

Western Field Ornithologists – Summer 2010 Newsletter

by Catherine Waters, President

In early June we began seeing disbursing young of locally nesting birds in the urban flats of Los Angeles. Young Hooded Orioles, attracted by the ripening fruit trees were a delight to hear as they found their voices to protect their food source from the Northern Mockingbirds. Following them came the Western Scrub-Jays. Three successful fledglings are still lingering and they, too, found their territorial voice. Next the individual and nearly indistinct warblers began visiting and their tiny calls were more difficult to distinguish. Wherever you are, this is a good time of year to take to the field and see what the nesting season has brought us throughout our western range.

Western Field Ornithologists Current Field Trips/Expeditions:

Cuba. The Cuba Trip (Oct 26- Nov 6) is now full. There is a wait list if you are interested (<http://www.regonline.com/register/checkin.aspx?EventId=866023>). If you are on the wait list but do not get a spot on this trip, you will receive advance notice of any future Cuba trips.

Expeditions. The “Tejon Ranch Conservancy (TRC) - Audubon California (AC) - WFO Expedition” for nesting Purple Martins and the “Sonoran Joint Venture (SJV) - WFO Bird Monitoring Expedition to the Los Alamos, Sonora, Mexico” area were successes in terms of data collected and the amazing teams that participated. The TRC trip report, complete with You Tube video, bird list and group photograph is on the WFO website at <http://www.westernfieldornithologists.org/10tejon.php>. Take a look at those smiling faces! The Los Alamos trip report will be posted shortly so keep your eyes open for it. Many thanks to all the organizers and leaders who put their time and energy into these field ornithology expeditions that broadened our knowledge of birds in the west: Carol Beardmore (SJV/WFO), Graham Chisholm (AC), Andrea Jones (AC), Dave Krueper (SJV/WFO), Tom Maloney (TRC), Ed Pandolfino (WFO), Mike White (TRC). Members of both scientific expeditions will be giving papers on their findings at our annual meeting in Palm Desert October 13 – 17.

Western Field Ornithologists Upcoming Field Trips/Expeditions

- **November 2010: *Birds in Art* field trip to the Wilding Art Museum, Los Olivos, CA.** WFO will be sponsoring a field trip to this dedicated-to-nature museum to see some very special birds. The *Birds in Art* exhibition is an annual event put together by the internationally recognized Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, www.lywam.org/exhibitions/. Their annual exhibition focuses on the depiction of birds in art and draws large crowds each year to see it. The Wilding Art Museum is the only location where this traveling exhibition can be seen in the west this year. Date and details will be posted in September 2010.
- **Winter 2010-2011: Middle Rio Grande mid Winter Tour with Dave Krueper.** Sites will include Bosque del Apache NWR, Elephant Butte and Caballo reservoirs, the Sandia Mountains for all three rosy-finches. The trip will be limited to 12 participants. Send an email of interest and any inquiries to contact@westernfieldornithologists.org. Details and date will be announced in September 2010. This will be a fundraising field trip.
- **February 2011: Sacramento, Klamath, and Gray Lodge Refuges (3 days).** This casual field trip will be a self-driven caravan that explores the grandeur of California’s and southern Oregon’s winter water fowl, wading birds and raptors. We will travel country roads in search of passerines and raptors, visit refuges, and enjoy local sights and sounds in a relaxed trip that is a journey through portions of the Great Central Valley and Modoc Plateau. There will be a small per person charge to cover the leader’s expenses. Leader and exact dates TBA. Send an email of interest to contact@westernfieldornithologists.org.
- **June 2011: Eastern Sierra trip with Jon Dunn and Kimball Garrett and Lena Hayashi.** This will be a fundraising field trip. Details and date will be announced in September.

