

Bob Stottlemeyer, at the NPS Great Lakes Area Research Studies Unit, sends us the Spring issue of *Bulletin of the Ecological Society of America*, containing an article by Sam Iker, reprinted from MOSAIC – the institutional publication of the National Science Foundation.

Entitled "A Lifetime of Listening," the article enum-

erates the advantages of long-term ecological research and makes the case for how these seeming y unrelated studies actually "are linked by a common thread." The scientists involved, Iker writes, "are among the handful who have spent decades seeking to decipher that 'vast, pulsing harmony' whose rhythms, as Aldo Leopold put it, span not only the seconds but also the centuries."

There are signs, according to Iker, that the importance of continuity in ecological research is now being recognized by the scientific establishment. He describes a newly launched pilot program sponsored by the NSF — a network of 11 long-term ecological study sites established across the United States and containing a variety of ecosystems, from alpine tundra to oak savanna to freshwater swamp. Each site has a coordinating investigator, a site director, and a number of researchers from various disciplines who will focus on key aspects of the particular ecosystem. Whether or not this "golden opportunity" is seized, says Iker, depends on how many young scientists come to believe in long-term ecological research as "a new frontier."