

Ornithological Newsletter

American Ornithologists' Union
Cooper Ornithological Society
Waterbird Society

Association of Field Ornithologists
Raptor Research Foundation
Wilson Ornithological Society

Cheryl L. Trine, Editor

NUMBER 167

AUGUST 2005

ORGANIZATION NEWS

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AOUSTUDENTS: The American Ornithologists' Union is pleased to announce the creation of AOUStudents, an electronic distribution list devoted to the exchange of information regarding ornithology in general, and the AOU in particular. This list is designed to encourage a sense of community among students interested in ornithology, and to aid in networking (e.g., arranging for sharing rides to annual meetings, meeting up with other student researchers at field sites, etc.). Current student members of the AOU (who have provided their email address to the membership data base) have received an email announcement explaining how to subscribe. Students who are not currently members of the AOU, and other interested individuals, please visit the AOUStudents homepage (URL: <http://aou.org/mailman/listinfo/students>) to learn more about the group and how to subscribe andicipate. Please send any questions to listadmin@aou.org.

ORNITHOLOGICAL WORLDWIDE LITERATURE (OWL) is an indexed compilation of bibliographic citations that pertain to ornithology and are from the periodic, worldwide scientific literature. In the 21st century, published scientific information that cannot be found at a later date is information lost to science. Ornithologists must be able to find papers related to our science. Now ornithologists around the globe can access this important resource at no cost via the OWL web site, <http://www.birdlit.org>. Results of all bibliographic searches are downloadable to a spreadsheet or database. OWL currently adds nearly 6,000 literature citations each year to the database, which already contains more than 45,000 citations back to about 1990. One OWL's particular strengths is that it covers periodicals and other publications not typically included in other searchable databases. The OWL depends upon a cadre of volunteer abstractors and editors around the globe who review their respective journals and compile the citation records. **We are constantly looking for more volunteers to help in this effort. If you are interested in helping, please contact the project manager (information below).** The more abstractors working on this effort and the more serials that are regularly being viewed and abstracted, the more valuable a resource for ornithologists around the world. Worldwide, about 100-125 abstractors are reviewing 400-700 serials. Each is responsible for all the ornithological papers in a particular journal. Abstractors may submit data either via a spreadsheet template file (i.e., fill in the empty cells for author, year, title, citation, etc.) or by a direct ONLINE entry form at our web site. It takes approximately one afternoon a year to cover one medium-sized journal with 20-30 papers of interest to ornithologists. or a current list of journals in need of abstractors or for more

information, contact KENNETH P. ABLE, Project Manager (EM: Kenable@direcway.com). **Visit a Live, On-line Demonstration of O.W.L. and its capabilities at the poster sessions on Wednesday and Friday evenings at the AOU Meeting in Santa Barbara.**

THE WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY held its annual meeting 21-23 April 2005 in Beltsville, Maryland with the Association of Field Ornithologists. The 2005 Margaret Morse Nice Medal was awarded jointly to DR. EUGENE S. MORTON of the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center and DR. BRIDGET J. M. STUTCHBURY of York University, who presented the plenary lecture, "Territoriality...Beyond the Temperate Zone." This award was established in 1997 to recognize the lifetime accomplishments of ornithologists and to provide them a venue for describing their scientific inquiry within the context of their careers in ornithology. The scientific program included 81 oral papers and 42 posters. Wilson Ornithological Society student travel awards were presented to COLLEEN BELL of Canisius College, ROSS ROBERT CONOVER of Mississippi State University, KRISTEN M. COVINO of Canisius College, MICHAEL F. GAYDOS of Xavier University, GEORGE S. HAMAOU, JR., of Ohio Wesleyan University, JENNIFER MCNICOLL of New Mexico State University, JENNIFER NEWBREY of North Dakota State University, KAREN ODUM of Ohio Wesleyan University, ASHLEY M. PEELE of Ohio Wesleyan University, JENNIFER SMOLINSKI of Xavier University, RACHEL STURGE of the University of Toronto, REBECCA SUOMALA of the University of New Hampshire, JENNIFER URBANSKI of Canisius College, and KATE E. WILLIAMSON of Ohio Wesleyan University. The Wilson Prize for the best student oral presentation was awarded to CHRISTOPHER HOFMANN of the University of Maryland-Baltimore County for "Pigment co-deposition and the masking of carotenoids in Orchard and Fuertes's Orioles." and the Lynds Jones Prize for the best student poster was awarded to BETH A. HAHN of the University of Michigan for her poster, "Using song playbacks to influence breeding habitat selection by American Redstarts." The Louis Agassiz Fuertes Award was awarded to JOEL W. MCGLOTHLIN of Indiana University, for his study, "Phenotypic integration of sexually selected traits in Dark-eyed Juncos (*Junco hyemalis*)." Paul A. Stewart Awards were awarded to JULIAN AVERY of Eastern New Mexico University for "The effects of habitat fragmentation on landscape-level processes and habitat associations of Nearctic-Neotropical migratory birds in New Mexico," AARON TED BOONE of the Ohio State University for "Linking winter and migration events in a long-distance migratory songbird using stable-carbon isotope analysis," CHRISTY ANNE MELHART of the University of Arkansas for "Reproductive success and philopatry of Prairie Warblers, Blue-winged Warblers, Indigo Buntings and Field Sparrows in declining scrub successional habitat in Connecticut," and COLIN E. STUDDS of the University of Maryland for "Linking non-breeding habitat occupancy to population processes in a Neotropical-Nearctic migratory bird." The results of the annual election of officers and council members were as follows: President – DORIS J. WATT, First Vice-President – JAMES D. RISING, Second Vice-President – E. Dale Kennedy, Secretary – SARA R. MORRIS, Treasurer – MELINDA M. CLARK, Editor – JAMES A. SEDGWICK, and Members of Council (2005-2008) – KATHLEEN G. BEAL, DANIEL KLEM, JR., and DOUGLAS W. WHITE.

