

WESTERN FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS
WFO 2018 Conference, Ventura, California
26 - 30 September, 2018
Youth Scholarship Recipients



The WFO Youth Scholarships are made possible by the generous contributions from the Pasadena Audubon Society honoring the memory of Mike San Miguel, the Sierra Foothills Audubon Society, the Buena Vista Audubon Society, and individual contributions from WFO members.

Andrew

Age: 11

Grade: 6th

From: Colorado

About Me: I am an eleven-year-old ornithologist and I am excited to learn new things and talk to ornithologists at the 2018 WFO conference in California.

Essay Excerpt: I am in the field birding a great deal of time. Arriving eight hours early, only getting 4 hours of sleep, and almost running into a lion in the morning was definitely something I did and would still do, to go birding. I've helped lead field groups all night long from sundown to sunup, and, while we are having a great time, we also learn about birds... at one in the morning!



Lucas

Age: 12

Grade: 7th

From: California

About Me: Observing, photographing, and recording birds is so much fun and has taught me so much about our incredibly complex ecosystems!

Essay Excerpt: I worked with a team of Middle and High School birders to do a year-long study of a restored section of Napa Creek. We visited the creek twice a month and completed 8-minute surveys. We presented our data to the Water Management Board and they gave us a standing ovation for demonstrating the impact of the restoration on bird diversity in downtown Napa!



Sierra

Age: 12

Grade: 7th

From: California

About Me: I'm a bird nerd, and I also like dinosaurs. I like to go birdwatching and draw birds.

Essay Excerpt: When I see a rare bird, one that I have been wanting to see for a long time, or a really cool bird, I get some feelings, like excitement, that comes over me. I had that feeling when I saw a Philippine Megapode on Turtle Island in Borneo. The reason why I wanted to see them for three years was because of their unique evolutionary adaptation. The hens lay their eggs in rotting leaf-litter and trot away, leaving the eggs to hatch in the warmth of the earth.



Aaron

Age: 12

Grade: 7th

From: California

About Me: I have been birding since I was 7 years old and I love spending time out in nature.

Essay Excerpt: And so that next night we went owling. That night was one of the most exciting of my life. Throughout the entire hike we heard the calls of Western Screech-Owls but they wouldn't show themselves. We were about to give up hope as we were nearing the parking lot, when we heard a very loud, unmistakable call of a screech owl. This time we were able to see it.



Zarah

Age: 12

Grade: 7th

From: Alaska

About Me: You can call me Zarah (like Sarah but with a Z). I enjoy being outdoors and I like hiking, biking, and most of all birding.

Essay Excerpt: My interest in larger birds is from the times I've gotten to watch them. It is inspiring to see a bird swoop down to catch their prey and shoot back up into the sky as though they were never down. My most memorable experience was a time on a fishing boat in Prince William Sound. As a salmon carcass was being tossed overboard, an Eagle swooped down from the treetops and grabbed the fish bones just as they were hitting the water. It was awe inspiring watching such a large bird move with such speed and grace.



Waker

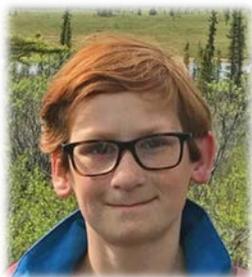
Age: 14

Grade: 8th

From: Alaska

About Me: Birds have interested me ever since I was five, and it is one of my dreams to go to Antarctica to study Penguins. In my spare time I ski-jor with my sled dogs.

Essay Excerpt: In fifth grade, I did a science fair project studying the migration pattern of the Chena River duck population. I chose this experiment because I was concerned that the ducks were not migrating south because people were feeding them. I visited the duck's nesting area near the energy plant in Fairbanks that keeps portions of the river unfrozen year-round. I found that people feed the ducks daily giving them no reason to migrate.



Amaya

Age: 16

Grade: 11th

From: California

About Me: I have always been interested in birds but got involved with serious birding about a year ago. Since then, learning about birds has become one of the most important parts of my life.

Essay Excerpt: Yet there is so much else that can be learned by watching birds as well. There is the complete, almost instinctual, thrill at taking in their sheer diversity and beauty. The mechanics of the natural world around us are fascinating on both a minuscule and massive level, and the more we can learn about that, the more we can learn how to coexist with our environment. I believe one of the best ways to make this connection is through birds.



Santi

Age: 15

Grade: 9th

From: Colorado

About Me: I've been watching birds since before I can remember. I am also a volunteer at a local bird banding station.

Essay Excerpt: My favorite habitat for birding is a riparian or ocean area, just something with water. I love the ocean and enjoy looking through the swarms of shorebirds, but unfortunately Colorado has no ocean. At the moment I am slowly working toward doing something about window strikes at my school, a somewhat common occurrence in the building which is right next to a small marsh area.

