

WFO Winter 2008 Newsletter

33rd Annual Meeting Update: Our annual meeting in San Mateo, California was a success and lots of fun and Robbie Fischer, Debbie VanDooremolen, Ed Pandolfino, Joe Morlan, and Bruce Webb deserve our thanks. Those of you who were not there missed Dr. Carla Cicero's insights from her modern day field research on Grinnell's historic transects. Deep appreciation also goes to the wonderful field ornithologists who imparted their research, the excellent field trip leaders who gave their time, the workshop presenters who shared their expertise, and the experts who sat on identification and bird record committee panels. Those of you who volunteered to sign books, sell books, and donate books [for the silent auction] deserve praise, too. The entire Board and Meeting Committee cannot begin to thank enough those generous people who worked the registration table and volunteered to handle the details that always need attending to. Our exhibitors were wonderful this year and special thanks goes to Out of This World/DiscountBinoculars.com of Mendocino, California who donated a binocular to the silent auction for our scholarship fund. The American Birding Association donated September/October issues of *Birding* for each registrant and Sequoia Audubon members generously donated their time as well. And, finally, those of you who attended the meeting and made it so much fun deserve thanks, too. We truly enjoyed seeing our friends and members of long-standing and welcoming those who were new to our meetings, especially our youthful scholarship attendees and their wonderful chaperones. We hope to see each of you again soon. See *Western Birds* 39:4 for Jay Withgott's full write up of the meeting.

Annual Meeting Election: At our 33rd annual Board of Directors meeting, we welcomed Osvel Hinojosa-Huerta (Mexico) and David Quady (California) to our Board of Directors. Dave Krueper (New Mexico) stepped aside to become Immediate Past President. At the annual meeting of the WFO membership, Catherine Waters (California) and Daniel Gibson (Alaska) were elected President and Vice-president respectively, and the ever popular, hardworking team of Jean Brandt (California) and Robbie Fischer (California) were re-elected to their respective offices of Recording Secretary and Treasurer. We also had a special election during the annual dinner and meeting, where our membership voted for creation of a membership directory. Our next meeting will be in Boise, Idaho, September 10 – 14, 2009 and we hope to see you all there! Stay tuned for details.

Anniversary: Commencing in 2009, Western Field Ornithologists will be celebrating the 40th Anniversary of *Western Birds*. This publication remains the premier journal of field ornithology in western North America. It is devoted to field-oriented ornithological topics from the states and provinces of Alaska, Hawaii, Yukon Territory British Columbia, Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Utah, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, western Texas, California, Sonora, Baja California, and Baja California Sur. In forty years of publication, *Western Birds* has had only two editors, Alan Craig (Arizona) and Philip Unitt (California).

Western Field Ornithologists 21st Century Review: Daniel Gibson, Dave Krueper and Catherine Waters compiled the following status report on WFO in the 21st Century and we hope you will find it of interest. It is a review of our membership and membership distribution, publications, activities, and conferences. Each of you should be proud of the progress that WFO has made. This is in large part due to your volunteer efforts and energy, dues and membership, and continuing support.

Western Field Ornithologists' in the 21st Century

At this time, Western Field Ornithologists' membership comprises approximately 1,200 field ornithologists and libraries. Between active membership, SORA (Search Ornithological Research Archive), and the impact of our website, we estimate that WFO reaches 3,000 to 5,000 interested people each quarter of the year. Our Board of Directors, the editorial staff of *Western Birds*, and our several formal committees include persons from Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Mexico who represent all ages and both sexes.

