

## **Western Field Ornithologist's Field Expedition to the Sierra de la Laguna Biosphere Reserve**

July 13-19, 2008

Dear WFO Board and Friends -

It gives me great pleasure to inform you all of the tremendous success of the recent WFO/SJV field expedition to the Sierra de La Laguna in Baja California Sur. The chemistry of the participants was fantastic. Gary Nunn (new member), Nathan Pieplow, and Richard Erickson were super enthusiastic field staff and data gatherers throughout the trip. A huge "thank-you" to Carol Beardmore who was instrumental in setting this trip up, as well as to Eduardo Palacios and Victor Anguiano, the local CICESE and Biosphere Reserve staffers who made the trip such a success. Some quick highlights:

1. Nathan and Gary compiled over 15 hours of very high quality sound recordings of the birds, including a great number of calls and interactive vocalizations beyond the primary and secondary song types which are more easily obtained. We plan on editing this total down to a manageable hour or so to evaluate whether we would like to include a CD along with a "special edition" of Western Birds which details systematics, abundances, habitat use and plumage differences (photographically) of the endemic subspecies (species) of birds in the Sierra de La Laguna.
2. Over 1200 avian and habitat photographs obtained.
3. Sixteen area searches (rapid assessments) and two intensive area searches were conducted.
4. Habitat use data for nearly a dozen species were obtained.
5. Some feather samples were collected.
6. Baja California's fifth record of Dusky-capped Flycatcher was documented (song and photos) right in the camp at La Laguna.
7. Baja California's first documented nesting of Whip-poor-will was obtained when Carol found an adult female with two young (vocalizations and photos obtained).
8. Dick Erickson et al. also documented nesting Tropical Kingbirds at the La Paz sewage treatment plant.
9. We conducted a dusk survey for Black Swift at a series of waterfalls which drain the high elevation meadow habitat. There have been reports of this species from the Cape District in the recent past, and it was intriguing enough to conduct a foray down the canyon to check the outlets for the birds. We were unsuccessful, but the boulder-hopping return at 10:00 pm will certainly trigger some memories.

There will be more information available as we wade through the data, so stay tuned. All the best to you.

Dave Krueper