

Western Field Ornithologists Newsletter & 33rd Annual Meeting Update - Summer 2008

Announcements: It has arrived. The new internet "face" of Western Field Ornithologists (WFO) is official! WFO proudly unveils our new website, www.westernfieldornithologists.org. We expect the website to evolve over the next year to include the WFO newsletter on-line (visit the website to subscribe), regional reports, special opportunities for WFO members, science session abstracts from current and past meetings, summaries of Western Birds, and updates on future meetings. WFO thanks Peter LaTourette for his dedication as our webmaster over the past decade and we welcome Tim Avery (Utah) as webmaster and Jay Withgott (Oregon) as website liaison. Ted Floyd (Colorado) serves as special consultant for website content. Suggestions, comments and contributions can be directed to the "Contact" tab on the home page. The site is secure and you can renew your membership on-line! Think of upgrading to a life membership.

Publications: If you are still without your copies of the incomparable Bird Species of Special Concern, (eds. W. David Shuford and Thomas Gardali) and Rare Birds of California, (eds. Robb Hamilton et al), you can order both books from the link on the WFO website or by contacting Allen Press at 800-627-0326. Both these books are flagship efforts by WFO. Bird Species of Special Concern is the first in our monograph series. It is available for \$12.00. The cost of this important book is being subsidized by our partners: California Department of Fish and Game; WFO; Audubon California; Bonterra; EDAW; H. T. Harvey; Jones & Stokes; PRBO; SWCA; The Nature Conservancy; LSA Associates and private donors. Rare Birds of California covers the entire history of the California Bird Record Committee archives. Both books belong within arm's reach of your desk.

Nominations and Committee Openings: Western Field Ornithologists is now accepting nominations for board candidates to serve 3-year terms. If you have someone you would like to nominate, please contact Gjon Hazard (California), WFO nominating committee chairman, at contacts@westernfieldornithologists.org. All of our board members are volunteers, serve on committees and are nice people to work with. There is a time commitment involved as well as attendance at our annual meeting. WFO also has a number of interesting committee openings for volunteers. Your time requirement would be about 3 - 5 hours per month if you let your generosity get the better of you and you sign up to help develop a youth field trip program, volunteer to be a regional activity reporter for the website, or help coordinate our 2009 meeting. You will have a chance to work with some really wonderful people who will welcome your involvement. Contact Dave Krueper (New Mexico) dave.krueper@fws.gov or Catherine Waters (California) catwaters@verizon.net.

Field Trips: Currently, WFO is offering our members the opportunity to participate in a scientific expedition to Baja California in July, 2008. If you are interested, the details are on the website, www.westernfieldornithologists.org. This is the first such opportunity for our members and Carol Beardmore (Arizona) of the WFO Board originated the project and is the expedition coordinator.

Board News:

- WFO Board member (Alaska) Bob Gill's yearly update on his nearly real-time satellite tracking of long distance shorebird migrants is always among the most popular of our science session's papers. Bob recently gave a fantastic talk in Los Angeles that went into detail on his study of the annual migration cycle of Bar-tailed Godwits. Bob's research and the objects of his research can now be followed by all of us in close to real time by going to the U. S. Geologic Survey website. http://alaska.usgs.gov/science/biology/shorebirds/barg_updates.html.
- Board member Elisabeth Ammon (Nevada) of the Great Basin Bird Observatory reports that GBBO is continuing their excellent 20 section "learn western bird sounds program." See the GBBO website, www.gbbo.org for the details of this unique program. It's a great opportunity.
- Tom Ryan (California), field trip chair, announces plans for a field trip to Ecuador and the Jocotoco Foundation Preserves are in the planning stages for early summer of 2009. Information will be posted on the website as it develops.

- The University of Alaska announces the retirement of former WFO Board member Dan Gibson (Alaska) on July 1, 2008. Dan is now working on developing a bird observatory to study the birds of Middleton Island, Alaska, an isolated island at the edge of the continental shelf in the Gulf of Alaska. If you would be interested in contributing to Dan's effort contact Dan at contact@westernfieldornithologists.org.
- WFO president, Dave Krueper (New Mexico) has announced that he will be leading a field trip to the Rio Grande Nature Center, Albuquerque, NM this fall for WFO members and friends. If you are interested in participating please email Dave at dave.krueper@fws.gov. Space is limited.
- Former WFO president and current director of the San Bernardino Museum, Bob McKernan (California) is leading two Salton Sea trips 9/15/08, 2/2/09 plus a series of trips to study the Birds of the San Bernardino Mts. You can reserve at 909-307-2669, obtain further information at www.co.san-bernardino.ca.us/museum.
- WFO Board member Jon Feenstra (California) is working on a new membership database which will allow WFO to more quickly and efficiently track membership.
- Sylvia Gallagher, WFO stalwart and bird sound expert, will be offering her amazing sounds workshop beginning Feb. 16 - 19 of 2009 in Huntington Beach, CA, reservations open on January 5, 2009. Running 8 weeks, this course will be an incredible tool for any field ornithologists. Details are available at www.seaandsageaudubon.org

Please watch the newsletter and website for announcements and for more regional activities. If you would like to volunteer to lead a special field trip in your region or if you have access to a special location, please send WFO a note to contact@westernfieldornithologists.org.

33rd Annual Meeting in San Mateo, California October 9 - 12, 2008.

A keynote address by Carla Cicero (<http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~ccicero/>) of the University of California's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology will highlight and anchor the meeting in San Mateo. Dr. Cicero's talk will be on the modern day transects of the historical Grinnell transects of California. Meeting arrangements for other aspects of our 33rd Annual Meeting in San Mateo are complete, too. Robbie Fischer (California) meeting coordinator and WFO membership chair, WFO Board Member Ed Pandolfino (California) and Western Birds featured photo editor, Joe Morlan, have put together an exciting array of activities including 2 afternoons of science sessions, 2 identification experts panels, a series of workshops, Bird Record Committees Reports, local and pelagic field trips, plus a number of social activities, including a books signing, will be part of the meeting, as well. Bruce Webb (California), former WFO Board member is handling all displays and vendors. Contact Bruce, BruWebb@surewest.net if you are interested in displaying. Debbie Van Dooremolen (Nevada) and Jay Withgott (Oregon) are managing the science portions of the meeting. Please contact them with your abstracts. Guest moderators for the experts' panel will be Ed Harper (California) doing the visual portion of this popular activity and Nathan Pieplow (Colorado) handling the sounds panel. Please consider appearing on one or both of these ID panels. Abstracts of the papers for the science sessions will be posted on the website a month before the meeting.

A complete faculty of field trip leaders and workshop presenters is on the website now. We have arranged to have WFO board members and WFO friends co-lead the full and half day field trips with the Bay Area/San Mateo experts. Shearwater Expeditions is offering two pelagic trips associated with this meeting. If you do not have web access please call Robbie Fischer (650-359-2068) and request a snail-mail registration form. All this information and more can be found at the WFO website.

We hope to see you at the meeting, ask any WFO Board member for information about the organization by sending an email to: contact@wfo.westernfieldornithologists.org