Meeting News

35th Annual Meeting of Western Field Ornithologists – Palm Desert, California. Don’t forget our annual meeting this year is in Palm Desert October 13 – 17, 2010! Elisabeth Ammon (Nevada), Kurt Leuschner (California), Ed Pandolfino, Dave Quady (California), and Debbie Vandooremolen (Nevada) have planned an

amazing conference. We'll have excellent speakers, science sessions, workshops, panels, field trips, and social activities. Please join us for this wonderfully planned event. A complete schedule of science sessions, workshops, meeting description, registration, etc. is on our website. Direct any questions to contact@westernfieldornithologists.org . We sincerely hope to see you there!

Nominations for Directors and Officers for Western Field Ornithologists. As a member of the Western Field Ornithologists you are invited to submit potential names for filling open positions for WFO officers and Board Members. Dave Krueper is the chair of our nominating committee. If you are interested in being involved in the nominating process, please contact Dave at dave.krueper@fws.gov .

Youth Scholarships for the Annual Meeting. WFO has a limited number of scholarships, including shared lodging and a travel stipend, for serious young birders to attend the WFO annual meeting in Palm Desert. Young people must be Junior High or High School age. They will need to submit a short paragraph of five or six sentences to president@westernfieldornithologists.org explaining why they want to attend the meeting and it must be written by the scholarship applicant. With the paragraph the applicant must include their parents' names and contact information. The applicant or his/her parent(s) must be a member of WFO. Student memberships are available for \$10.00. If there is a hardship, please privately contact Cat Waters, president@westernfieldornithologists.org .

Annual Meeting of the WFO Board of Directors. As many of you know, WFO holds the annual membership meeting and a Board of Directors meeting each year at the time of the conference. Members are welcome to submit items for the agenda by sending them to Cat Waters (California), and Daniel Gibson (Alaska). And, members are welcome at the B.O.D. meeting, too. Space is limited each year so we request that you reserve a seat in advance if you are interested. The annual meeting of the B.O.D. will be Thursday afternoon, October 14, 2010.

Publications

- WFO is offering *Rare Birds of California* edited by Robb Hamilton for \$49.00 including shipping. There are just a few copies remaining of this excellent book and this is your chance to fill out your library. *California Bird Species of Special Concern* is available for \$12.00 including shipping. No shelf of a biologist in the west should be without it. See the WFO website to order either or both books.
- Dave Shuford has recently completed "*Inland-breeding pelicans, cormorants, gulls, and terns in California: A catalogue, digital atlas, and conservation tool.*" Available on the Point Reyes Bird Observatory website, www.prbo.org. The catalog chronicles the current status and conservation of seven colonial or semi-colonial California species of water birds. For more information contact Dave Shuford dshuford@prbo.org.
- Not to be missed is Steve Howell's book on molt, *Peterson Reference Guide to Molt in North American Birds* (Peterson Reference Guides). It is now available in the bookstores.
- Robert Pyle's *Birds of the Hawaiian Islands* is now available. It is an evolving electronic monograph, edited by Peter Pyle, the book represents the years long project of noted Hawaiian ornithologist, Robert Pyle: <http://hbs.bishopmuseum.org/birds/rlp-monograph/>. There is a full review in the current *Western Birds*.

Membership News

At the Movies. Long standing WFO member Debi Shearwater of Shearwater Journeys reminds us that the movie *Big Year* is due out in early 2011. Angelica Huston has the honor of portraying Debi in the movie. A comedy about bird watchers in a big year competition is a real rarity. Keep it on your radar.

Mike San Miguel. With the untimely death of Mike San Miguel earlier in July, WFO lost a wonderful supporter, mentor and friend. The birding and field ornithology community lost a good example of what we should all strive to be. And, the San Miguel family lost a husband, father and grandfather. You can read about Mike's life at <http://www.latimes.com/news/science/environment/la-me-michael-san-miguel-20100717,0,1643002.story> and among the dozens of heartfelt tributes that graced Cal Birds. The family has asked donations in lieu of flowers be sent to the Mike San Miguel Memorial Fund of Western Field Ornithologists. Donations to this fund may be made online at <https://www.westernfieldornithologists.org/support.php>. The next issue of *Western Birds*, 41:3 will have a memorial to Mike.