REPORT OF THE SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COOPER ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY—The Cooper Ornithological Society held its 75th annual meeting at Humboldt State University, Arcata, California, 14-19 June 2005. T. LUKE GEORGE chaired the Local Committee. MATTHEW D. JOHNSON chaired the Scientific Program Committee. There were 242 registrants, including 76 students. The program included 15 posters and 100 papers, 11 of which were in the symposium "Beyond Mayfield: Measurements of Nest Survival Data" organized by STEPHANIE JONES and GEOFF GEUPEL, and 14 in the symposium "Choices and Consequences of Habitat Selection" organized by WILLIAM KRISTAN, MATTHEW JOHNSON, and JOHN ROTEN-

ORNITHOLOGICAL NEWSLETTER (ISSN 0274-564X) is published bimonthly by OSNA, 5400 Bosque Blvd., Suite 680, Waco, TX 76710 (business@osnabirds.org). Membership dues in any OSNA society include \$3.50 for the cost of publication. Separate subscriptions are not available. For application to membership write the OSNA office. Periodicals postage paid at Waco, TX.

POSTMASTER: Send address change to ORNITHOLOGICAL NEWSLETTER, 5400 Bosque Blvd., Suite 680, Waco, TX 76710.

intraspecific divergence in insular populations of song sparrows (*Melospiza melodia*); PAUL ZWIERS, Smithsonian Institution and University of Maryland, A test of MHC-dependent mate choice in the Satin Bowerbird (*Ptilonorhynchus violaceus*).

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LEAST BELL'S VIREO, a Songbird Missing from Central Valley for 60 Years Reappears at San Joaquin River National Wildlife Refuge—This little songbird, once common in California's Central Valley but not heard there for the last 60 years, has reappeared on the San Joaquin River National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) west of Modesto. The sighting of a nesting pair of Least Bell's Vireo occurred on the refuge, a unit of the San Luis NWR Complex that was restored under the CALFED program. The restoration began just three years ago and was completed this spring. In that time, the former farm field has quickly grown into a tangle of willows, blackberry, wild rose and other native riverside plants, some already 30 feet high. It is reminiscent of the original valley riverside habitat, and Least Bell's Vireos soon found the area, even though they haven't nested in the Central Valley for 85 years. "Hearing the Least Bell's Vireo again demonstrates that a good recovery plan, committed partners and resources to carry it out, can bring many species back to life in areas where they seemed lost forever," said Steve Thompson, manager of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's California-Nevada Operations Office. The wildlife refuges increasingly play a major role in the survival and recovery of species. The Least Bell's Vireo once was common from Red Bluff down throughout the Central Valley and south into Baja California. But the removal of 90 per cent of the riparian habitat resulted in their steep decline. The last time Least Bell's Vireo breeding was confirmed in the valley was 1919. Exhaustive searches for the bird in the 1970s and 1980s came up empty-handed, and biologists sadly concluded that the bird no longer nested in the valley. When the Least Bell's Vireo was federally listed as endangered in 1986 only 300 pairs were left, all along small streams in Southern California. This week's success is the outcome of a broad partnership involving at least nine different organizations. CALFED spawned the effort in 1998 when it provided key funds to purchase an 800-acre farm. Many other agencies also contributed, among them the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Resources Agency, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Audubon Society. Three years ago, CALFED provided funds to the San Luis NWR to restore a 164-acre section along the San Joaquin River where the Least Bell's Vireo now has nested. The restoration quickly filled in the farmed land with classic Central Valley riparian habitat. The hands-on restoration work was an adaptive effort by three conservation partners -- PRBO Conservation Science, River Partners and the Endangered Species Restoration Program at CSU-Stanislaus. Geoff Geupel of PRBO said the Least Bell's Vireo's return "is a success for CALFED's adaptive management approach to habitat restoration." Learning from earlier restoration efforts, they planted more shrubby understory and created a varied pattern of planting that mimics the natural floodplain habitat. That created an area perfect for the Least Bell's Vireo -- dense shrubby understory.

