



# THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA PRESS

1005 North Palm Road  
Tucson, Arizona 85719

Telephone 624-8181 Ext. 507-8-9  
Area Code: 602

November 20, 1964

Mr. Eliot Porter  
Route 4, Box 33  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Dear Mr. Porter:

Dr. Cross has asked me to answer the technical aspects of your criticisms of the reproduction of some of the transparencies you provided for THE BIRDS OF ARIZONA.

First, let me say that as the designer I was impressed and delighted with the dramatic nature of the pictures, but as Production Manager I had serious misgivings about the reproducibility of most of them. However, the authors wanted the birds and seemed less concerned with technical aspects.

The reaction of ornithologists, birdwatchers, booksellers, and reviewers who have seen the volume has been unanimously and enthusiastically favorable toward the dramatic quality of the reproduction and the pictures as pictures. It is this quality which sets the book apart from the usual trite and orthodox regional bird book, and which renders technical flaws unimportant. In fact, the technical objections are only known to you, the authors, and the publishers! For this reason, the reputation of Eliot Porter will be enhanced, not damaged, by this publication!

Now for some of the specific complaints:

The owl, hummingbird, and oriole you say are "turned on their sides" were so placed as the designer's prerogative because they look better that way, and were so approved by the authors.

With the exception of the Rock Wren, the examples cited as being "badly out of register" are, in fact, OK in the edition run. The copy you received is apparently one of a few which slipped by the inspection.

All of the examples noted as being "much too dark," plus a majority of other pictures, are actually improvements over the transparencies which exceed the 3.00 limit on the densometer scale. When you consider that Eastman Kodak's recommended range for transparency reproduction is 0.35 in highlights to 2.65 in shadows, and that the optimum range for printing within this 2.30 limit is only 1.90, it is remarkable that the pictures reproduced as well as they did!



Careful re-examination and comparison shows that, within the above mechanical limitations, near-perfect reproduction was achieved for the White-winged Dove, Screech Owl, Rivoli's HB, Blue-throated HB, Violet-crowned HB, Arizona Woodpecker, and Red-starts; that all of the others cited are better than the transparencies insofar as density is concerned, but that the printer did run a trifle heavy on the magenta for the Phainopepla, Pyrrhuloxia, and the four warblers. However, variations in lighting can account for differences in appearance, as you know, and this is the way the printed pictures are interpreted.

Incidentally, Allan Phillips requested some color corrections which we made to produce what he felt was a more desirable color than that in certain transparencies. Gale Monson also modified one or two. These corrections we made as best we could within the limitations noted above.

Perhaps with unlimited time and funds we could have proceeded in such a way that you, the authors, the sponsor, our administration, and the publisher could all have been satisfied. This would require printing each picture individually and obtaining agreement from all parties concerned on the precise values during each stage of reproduction.

Since we were limited by funds, by time, and our situation was almost unbelievably complicated by having one author in Thailand, one in Mexico City, one in Washington, a sponsor in Martha's Vineyard, an artist in Oklahoma, a photographer in New Mexico, and several vitally interested members of the UA administration all to be satisfied, we simply had to reduce our approval responsibility to Phillips and Monson. We only had seven months from raw manuscript to delivery at the Tucson meetings of the Audubon Society to do a job which should take a year or a year and a half.

All things considered, we honestly think THE BIRDS OF ARIZONA is a real contribution, and that the Eliot Porter illustrations add to the prestige of the book and of the photographer.

So that you may re-evaluate the reproductions I am returning under separate cover 44 of the 51 transparencies used in the book. The other seven will be forwarded as soon as possible. They are now in use at: National Geographic, Texas Nighthawk EK14-1-1-2; rotogravure Sunday supplement Arizona Republic for feature article on the book Nov. 29, Black-chinned HB, EK14-3-1-13, Violet-green Swallow EK 15-8-2-22, Jays AN15-3-7-7, Hooded Oriole H15-5-6-2, and Western Tanager AN15-7-2-42; TUCSONORA magazine for a feature on the book this month, Roadrunner AN12-1-2-34. We are also sending



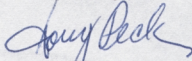
Mr. Porter

-3-

11-20-64

you another copy of the book to replace the imperfect copy you apparently received. We trust your re-appraisal will prove to be more in line with ours, and that you will find THE BIRDS OF ARIZONA to be a real booster for your work.

Sincerely,



Douglas A. Peck  
Design-Production Manager

DAP:ks

