



Founded in 1925

Western Regional News

Message from WBBA's President

WBBA's 78th annual meeting was held in Corvallis, Montana, 28-31 Aug. It was a great meeting, with a full and varied schedule, beautiful setting, good weather, and charming accommodations at Teller Wildlife Refuge. Highlights included a workshop on molt limits by Peter Pyle and fascinating presentations by Jeff Marks and Dick Hutto of the University of Montana on Long-eared Owls and fire ecology, respectively. Our thanks to Stephanie Jones for organizing the meeting and to the staffs of the Teller and Lee Metcalf wildlife refuges for their hospitality.

I'd like to take this opportunity to update you on recent WBBA developments and issues. The organization is holding its own financially and has a reasonable nest egg, but membership continues to decline. As of the end of July, we had 232 members, down about 5% from the previous August. We will be looking for ways to increase our outreach efforts and we welcome suggestions.

By the time you read this, WBBA should be signed up with PayPal to accept on-line dues payments. This should especially please our Canadian members! There is a small surcharge to cover PayPal's administrative fees. You are still welcome to pay the old-fashioned way with no surcharge. We also are signing up with a company called WithoutBricks.com, an on-line nature store with thousands of birding, gardening, and nature items. WBBA receives a cut on any items purchased through the WBBA Web site.

Speaking of the Web site, we have a brand new one! We are particularly excited about this development because we feel the new site will serve you and the banding community much better. We welcome feedback on it, so please take a look; the URL is:

<http://www.westernbirdbanding.org>.

Our Editor, Kay Loughman, is, as always, happy to receive manuscripts for potential publication in *NABB*. She can provide suggestions to authors and a list of books that may be helpful with manuscript preparation. Annual or quarterly reports from banding stations also are welcome for the WBBA section. Kay's address is on the inside cover of this journal and on the Web site. We are hoping to join *The Condor* and other ornithology journals in digitally archiving all but the most recent three volumes of *NABB* in the near future.

We awarded three \$500 grants this year. The recipients are Susan H. Craig ("Loggerhead Shrikes in El Paso County, Colorado: An Ongoing Investigation of Age, Sex and Subspecies"); Gabriel Jaime Colorado ("Diversity and Habitat Use in Wintering Areas by Boreal Migrant Songbirds in the Darién region, Chocó Province, Northern Colombia"); and María A. Maglianesi ("Implications of Habitat Characteristics on Neotropical Migrant and Resident Landbirds in a Wet Lowland Forest of the Caribbean North in Costa Rica"). Congratulations to Susan, Gabriel, and María!

John Alexander and I are continuing to serve as WBBA's North American Banding Council (NABC) representatives this year. John is Chairman of the Evaluation Committee and I am Chairman of the Education Committee. Both of us attended the NABC meeting in Canada in September, which will be reported on separately. We are looking for a new Alternate Representative to start next year; candidates should be both WBBA members and NABC trainers. Please get in touch with me if you are interested.

The slate of WBBA officers approved by the membership at the meeting is the same as last year's except that John Alexander has replaced Ken Voget as 2nd Vice-President and Diana Humple of Point Reyes Bird Observatory is our new Secretary. We welcome Diana to the Board. We are planning to increase the size of the Board this year as well.

We have made a few changes to our dues structure. We raised the Non-Subscribing Membership rate to \$10/year and added two new categories of membership: Institutional (\$35/year) and Student/Volunteer/Intern (\$15/year for the first two years of membership). We also are considering lowering our Life Membership cost substantially.

Finally, next year's meeting will be hosted by Klamath Bird Observatory in Ashland, Oregon, probably in September and possibly in conjunction with Western Field Ornithologists and/or NABC. We are looking for a venue for the 2005 meeting; contact us soon if you have an idea.

As you can see, we've been busy and look forward to an even busier year ahead. We need your help! Recruit new members, contribute a manuscript, serve on the Board, host a meeting... There are many ways to get involved. It is YOUR organization and your participation is not only welcome, it is essential!

Best wishes for a prosperous year,

**Ken Burton,
President**

MONTANA MEETING 2003

Just as Stephanie predicted, we loved Montana!

Peter Pyle's Molt Limits Workshop was filled to capacity. Participants agreed they learned a lot and came away with increased confidence in their ability to recognize molt limits. Special thanks to Stephanie Jones and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for making this workshop possible.

Supervised by Deb Goslin at Lee Metcalf NWR, WBBA members practiced their banding skills on Gray Catbird, Black-headed Grosbeak, Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, among many others. According to Patricia Taber, "The highlight for the Lee Metcalf people was when we had four grosbeaks in hand and Peter [Pyle] asked to see one of them and each person was checking the underwing color. When Peter opened the underwing of his bird it was red! The "OOHs and WOWs" were flowing, as he had a Rose-breasted Grosbeak." – a likely first for the refuge.

Guest presentations included: *Biology and Behavioral Ecology of Long-eared Owls*, by Jeff Marks; *A Bird's Eye View of the Fires of 2000*, by Dick Hutto; and *Raptors of the Rockies*, a discussion and demonstration using live birds, by Kate Davis. Your editor was suitably impressed with the Golden Eagle perched only ten feet away!

B&B-style accommodations and excellent meals were provided at Teller Wildlife Refuge. For those not involved in scheduled activities, Teller also proved to be comfortable for socializers and rewarding for birders.

An updated listing of officers, reports on the field trips, and abstracts of papers begin on the next page.

**Kay Loughman,
WBBA Editor**