



About Our Cover

This 1935 watercolor of a male ivory-billed woodpecker (*Campephilus principalis*) was sketched by George Miksch Sutton from a living, wild bird in the Singer Tract of northeastern Louisiana. By the early 1930s, many considered the ivory-billed woodpecker extinct in the United States, and the last evidence in Louisiana was from 1899. In 1932, Mason Spencer shot an ivory-bill near the Singer Tract to confirm the existence of the species. This news brought Arthur Allan, Paul Kellogg, George Sutton, and James Tanner from Cornell to the Singer Tract, where they “rediscovered” ivory-bills. James Tanner returned in 1937 to conduct the only detailed study of the species. Efforts were made by the Audubon Society to have the Singer Tract designated a protected wildlife refuge. Driven by profit and greed, the Chicago Mill and Lumber Company accelerated its logging of Singer. The Audubon Society’s efforts failed, and the last ivory-billed woodpecker was observed at the Singer Tract in 1944. More discussion on the ivory-bills can be found in this month’s Feature Article by James J. Krupa, “Scientific Method & Evolutionary Theory Elucidated by the Ivory-billed Woodpecker Story.” (Watercolor courtesy of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.)

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