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In Memory of Olin Sewall Pettingill

Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr., Ph.D., renowned ornithologist and teacher, passed away December 11, 2001, in Bedford, Texas. He was 94.

Dr. Pettingill was born in Belgrade, Maine, on October 30, 1907. He graduated from Bowdoin College in 1930 and received a Ph.D. from Cornell University in 1933. Honorary doctor of science degrees were awarded by Bowdoin college in 1956, Colby College in 1979 and the University of Maine in 1982.

Dr. Pettingill taught ornithology at Carleton College for 17 years and at the University of Michigan Biological Station for 35 summers. He was director of the famed Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University from 1960 to 1973. Pettingill served on the National Audubon Society Board of Directors for 19 years.

Among the books written by Dr. Pettingill are the classic textbook Ornithology in Laboratory and Field (1939) and his two-volume work, A Guide to Bird Finding East of the Mississippi (1951) and A Guide to Bird Finding West of the Mississippi (1953). The latter two works were the first of their kind to give specific information on when and where to find different species of birds in the contiguous 48 states.

Dr. Pettingill lectured regularly for the National Audubon Society until 1978. A distinguished wildlife photographer, his camera work took him all over the world, and his photography can be seen in numerous popular Walt Disney nature documentaries.

In 1945 Dr. Pettingill did research in Nebraska on Whooping Cranes and was made an honorary member of the NOU in 1947.