

# Western Field Ornithologists Newsletter

Fall/Winter 2018

by Catherine Waters

**With Great Excitement:** The Western Field Ornithologists announces the availability of three new publications. You may think that we rock on field trips or conferences or science sessions (and we do) but WFO is best represented by our publications and volunteerism and our commitment to field ornithology in the West. The three new publications, detailed below, represent the hard work of editors, writers, researchers, field ornithologists, fundraisers and donors, and countless others to projects and publications that might never see the light of day without their commitment. Full descriptions, covers, and ordering information for each publication listed below are available on the WFO publications webpage, <https://www.westernfieldornithologists.org/publications.php>.

- Volume 2 of the WFO monograph series *Studies of Western Birds*, ***The Biology of a Desert Apparition: LeConte's Thrasher (Toxostoma lecontei)*** by Jay M. Sheppard. This monograph is a detailed discussion of LeConte's Thrasher distribution, ecology and conservation and a thorough study of its life history, including extensive data on reproduction, population dynamics, reproductive output, behavior, molt, development, vocalizations, and feeding and prey analysis.
- Volume 3 of the WFO monograph series, *Studies of Western Birds*, ***Trends and Traditions: Avifaunal Change in Western North America*** by W. David Shuford, Robert E. Gill Jr., and Colleen M. Handel, editors. This important monograph of 26 papers details the effects of extensive changes to habitat on the avifauna of the West and the responses of birds to those changes. The book is a must own for 21<sup>st</sup> Century field ornithologists, biologists, conservationists, and traditional and alternative energy companies operating in the West and beyond.
- ***The Field List of California Birds***, Steve Rottenborn and the California Bird Records Committee, editors, updated to September 2018. This is the official checklist of birds recorded in California, as maintained by the Western Field Ornithologists' California Bird Records Committee (CBRC). The list may be purchased as a booklet or downloaded at no charge from the WFO website.

**Where the Wind Blows:** It blows WFO to Albuquerque! The Western Field Ornithologists 44th annual conference will be in Albuquerque, New Mexico, August 21 – 25, 2019. As available, details will be posted on the WFO website. If you missed Tom Blackman's wonderful emailed newsletter, full report and wrap up about our 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference in Ventura, California you can see it on our website. His report was comprehensive and included all the conference activities and the best photograph yet of the assembled Board and Friends since we began taking them (good work, Tom!).  
[https://www.westernfieldornithologists.org/docs/2018/Recap-43rd Western Field Ornithologists.pdf](https://www.westernfieldornithologists.org/docs/2018/Recap-43rd%20Western%20Field%20Ornithologists.pdf).

**Is there a road trip in your future?** From time to time, WFO offers trips, tours and expeditions to domestic and international birding sites of special ornithological interest. Some focus on research while others offer expert leadership and/or access to places that may be inaccessible to the general public. You might be interested in our latest offering:

January 10 – 13, 2019, Homer Hansen, an aficionado of all things Arizona, WFO Board Member and the Chair of WFO's Scholarship Committee, is leading a special field trip, with a workshop component, on Arizona sparrows and the winter birds of Arizona. Information and details are available on the WFO website <https://www.westernfieldornithologists.org/tours.php> and any questions can be directed to [hhansen@aplomado.com](mailto:hhansen@aplomado.com).

**Is there a road trip (continued):** Kurt Leuschner and fellow WFO Field Trip Committee members are planning an interesting selection of opportunities for our membership in 2019 and beyond. Dates and particulars are being discussed, but one of the best ways to make sure you know what is going on and when is to put your name and email address on our digital mail list, watch our website and Facebook page, and keep your membership up to date.