LONG-LIVED KIRTLANDS' WARBLERS--The Huron National Forest's Kirtland's Warbler census, run mid-month, resulted in tallying 459 singing males. This is the highest-ever count on National Forest lands, and it's something to celebrate. Almost all these males were located on habitat developed through forest management. Currently, no wildfire habitat exists on Huron NF, so something that the Forest Service is doing for the warblers must be working. On 8 June, the team captured a male in Ogemaw County that was previously banded in 1996 as an adult. That would make him at least 10 years old, the oldest Kirtland's warbler ever documented. Four days later, also in Ogemaw County, another male Kirtland's was captured, this one originally banded as an adult in 1995, a bird at least 11 years old! Records are, indeed, meant to be broken. Both males were observed defending territory, and appeared to be "in great shape." Assuming an annual round-trip migration of approximately 3,000 miles, these little birds would have logged at least 30,000 and 33,000 miles, respectively, during migrations throughout their lives. It's very exciting that the Kirtland's Warbler has been exhibiting recent recovery and has responded to hands-on management, but the species' future is still far from secure. (Reduction of cowbird control, threatened though current budget demands is, similarly, a risky proposition.)

ALASKA: FREE STREAMERS KEEP AWAY SEABIRDS--Beginning last year, and now extending to this fishing season, most fishing-vessels in Alaska are being required to use streamer-lines and other avoidance devices to keep seabirds away from longline fishing gear. The seabirds will otherwise attack baited hooks and get dragged beneath the water to die. Four types of avoidance devices were developed through collaboration between the USFWS, Alaska Sea Grant, the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and fishermen. The devices were made available for free. In the recent past, tens of thousands of seabirds were killed annually in the Alaska longline fishery alone. These birds included albatrosses (e.g. Laysan and Black-footed), Northern Fulmar, and shearwaters (e.g. Sooty and Short-tailed). The problem is an industry-wide and global issue, with numerous unresolved concerns, especially with industrial-type longline fishing expansion, and fishing lines which extend for 60 miles. Research conducted through the University of Washington Sea Grant Program has shown that streamer-lines, when properly deployed, can reduce seabird bycatch by almost 100%. It is particularly important for fishermen in Alaska waters to keep a safe distance from the endangered Short-tailed Albatross, a rare species that has recently been recovering and appearing in Alaska waters. (From a population low of approximately a dozen, almost 2,000 of these albatrosses now wander the North Pacific.) The destruction of just a few of these birds could literally shut down fisheries. (No more than four Short-tailed Albatrosses can be taken by longliners over a two-year period, and no more than two by trawl fisheries.) For more information: URL: <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/protectedresources/seabirds/freelinesmay05.pdf> and additional reports from the American Bird Conservancy: http://abcbirds.org/policy/seabird_reports.htm. (From *Swarovski Birding E-bulletin* - July 2005)

PARTNERS ESTABLISH PROTOCOL TO REPORT SIGHTINGS OF IVORY-BILLED WOODPECKER--The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology announce the establishment of an e-mail address (EM: ivorybill@cornell.edu) and associated web site (URL: <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/ivory/story17.htm>) to report sightings of the rediscovered Ivory-billed Woodpecker. Since the announcement in April that the Ivory-billed Woodpecker has been confirmed, we've had numerous calls reporting sightings, said Sam D. Hamilton, Southeast Regional Director for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We need to gather this information so biologists can explore any promising leads. Because the Ivory-billed Woodpecker looks very similar to the more common Pileated Woodpecker, biologists urge the public to carefully review the information on the web site, including range maps, habitat descriptions, field marks, and photos of both birds, before reporting sighting information. People who believe they've seen an Ivory-billed Woodpecker should fill out the form available at <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/ivory/story17.htm> and send it to ivorybill@cornell.edu. Those without Internet access may request the form by calling the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (PH: 800-843-2473). The Service has established a second e-mail address (EM: ivorybill@fws.gov), where the public can submit questions or comments about the recovery of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. The public may also write to: Ivory-billed Woodpecker Recovery Team Leader, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 1875 Century Boulevard, Atlanta, GA 30345. The Service and Cornell Lab of Ornithology will work closely with partners to investigate credible reports of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers. The partners hope that those who spend time exploring the bottomland hardwood swamps of the Southeast may be able to help search for the bird.

VIDEO RECORDING SERVICE-- Since 1989, I have been a bird/nature film-maker producing videos that tell stories about people and organizations devoted to scientific study and environmental work. What would your bird-work look like if it was turned into moving images--a video? Could you save time and money by utilizing training videos as reference tools? Would you like to document the special project that may only occur once? Would you like to give video presentations of your work that aren't static, that show the dynamic movement of birds and nature, and chronicles your contributions/research? Finished videos can be distributed, used as training tools, the main or supportive part of a presentation, a television program, or used as video clips on the internet. I am a Field Research Associate for Cornell Lab of Ornithology--one of three videographers collecting video images for CLO's New Visual Media Collection; produce videos for the online version of *Birds of North America*, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and Watchable Wildlife; and make video presentations for organizations interested in the science, conservation, preservation and recreation activities associated with birds. To see samples of my work, email your MAILING ADDRESS for a