

## Obituary



### **Edward D. Greaves, M.D**

**1931-2013**

The Central Valley has lost one of its favorite and best known birders with the passing of Ed Greaves. On July 21, 2013, he died peacefully at his home in Carmichael, CA, surrounded by family, following a short course with an incurable cancer. He leaves behind his beloved Lynne, wife of 57 years; his 3 children Paul, Mark, and Jean; and two granddaughters, Claire and Ingrid. He also leaves behind scores of birding friends. He is already missed.

Born April 15, 1931, in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, he graduated from Lafayette College and Temple University Medical School. A board-certified pediatrician, he practiced first in the US Navy, then in private practice, and spent the next 22 years with Kaiser-Permanente in Sacramento and Roseville until his retirement in 1994. Ed took up birding in 1958, and followed it with a passion. A proud lister, he was the first person in the Sacramento area to reach the milestones of 700, 750, and then 800 recognized American Birding Association (ABA) species. Ed was an avid local, state, ABA, and world birder; his final totals were 824 for the ABA, 559 for California, and over 3,300 for the world. He had visited and birded all seven continents. Moreover, he was an

avid photographer and had thousands of slides, including 730 North American species. Ed and Lynne were the regular hosts of slideshows over the years for birders sharing their photography.

What Ed referred to as "the emotional peak of all my birding encounters" occurred on Attu Island, Alaska on May 30, 1986. While photographing what had been thought to have been three Red-necked stints, Ed saw through his camera lens that two were Spoon-billed sandpipers instead! His photographs of these endangered rarities are still circulating today. Ed never bragged about such things, but he did proudly brag about Lynne, who patiently crafted her prize-winning weaving when she was not accompanying Ed on some of his birding adventures.

I knew Ed as a professional colleague, a mentor, and birding companion. Ed was a very modest man. He would not approve of my calling him a near-saint, but that would be true. It is worth noting that, when asked how often he had called in sick to work, Ed responded that he never had, not even once. He considered the care of sick children more important than his own well-being. I never heard Ed say a harsh word about anyone (politicians don't count) nor complain, ever, about anything. Once when we dined on a birding outing, the waiter brought him the wrong entree. Instead of complaining, he ate the hamburger instead of salmon. He politely objected only when the bill charged him for the salmon. When the manager told us our meals would be free, Ed said no, the food was fine, and we would gladly pay for what we got. And he left a good tip. That was Ed.

Ed's thousands of birding slides will go on. They have been donated to the National Audubon Society, where they will be scanned into its permanent collection.

It was Ed's wish that any remembrance left in his name should go to The Nature Conservancy.

**Gil Ewing**