

## Western Field Ornithologists Newsletter for Winter 2007

### Hello, WFO Members!

Our 31<sup>st</sup> annual meeting in Boulder, Colorado, was fantastic. Ted Floyd and Kei Sochi did an excellent job of planning and arranging the meeting, with the help of local supporters who lent expertise on every level. Nature cooperated by bringing us a full range of Colorado birds, from ptarmigans and rosy finches atop the high peaks of the Rockies to longspurs and shorebirds on the open plains. The local field trip leaders were unstintingly generous with their time and expertise. Our science sessions, planned and coordinated by Jay Withgott, were fascinating. The expert panels were fun and informative, and participants left both the digiscoping and sound identification workshops with new or enhanced field skills.

In Boulder, WFO welcomed three new members to the Board of Directors: Elisabeth Ammon, director of the Great Basin Bird Observatory; Carol Beardmore of the Fish and Wildlife Service in Arizona; and Jon Dunn, renowned author, ornithologist, and tour leader. Dave Krueper was elected president for a two-year term. Catherine Waters was elected vice-president for a two-year term, Robbie Fischer was re-elected to the post of treasurer, and Jean Brandt was re-elected to the post of recording secretary.

### Plan now to attend our 32nd Annual meeting slated for the Las Vegas, Nevada, region, September 27-30, 2007

WFO will next be traveling to the Land of Neon and the Desert National Wildlife Range — Clark County, Nevada. Southern Nevada, around Las Vegas, is a region where the year-round bird list surpasses the bird lists of many U.S. states. Join WFO and local host Red Rock Audubon during the height of fall migration, and enjoy exciting birding in the mix of mountains, lakes, and lowlands where the Mojave Desert and the Great Basin converge.

Full-day and half-day field trips will include such legendary migrant traps and wetland hotspots as Corn Creek, Pahrnagat, Lake Mead, Red Rock Canyon, Henderson Sewage Ponds, etc. Pre-meeting and post-meeting 3-day, 2-night fundraising field trips will include guided loops through southern Utah, central Nevada, northern Arizona, and eastern California.

Sam's Town Hotel in Henderson will be our base of operations for the entire meeting, and all field trips will depart from this location. Restaurants serving meals 24 hours a day will be steps away. Those with campers can reserve and stay in the campground associated with the hotel. This will be the perfect location to bring your entire family. September is a popular time of year in this part of Nevada, so consider reserving early. Keep an eye on the WFO website for reservations and registration information (about April 1, 2007). If you are a vendor or non-profit interested in having a table at the meeting, we would love to have you; contact Red Rock Audubon president Pam Nickels at [imabirdwatcher@cox.net](mailto:imabirdwatcher@cox.net).

### On the road with WFO

Tom Ryan, chair of the WFO field trips committee, has been hard at work writing a comprehensive field trip policy so that knowledge of our trips is more widely distributed. It is in the final draft stage and will be posted on the website soon. We are working on a few U.S. and international field trips to be available in 2007/2008, including short 3-day carpool trips to various Nevada, California, Utah, and Arizona hotspots. Information on these trips will be available with the meeting registration.

WFO also wants to explore the possibility of helping to organize "Working Trips" or scientific expeditions in which interested and qualified WFO members would help collect observational and other bird data. These trips would mostly be to remote, rugged areas of Mexico to do species and subspecies observation and data collection. They would require a high level of tolerance for strenuous hiking, heat, and primitive conditions, as well as a willingness to follow exact protocols expected on a scientific expedition. If this sounds appealing to you, send a brief e-mail of interest to Carol at [Carol\\_Beardmore@fws.gov](mailto:Carol_Beardmore@fws.gov).

We will be evaluating the response and then organizing possible trips.

### WFO publications update

Publication is nearing for *Rare Birds of California*. The book's primary editor, Robb Hamilton, and his co editors, Richard Erickson and Michael Patten, have done a wonderful, wonderful job. The book includes every decision from the CBRC since its inception through 2003, along with an appendix that includes important records from 2004 - 2006. Over 100 sketches and photos, historical and contemporary, document the records — and also document the irrepressible California birding community. As soon as the artist puts the final touches on the cover we'll post a copy of the color front, back, and spine on the website, [www.wfo-cbrc.org](http://www.wfo-cbrc.org), along with an order form. The cover artist, Peter Gaede, did a wonderful job of drawing and designing the cover for us.

*Bird Species of Special Concern* is also about to be published. A combined effort of the California Department of Fish and Game, Western Field Ornithologists, and PRBO Conservation Science (formerly Point Reyes Bird Observatory),

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the monograph will be a must-have tool for field ornithologists, planners, and conservationists. This effort identifies a list of California's at-risk birds that are of immediate conservation concern. Full-length species accounts (with maps) document the distribution; abundance; threats; and management, research, and monitoring needs for the 63 species, subspecies, or distinct populations included on the list. Please watch the WFO website, [www.wfo-cbrc.org](http://www.wfo-cbrc.org), for ordering information.