Our membership and current distribution of *Western Birds* include the following states and countries:

Alaska	Great Britain	Minnesota	Oregon
Arizona	Hawaii	Montana	Pennsylvania
Canada	Idaho	Nebraska	Texas
California	Kansas	New Jersey	Utah
Colorado	Louisiana	New Mexico	Washington
Washington, D.C.	Massachusetts	Nevada	Wyoming
Florida	Maryland	New York	
France	Mexico	Ohio	
Georgia	Michigan	Oklahoma	

In 2006, WFO instituted a number of additions to our range of publications in addition to publishing *Western Birds*. These are a benefit to our membership as well as an effort to broaden the tools available to the field ornithology community at large. In 2006 our entire archive of *Western Birds* became web accessible at SORA. SORA can be reached quickly at our website, www.westernfieldornithologists.org, or at www.elibrary.unm.edu. SORA is an open access electronic journal archive that provides researchers and scientists global access to the entire publication history of *Western Birds*.

Also in 2006, WFO began publishing a print newsletter to be distributed with issues of *Western Birds*. The newsletter was conceived as an informal way to reach the membership with information not included in the journal. The newsletter covers topics such as recent publications by board members and friends of WFO, membership news, annual conference information and promotion, and announcements. As of 2008, the newsletter is available for electronic distribution and we find there is an interest beyond our membership that now totals over 300 requests to be added to the electronic distribution of the newsletter. The current newsletter can be accessed at www.westernfieldornithologists.org.

In 2007 WFO began development of our new website, www.westernfieldornithologists.org, which promotes *Western Birds*, our recently published books, our annual conference, our newsletter, access to our Board members, and opportunities for field ornithologists to expand their range of skills. By early 2009 we will have expanded the site to include a preview of the *Western Birds* table of contents, a synopsis of the abstracts, notes and book reviews within the current issue of *Western Birds*. The site will also include links to the western bird record committees, updates of interest to field ornithology within the regions of the west, and membership opportunities by region.

Under the aegis of Western Field Ornithologists, our membership has published two well-reviewed books, *Rare Birds of California* (2007) and *Bird Species of Special Concern* (2008). *Rare Birds of California* represents an impressive achievement of volunteerism on the parts of its editors, contributors, and the California Bird Records Committee and serves as an exemplar for other state bird records committees throughout the country. *California Bird Species of Special Concern* is the first book in WFO's monograph series, titled *Studies of Western Birds*, and it too stands as an impressive result of volunteer efforts by the active field ornithologists of California. The book is a ranked assessment of birds of immediate conservation concern in California, and the publication costs of the book were completely underwritten. The list of acknowledgements in either book illuminates the depth of WFO's reach among the active field ornithologists of the West, especially those of California.

Currently WFO is planning to publish a long manuscript titled "Birds of the Ketchikan Area, southeast Alaska" as a stand-alone issue of *Western Birds*. Publication in this fashion has been done in the recent past with an issue devoted to "Biology of the California Gnatcatcher" (WB 29[4], 1998) and "The Birds of San Clemente Island" (WB 36 [3], 2005), both of them now important collectors' items. We expect that this southeast Alaska issue, too, will be sought by interested persons beyond our usual readership. It is scheduled for publication in 2009.

In 2009 our annual conference will be in Boise, Idaho. In 2010 we will be meeting in the Coachella Valley region of California. Since the turn of the 21st century, Western Field Ornithologists has held their annual conference in Reno, NV (2001), Orange County, CA (2002), Ashland, OR (2003), Silver City, NM (2004), Santa Maria, CA (2005), Boulder, CO (2006), Las Vegas, NV (2007), and San Mateo, California (2008). Our meetings normally draw from a core group of members and regional attendees and attract 100 – 250 participants plus presenters and students. In past years, our meetings have been hosted by, or partnered with, Western Bird Banding Association, New Mexico Ornithological Society, Sea and Sage Audubon Orange County, Los Angeles Audubon Society, Lahontan Audubon Society, Red Rock Audubon Society of Las Vegas, Great Basin Bird Observatory, Klamath Bird Observatory, and Western New Mexico University.

This newsletter was compiled for the benefit of WFO members. [Perceived] omissions and errors are to be ignored. Comments or potential inclusions for future newsletters should go to contact@westernfieldornithologists.org. Thank you.