**Listening for patterns in how songbirds present their song repertoires.** By now, your ears are well tuned for fine listening. With every singing bird, you will subconsciously listen to the pattern in each song, comparing it to the next, and the next, wondering exactly how the bird is moving through whatever songs he knows. You will be listening for a unique song (a “handle”) that you are confident you will recognize if you hear it again, and you will pause long enough to get a sense of at least the short-term use of that particular song. You will linger more often, wondering when such a unique song might recur, perhaps even staying with a singing bird for hours on end. Without even thinking, you will be asking questions, and answering many of them, more and more effortlessly exploring the world of birdsong. It’s a good life!

Fifty years ago I knew a graduate student, coincidentally named Robin, who was going to “do” reptiles because everything was known about birds. I have friends who are “doing” butterflies or dragonflies because they have “done” birds. Now, there’s nothing wrong with reptiles, butterflies, or dragonflies, of course, but the birds I know offer limitless opportunities, with so little known about them!