

## Western Field Ornithologists Newsletter

Winter/Spring 2016

Edited by Catherine Waters

### The Season in the Field

Spring has come long before “calendar” winter has passed into obscurity in the West. Reports of rarities or just wonderful weather - from Fairbanks south to San Diego - have kept many of us active in the field all winter whether we have been chasing vagrants or enjoying the listserv menus of locally overwintering birds. The mild winter weather also has many of us scratching our heads over sightings of unusual, out-of-season or both birds and whether we are seeing early migrants or overwintering birds that never migrated and instead stayed local. Regardless, if we are to make any sense of over-wintering or migratory birds and climate it is important to report our birds. Besides putting your own list into ebird, rarities should be reported to your state’s bird record committee, too. Unusual or out-of-season sightings should be reported to your local compiler for North American Birds. And, reporting your sightings to the area listserv helps your fellow birders seek out what you’ve discovered. The people who compile and record records for us and who make this data available are each hardworking volunteers and reporting our birds is the least we can do to make their jobs easier.

### O, Fortuna Here We Come!

WFO’s hardworking Conference Committee led by vice president Tom Blackman, has forged ahead on planning for our annual conference to be held in Fortuna, California coming up this fall, September 28 to October 2, 2016. You are going to love this location. Fortuna is a lovely small town on the banks of the Eel River, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eel\\_River](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eel_River), in the heart of Humboldt County, one of the most beautiful areas in all of California. It has been a long time since WFO has come to this area of California and we are long overdue for a visit. Keep your eyes on the WFO website, [www.westernfieldornithologists.org](http://www.westernfieldornithologists.org), and look for the most recent registration, conference and hotel information. We’ll be meeting for two days of science sessions, expert’s panels, and workshops plus four days of field trips and social activities. There will be a book signing this year and plenty of opportunities to visit with each other and visit the area, too. Fortuna has its own concert series at the Monday Club, a wonderful weekly farmers market, excellent fishing, an historical museum and a charming downtown. The local apple festival will be going on during our time in Fortuna. The City, [www.friendlyfortuna.com](http://www.friendlyfortuna.com), and the local Chamber of Commerce, [www.fortunachamber.com](http://www.fortunachamber.com), have listings of other local activities and recreation on their websites. You can order a free travel guide to the area at <http://redwoods.info/more.asp>.

Now is not too early to begin going through your personal library for books to bring to Fortuna. We would be happy to accept your contributions to our annual bird and natural history silent book auction. Once again Dan Gibson, [avesalaska@gmail.com](mailto:avesalaska@gmail.com) and Cat Waters, [cpannellwaters@gmail.com](mailto:cpannellwaters@gmail.com), will be organizing this event. They would be happy to answer any questions. Plus, you will want to bring along copies of any book that you might want to have signed by the attending authors.

If you are interested in being a vendor at The River Lodge where our annual conference in Fortuna will be held, reserve your table by contacting Cat Waters, [cpannellwaters@gmail.com](mailto:cpannellwaters@gmail.com). The sooner, the better. It is WFO’s tradition to not charge vendors for tables but we do ask them to register for the conference.

Authors, if you would like to participate in the book signing we are planning, give Cat a call or an email to help work out the details.

### Write On!

WFO Board Member, Jon Dunn, is hard at work on the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition of *The National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America*.

Long time WFO member and volunteer, Al Jaramillo, with co-author Brian Small, has authored the *American Birding Association’s Field Guide to Birds of California*. It is now available.

Editors Ken Able, Robert Gill and W. Dave Shuford have all the paper submissions in hand and are developing the budget for WFO's newest monograph project, *Avifaunal Change*. The book is anticipated for January 2017 publication.

WFO member in long standing, conservationist Paul Baicich, with his co-authors, Margaret Barker and Carrol Henderson, has written a wonderfully researched book about the history, culture, commerce and conservation of feeding birds. *Feeding Wild Birds in America* is published by Texas A & M Univ. Press and is now available.

WFO president Dave Quady, with Jon Dunn, Kimball Garrett and Brian Small, has written the recently released *Birds of Northern California*, a photographic identification guide in the popular R. W. Morse series.

## **Changes**

WFO's California Bird Records Committee met in January and that meeting marked the retirement of Joseph Morlan from his long history of service to the California Bird Records Committee and Western Field Ornithologists. Joe's twenty-eight years, from 1981 to 2015, as a voting member of the CBRC were extraordinary. WFO deeply appreciates the literally thousands of hours Joe has devoted to the CBRC and the organization. The entire California birding community has benefited tremendously from his efforts over the years and a standing ovation is in order.

At the January CBRC meeting, WFO Board member Steve Rottenborn, was voted Chair of the CBRC and Scott Terrill Vice-chair. Brian Daniels, John Garrett, Jim Tietz, Lauren Harter, Kristie Nelson, Guy McCaskie and Jon Feenstra complete the committee membership.

## **WFO Committee News**

The WFO Scholarship Committee, chaired by Homer Hansen, is blazing trails and this year up to eight youth scholarships will be available for our 2016 Fortuna annual conference. Details are on the WFO website, [www.westernfieldornithologists.org](http://www.westernfieldornithologists.org). The young people who have matriculated through our annual scholarship programs are now blazing their own trails and each of us is proud to note their contributions to the field ornithology community. You can contribute, too, through the WFO website and insure the program remains strong!

Recently a small ad hoc WFO committee was formed to address WFO history and archive it on our website. The first project will be to identify each of our past presidents and highlight each with a photograph from the era in which they served. All of us are looking forward to being frozen in time! A continuation of that project will be to do the same for each Board member. So, past WFO presidents, vice presidents and board members send those candid photographs to Ed Pandolfino, [erpfromca@aol.com](mailto:erpfromca@aol.com), and cc to Dave Quady, [davequady@att.net](mailto:davequady@att.net), and Cat Waters, [cpannellwaters@gmail.com](mailto:cpannellwaters@gmail.com).

## **Further Afield**

Colorado Field Ornithologists' journal, Colorado Birds, is 50 years old with the publication of the Winter 2016 issue! If you do not receive this unique journal you are missing out. All of it is good but Dave Leatherman's Hungry Bird column is fun to read. The CFO annual conference will be in Lamar, Colorado, May 5 – 9, 2016. Details are up on their website. Hoping to see you there!

Both Great Basin Bird Observatory, [www.gbbo.org](http://www.gbbo.org), and Intermountain Bird Observatory, [www.ibo.boisestate.edu/](http://www.ibo.boisestate.edu/) have new websites worth checking out. Especially interesting is the story of Jay Carlisle's radio telemetry work on Long-billed Curlews, detailed on the IBO website. GBBO has added columns that give detailed descriptions of their active research projects and partnerships.

WFO Life Member, Klamath Bird Observatory based in Ashland, Oregon, announces they are looking to fill two professional positions on their staff in 2016, details are on their website, [www.klamathbird.org](http://www.klamathbird.org). Their second Mountain Bird Festival will take place May 20 – 22, 2016. Those details, too, are on their website.

And last but not least, Occidental College's Moore Lab of Zoology collaborated on an art project and made their Ornithology collection available to artist Emily Arthur. Her unique exhibition, **Endangered**, is on display at Oxy's Weingart Gallery, March 3 – April 9, <http://www.oxy.edu/news/emily-arthur-endangered-oxy-march-2-april-9>. See you there!