, whether deemed good or ill; just the name will no longer be attached to a bird...which actually is truer to history, because these birds were around and most of them known to humanity well before some explorer of European ancestry who "discovered" it slapped someone's name on it.

3. "It's performative."

No; performative would be if birding groups started every meeting with "We acknowledge that some of the names used for some birds may be historically painful to some people..." and then did nothing to change the names. The names are actually changing. No, this is not a cure-all for the racial disparities in birding. But it's a welcome and welcoming step \*\*\*in the eyes of us who have not always felt welcome in the field.\*\*\*

4. "It will lead to other performative acts in science."

See #3. But beyond that, this is a classic slippery slope argument: We should not do A, because it sets a precedent that might lead to Z ("If we allow gay marriage, people will want to marry their dogs next!")...when in fact, doing A should be evaluated on its own merits, because no one can predict the future. After all, if we let Black men vote, then for god's sake, women might be next, or the U.S. might end up with a Black president someday! Heaven forbid.

5. "It's a capitulation to woke ideology.”

Translation for those who don’t speak Fox News: “Anything that isn’t centered on my experience as a white / male / heterosexual / Christian person must be eliminated, regardless of its merits, because change is scary.”

[Subtext: To assist in the fear mongering, here are some red-button terms we’ve workshopped for you--"woke," "War on Xmas," etc.--to use to help rally the base.]

BOTTOM LINE: Non-white people--birders and prospective birders--are excited by this. White birders age 9 to 99, but whose years haven’t calcified their perspectives, are excited by this. Folks I've encountered in the field are getting excited thinking of new bird names. \*\*\*And excitement and engagement, from many more people of all backgrounds, is exactly what the birds need from us if we're going to turn things around for them.\*\*\*

VERY BOTTOM LINE: You'll get over it. But if not, if the "diktat" on bird names permanently wounds you, by all means, cling to the old names; find a dark corner and lick those wounds. The rest of the world will move on, and we will bird in the sunlight.