

Western Field Ornithologists Newsletter

and Meeting Update for Summer 2007

32nd Annual Meeting Update

Our 32nd annual meeting, set for Las Vegas, Nevada, September 27 - 30, 2007 is shaping up beautifully with thanks to our local hosts, Red Rock Audubon Society (RRAS). The meeting will be held at Sam's Town Hotel, 5111 Boulder Highway, Las Vegas, Nevada, 702-456-7777, www.samstownlv.com. There are a limited number of rooms available for the meeting, so **make your reservations now**. The cost of rooms for the meeting is structured somewhat differently than we are used to, but quite the norm for Las Vegas: \$39.00 per night for Sunday through Thursday and \$99.00 per night for Friday, and Saturday, thus averaging \$79.00 per night for the meeting. There is also a fully developed RV campsite at the hotel that includes all hook ups for \$25.53 per night, incl. tax, for a vehicle 37' or less. The hotel also provides wireless Internet for \$9.99 per day. And, upon request, the hotel will provide a small refrigerator in your room for \$10.00 per night.

Bring the family. Sam's Town is a self-contained resort and has everything, including a bowling alley, movie theater, pools, day spa, shopping, family activities and free transportation to other locations in the Vegas area, so think about bringing your family. No breakfasts or lunches will be on the registration form this year since the hotel has numerous places to have a meal that cater to every budget. Bag lunches will be available for an extra fee for the all-day field trips.

Registration. We are trying a new twist on registration this year — we will not be mailing out registration forms. Instead, the registration form will be available on our website. If you require, we will mail a copy of the registration form upon special request. You may also register via the Internet. We do not yet have a secure server, so if you would like to charge the expense of the meeting with either your VISA or MasterCard you will have to confer with our registrar. We have endeavored to keep the costs of registration down but the march of time and inflation affects us all. You will notice slight increases. Please keep in mind that registration will be accepted beginning now, but if you register between July 1 and August 1 your electronic acknowledgement will not come until after August 1. Robbie Fischer will be our registrar this year and she can be reached at robbie22@pacbell.net.

Field Trips. Je Anne Branca of RRAS and Ted Floyd of WFO have endeavored to describe the various field trips and expected birds for you. This information will be posted on the WFO and Red Rock websites. Je Anne, the field trip chair for this meeting, has put together a cross section of the best birding locations in the region with local leaders who know these locations. The local leaders will be teamed with the WFO stalwarts, so keep your eyes on the website for descriptions of the field trips.

Meeting Activities. Included in your registration will be our afternoon field ornithology science sessions, coordinated by Debbie VanDooremolen of RRAS, the welcoming reception, an incredible book signing event (see description below), the experts' sounds panel, photographic identification panel, a presentation by the authors of the *Atlas of Nevada's Breeding Birds*, a great silent auction, and the camaraderie for which WFO is well known.

Keynote Address. Gracing our keynote stage this year will be Chris Elphick. Chris was a co-author on the team that wrote the *Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Nevada*. Formerly a Nevadan, Chris is now at the University of Connecticut. He is also the co-author, with Barney Dunning, of the *Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior*. Our thanks go to the Great Basin Bird Observatory, which is co-sponsoring the expenses of our keynote speaker.

Workshops. Associated with this meeting will be two off-site workshops and one onsite workshop available for further developing your field ornithology skills. Friday's workshops will be a banding and mist-netting workshop with Chris Dodge of the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation (limited to 15 people) AND a workshop on monitoring night migration with Andrew Farnsworth and Michael Powers of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (see details on website). The banding workshop will begin a half hour before dawn at 5 a.m. somewhere in the Clark County Wetlands/Las Vegas Wash area and last for 5 hours. The workshop on monitoring nocturnal migration will begin at 8 a.m. The Saturday off-site workshop will be with John Klicka of the University of Nevada Las Vegas and UNLV's Barrick Museum. Limited to 20 people, this hands-on workshop will be devoted to the uses of study skins and their preparation.

Book Signing. There will be a book-signing party in conjunction with this year's meeting in Las Vegas. A great many friends of WFO have published books in 2007. We are planning on having the signing because many of the authors will be in attendance this year: John Dunn (*Field Guide to the Birds of North America, Warblers, Birds of the Los Angeles Region*), Ted Floyd, Chris Elphick, Gram Chisholm, Elisabeth Ammon (*Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Nevada*), Dan Gibson (*Birds of the Aleutians*), Robb Hamilton, Richard Erickson, Michael Patton (*Rare Birds of California*), Steve Howell (*Gulls of the Americas*),

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Alan Contreras (*Birds of Lane County, Oregon, Birds of Oregon: A General Reference*); Jay Withgott (*Environment: The Science Behind the Stories*), and Kimball Garrett (*Warblers, Birds of the Los Angeles Region*). Many others responsible for earlier important ornithology works and monographs from the West may be present, too, and this is your opportunity to buy your copy, pick up the newest editions, or have those you own already signed. Watch the website for a list of authors and titles.

