



Peterson views birds through a pair of his ever-present binoculars. Below is a scarlet tanager painting by Peterson.

allowed one to photograph in color.

Peterson realized this and at age 13 bought his first camera, a Primo No. 9 4x5 plate camera, and a 4 power LeMaure opera glass from an advertisement

in *Bird Lore*. It is hard to believe that a young lad 13 years old should have had the perspicacity to realize that these comparatively unused and unknown instruments — in the milieu in which he lived — would be helpful to him. One can imagine how much newspaper delivery money he must have accumulated to pay for these treasures. At this same time he bought a bird guide by Chester Reed to assist him in his quest.

I have a very much worn Chester A. Reed *Bird Guide: Land Birds East of the Rockies from Parrots to Bluebirds* which my father bought me in Mexico City when I lived there as a little girl. I came quite familiar with the pretty illustrations of the birds in color as well

as with the accompanying text, which included the bird's song, its nest and its range.

The content of this book was unique for that period, but it was miniscule in comparison to the vast extant field of bird species. Peterson craved to know much, much more about the myriad birds about him.

Having a bountiful spirit of sharing and helping others, he had been a teacher of art and natural history at Rivers School in Brookline, Mass., from 1931-34. There he received a "Teacher of the Year" and "Golden Award" from the American Association of School Administrators. Peterson was determined to create a bird guide that would be so clear that it might help all bird lovers to identify the birds more easily and accurately.

Every bird has its own very particular characteristics that might be hard to detect by a novice, be it hundreds of feet away up a tree, or be it on one's window sill. These characteristics might resemble those of another bird, but not quite, a diversity an amateur would hardly notice yet which would make all the difference in the world. In order to help the beginning bird watcher, Peterson would place on the same page of his new guide book a number of small birds, allowing the watcher to use visual clues to compare and eliminate incorrect choices. To help the contrast between species, the birds are pictured in the same pose.

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