**Envision your name here:** WFO is seeking original monographs, manuscripts, and research papers in field ornithology from throughout the West, including Mexico, Canada, and the Pacific. Complete information for submission is on our website, [www.wfo-cbrc.org](http://www.wfo-cbrc.org), but if you have questions feel free to e-mail Dave Shuford and/or Kathy Molina. Be patient; these are two busy people and it takes them a bit of time to get around to their mail.

**See your artwork in print:** If you are interested in submitting your photographs or black-and-white sketches of birds for publication in *Western Birds* contact Peter La Tourrette, *Western Birds* photo editor, at [petelat1@stanford.edu](mailto:petelat1@stanford.edu). For guidelines see <http://www.wfo-cbrc.org/journal.html>.

## Member and Board News

WFO welcomes to the fold its newest member, Andrew Floyd. Andrew joins his sister Hannah as one of the youngest birders in Colorado. Born in December to Ted Floyd and Kei Sochi, Andrew apparently still relies on his father for help in listing his birds, but this is a temporary inconvenience.

Jon. L. Dunn and Jonathan Alderfer announce the availability of the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition of the *National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America*. Birders and fans of the previous four editions have been enthusiastic in their praise of the 5th. The text and maps have been completely reworked and there is considerable new artwork. All of the North American accidentals are included. Up to the moment of printing, this edition included all of the species ever recorded in North America.

Steve Howell's newest contribution to field ornithology, *Gulls of the Americas*, is available for advance orders. This hardcover photographic guide to gulls is expected for the Spring of 2007. It can be previewed at the Houghton Mifflin website and preordered at a number of outlets.

Finally, one of the most highly anticipated ornithological books for this year: Daniel Gibson announces that *Birds of the Aleutian Islands, Alaska*, "is finally and literally, in press." Because the monograph's length was deemed too long for an AOU Monograph, this book represents the first collaborative effort of AOU Monographs and the Nuttall Ornithological Club, and is scheduled to be published in early 2007. Keep your eyes on our website for further information.

**The WFO nominating committee wants to hear from you:** We will have three new Board openings in 2007! WFO welcomes your input on potential new candidates for the Western Field Ornithologists' Board of Directors. Our board terms are 3 years, for a maximum of 2 terms. Our all-volunteer, working board makes a time commitment to the organization. If you or someone you know would be "perfect" for this, please send the candidate's name, qualifications, and contact information to the WFO nomination committee, chaired by Gjon Hazard, [gjon\\_hazard@fws.gov](mailto:gjon_hazard@fws.gov), and cc: to committee members Tom Ryan, [wtswift@aol.com](mailto:wtswift@aol.com), and Jay Withgott, [withgott@nasw.org](mailto:withgott@nasw.org).

**Lifetime membership:** WFO offers a lifetime membership for \$500.00 that can be deferred over two years. Just think about having that wonderful little jewel of a journal landing in your mailbox for life — and keep in mind that the gift of *Western Birds* and WFO membership can be the perfect present for those hard-to-buy-for people. Contact Robbie Fischer, [robbie22@pacbell.net](mailto:robbie22@pacbell.net).

**Getting to Know Us, Getting to Know You:** In the future we are hoping to highlight WFO's small army of volunteers as the newsletter has space, but we'd like to hear from you, too. Do you have a book in press? A friendly comment? We can't promise you much — or any — space, but you never know. Contact Catherine Waters, [robcatwaters@earthlink.net](mailto:robcatwaters@earthlink.net).

**Field trip leaders needed:** WFO needs people who are proficient with all level of birders and with the birds of southern Nevada, the Mojave, southern Utah, etc., to volunteer to help lead field trips in Las Vegas for 2007. We like to make sure there is a representative of WFO as a co-leader on all our conference field trips.

**WFO looks beyond Nevada:** The WFO conference and future meetings committee would love to hear from you if you or your group would like to help host a future WFO meeting, or want to help plan a future meeting. For 2008, WFO is planning on traveling to the San Francisco Bay Area in the fall for the southbound shorebird migration and to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of Grinnell's transects. If you'd like to see one of our future meetings closer to YOUR home or in a location that YOU want to visit, then we are as close as your keyboard. Contact either Jay Withgott, [withgott@nasw.org](mailto:withgott@nasw.org), or yours truly, Catherine Waters, at [robcatwaters@earthlink.net](mailto:robcatwaters@earthlink.net).

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