**Committee Work:** Whether visible or under the radar, our committee members and committee chairs are amazing besides being just wonderful to work with and know. You might even want to contact them with your thoughts or ideas. Here are the updates on WFO Committee Chairs and “significant others” as of November 2018:

- Awards: Jon Dunn, [contact@westernfieldornithologists.org](mailto:contact@westernfieldornithologists.org) attention: Jon Dunn
- California Bird Record Committee: Steve Rottenborn, [srottenborn@harveyecology.com](mailto:srottenborn@harveyecology.com)
- Conservation and Science: Steve Rottenborn
- Facebook Page Editor: Cliff Hawley, [yellowhammerca@gmail.com](mailto:yellowhammerca@gmail.com)
- Field trips, programs: Kurt Leuschner, [kleuschner@collegeofthedesert.edu](mailto:kleuschner@collegeofthedesert.edu)
- Finance: Tom Blackman, [obeach@cox.net](mailto:obeach@cox.net)
- Fundraising: Chris Swarth, [cswarth10@gmail.com](mailto:cswarth10@gmail.com)
- Hawai'i Bird Record Committee: Eric VanderWerf, 3038 Oahu Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96822
- Mail list: Ed Pandolino, [erfromca@aol.com](mailto:erfromca@aol.com)
- Meetings: Chris Swarth, [cswarth10@gmail.com](mailto:cswarth10@gmail.com)
- Membership: Suzanne Carota, [treasurer@westernfieldornithologists.org](mailto:treasurer@westernfieldornithologists.org)
- Newsletter: Catherine Waters, [cpannellwaters@gmail.com](mailto:cpannellwaters@gmail.com)
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- Publications: Kenneth Able, [kennethpable@gmail.com](mailto:kennethpable@gmail.com) and Catherine Waters, [cpannellwaters@gmail.com](mailto:cpannellwaters@gmail.com)
- Scholarship/Youth: Homer Hansen, [hhansen@aplomado.com](mailto:hhansen@aplomado.com)
- Special Publications, Kenneth Able, [kennethpable@gmail.com](mailto:kennethpable@gmail.com)
- Webmaster, Tim Brittain, [contact@westernfieldornithologists.org](mailto:contact@westernfieldornithologists.org), attn. Tim
- Western Birds Editor, Philip Unitt, [punitt@sdnhm.org](mailto:punitt@sdnhm.org)
- Western Birds Assistant Editor, Daniel Gibson, [avesalaska@gmail.com](mailto:avesalaska@gmail.com)

***A few Western opportunities:*** Sylvia Gallager, long time WFO supporter is offering a repeat of her excellent *Western Mountains and their Birds Workshop* starting, January 7, 2019. Details can be found at [www.seaandsageaudubon.org](http://www.seaandsageaudubon.org). Portland Audubon continues their outstanding adult workshop birding skills series, [www.audubonportland.org](http://www.audubonportland.org). Starr Ranch in the Orange County, CA foothills is offering Bird Banding Workshops for March 2019, [rsnowden@audubon.org](mailto:rsnowden@audubon.org).

***The Trailing Edge:*** The WFO newsletter in the current iteration, is now 15 years old. For the editor, it has been a true pleasure to compile. Back in the long ago WFO past, there was another newsletter that went out individually via the USPS and it was multi-paged, with coated paper, and beautifully edited, laid out and designed by Bruce Webb. The current editor of the newsletter never saw the first outreach to the WFO membership until someone sent her information for the archive and a single copy of Bruce's newsletter was in the envelope. To this day she remembers seeing, reading it and being totally humbled. Regardless, beauty and fantastic content or basic and chatty, both newsletters had the same intent, to bring you, the WFO member, into the loop of where WFO and its partners are going...what's being planned and what's happening.

***A new change is afoot.*** The WFO leadership is eager to have the newsletter go digital. However, plans are in place for those who want to continue receiving a hard copy. Kurt Leuschner, our new WFO president (and the nicest of people) wants to hear from you and to know your preferences, [kleuschner@collegeofthedesert.edu](mailto:kleuschner@collegeofthedesert.edu). If you do not do email, call or write Cat (562-869-6718, 12079 Samoline Ave., Downey, CA 90242) and we will see to it that you continue to receive a print copy.

In closing, the newsletter editor would like to use these last precious lines, to remind you to submit your notes and research or questions about publishing in *Western Birds* to Daniel Gibson, [avesalaska@gmail.com](mailto:avesalaska@gmail.com). If you have written or are writing a monograph or special publication, Ken Able is your go-to, [kennethpable@gmail.com](mailto:kennethpable@gmail.com). Guidelines for publications are on the WFO publications webpage, [www.westernfieldornithologists.org/publications](http://www.westernfieldornithologists.org/publications). All that data, all those notebooks, the sketches, etc. can become a significant contribution to our knowledge of the field ornithology of the West.