Vendors and Organizations. You are welcome to display at a WFO meeting. Space is limited, so let us know early if you plan on coming. Please contact Pam Nickels, Red Rock president, at ImaBirdwatcher@cox.net to make arrangements.

Silent Auction. Pam Nickels of Red Rock Audubon is organizing a silent auction for Saturday evening, September 29. She's lining up some wonderful items. Think about contacting Pam and donating an auction item or items. Services, new books, hard-to-find used books, new outdoor-related clothing items, subscriptions, memberships, a weekend at your vacation home, a privately led birding tour. Pam's contact is ImaBirdwatcher@cox.net.

You can leave your hat on... We are noticing some definitely faded or worn WFO hats wandering around out there. If you are interested in purchasing a new one for \$17.00 please indicate so on the registration form and include payment with your registration. The hats will be navy blue with the Sabine's gull logo. Your hat, if pre-ordered, will be in your registration packet. For those of you who cannot attend, we'll gladly mail your hat but it will cost \$21.00 after shipping and handling. Contact Robbie Fischer, our registrar, at robbie22@pacbell.net. Availability will be limited.

Bowling for laughs. Don't laugh. Sam's has a wonderful bowling alley. Just in case you are interested in doing a little bowling, we've reserved two lanes at Sam's town for Friday night after the book signing reception. What can we say? It sounded like great fun when we were arranging the meeting. Let Cat Waters know if you have any interest or want to put together your own challenge team. cpannellwaters@yahoo.com. If there is no interest we'll turn the lanes back Aug. 15.

Fundraising Field Trips. WFO will offer pre- and post-meeting fundraising field trips in conjunction with the meeting in Las Vegas, to benefit our scholarship fund for young ornithologists. One trip will be to the Death Valley region, another to southern Utah, and a third will be a loop of Nevada migration hot spots beyond Clark County. These trips will be handled separately from the meeting registration. They will be carpooled field trips with WFO leaders and include hotels/motels, on-the-road breakfasts, morning and afternoon snacks, and dinners. These trips will be offered using our new comprehensive field trip policy and no registration may begin until the trip is posted on the website — in this case, after June 20. Contact Cat Waters at cpannellwaters@yahoo.com.

Optics: There will be an optics vendor on site for this meeting. They will also participate in the field trips. If you have a particular item that you would like to see in action or trial contact Pam Nickels, imabirdwatcher@comcast.net and she'll send you their pre-meeting contact info so you can ask them to bring your special request along.

Member and Board News

WFO Volunteers. WFO has a wonderful volunteer working board and a fleet of equally wonderful volunteers that make our meetings, *Western Birds*, and our field trips possible. They work very hard to keep the organization alive and headed in a forward direction. Photo selection and photo editing, assembling *Western Birds*, reviewing *Western Birds*, writing book reviews, fundraising, organizing the meetings, maintaining the website, membership outreach, sketches and photographic contributions to *Western Birds*. So, remember when you look at or read any part of *Western Birds*, the WFO newsletter, attend our annual meetings, or go on a WFO field trip that you are in the company of WFO volunteers. And conversely, each of those volunteers is delighted that you are a member. If you would like to volunteer for a special committee, work on meetings, or have other ideas, please contact any WFO board member.

WFO Youth. It has always been our policy to welcome all young people from local high schools and junior high schools to our annual meeting science sessions at no cost. We have need of donations (large or small accepted happily) in order to offer full scholarships for the entire meeting for young field ornithologists or bird-interested youth at WFO's annual meeting this year. If you are interested in being a part of ensuring interest in western field ornithology into the future, send your donation to this specific scholarship fund to Robbie Fischer. She can be contacted at robbie21@pacbell.net.

More Youth. Western Field Ornithologists is looking for a volunteer to chair and coordinate a simple outreach program for interested- in-field ornithology youth of Junior High and Senior High school age. The job will be simple and involve about 5 or six hours a month. It will include: identifying and contacting local area programs to promote youth attendance at our meetings; composing a 3-time a year newsletter aimed at that group; and seeking out local leadership to participate in a once- or twice-a-year special youth field trip for that area. This volunteer coordinator would have the entire WFO board as their contact for help, advice and contacts. Please contact Robbie Fischer, robbie21@pacbell.net and copy to Kimball Garrett, kgarrett@nhm.org.

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