

## EDITORIAL

For nearly twenty-five years, *The Chat* has thrived under the effective editorial leadership of Eloise Potter. Now *The Chat* is recognized widely as a reputable journal of regional ornithology. Notes appearing in *The Chat* are abstracted regularly into the national ornithological journals of the United States, Great Britain, and Australia.

Given this appreciation of our status, and some historical sense of how it was achieved, it is with an overwhelming sense of responsibility and humility that I assume the office of editor. My primary goal is to maintain the quality of the journal that all of the membership has strived to achieve. This cannot be done without a great deal of help.

Fortunately, many of the people who have been important in getting *The Chat* to where it is today will continue to assist as they have in the past. Will Post will continue as South Carolina General Field Notes editor, and Harry LeGrand will continue to edit the Briefs for the Files and serve as Southern Atlantic Coast Regional editor for *American Birds*. Dave Lee has agreed to resume his former position of General Field Notes editor for North Carolina beginning with the next issue.

There will also be some changes in the upcoming issues. Both Gail Whitehurst and Louis Fink have expressed a desire to discontinue their respective departments of Backyard Birding and CBC Roundtable. Their reasons are remarkably similar. Both departments were created to provide the membership with an opportunity to have "non-professional" input into the journal. Participation in this avenue of expression has declined over the years, to the point where neither editor feels it is worth continuing. I am accepting their advice with a great deal of reluctance. Any suggestions for ways to re-establish this outlet, and more importantly, any volunteers to take on the duties of carrying it out will be given careful consideration.

As in all areas of science, it is not possible to construct generalizations and draw conclusions without factual observations. While it is obvious that *The Chat* depends upon the staff whose names appear on the masthead to present a journal that is both scientifically valid and of popular interest, it is equally dependent upon the contributions of the hundreds of members who submit their careful and accurate observations. Keep sending in your observations; *The Chat* cannot survive without them.