

2012

## Western Bird Banding Association 2012 Annual Meeting Report

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necessity, some such Groups can include several recognized subspecies. New alpha codes could be used (e.g., Sooty Fox Sparrow [SFSP]), while others should be reassigned. For example, the Red Fox Sparrow of Sibley shares a common alpha code (RFSP) with the Red-faced Spinetail, so it could be the Northern Red (NRFS) of Pyle, or the Taiga Fox Sparrow (TFSP). It would be excellent if there was some way to assign a certainty to the identifications.

As we try to maximize the information that we take on each bird, to make their brief captivity have the most value for science and conservation, it will add greatly to our understanding of bird populations to record the potential origin of each individual we capture.

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p.s. Thanks to Wade Leitner, Carol Ralph, Josée Rousseau, and Walter Sakai for very helpful comments.

### **Western Bird Banding Association 2012 Annual Meeting Report**

The 2012 annual meeting of the Western Bird Banding Association (WBBA) was held 22-24 Jun, jointly with Oregon Field Ornithologists (OFO), at the Running Y Ranch on the shores of Upper Klamath Lake in the beautiful Klamath Falls area of southern Oregon and northern California. The total number of registered attendees was approximately 64 hailing mostly from Oregon but also from California, Washington, Arizona, Utah, Mexico, Costa Rica, and the United Arab Emirates.

Friday's events began with mist netting at Klamath Bird Observatory Rocky Point Cabin site and a birding trip to Klamath Marsh National Wildlife Refuge. A workshop on NABC Banding curriculum was presented Friday afternoon. The annual WBBA board meeting was also held Friday afternoon.

On Friday evening a lively social and barbecue was held at the Running Y Ranch. Jaime Stephen's (from the Klamath Bird Observatory) presentation was on bird research and conservation efforts being done by the observatory in Pacific Northwest forests.

Saturday events included many birding opportunities to local hotspots.

The scientific session was held on Saturday at the Running Y Ranch. The sessions were attended by registered WBBA participants, student interns and a few guests. Fourteen interesting and informative presentations were given.

Also on Saturday, both WBBA and OFO held general membership meetings where the respective boards reported on the year's activities.

The Saturday evening banquet events were held at the Running Y. A competitive silent auction featuring books, T-shirts, and wildlife prints netted over \$800 which helps fund WBBA's research and monitoring grant program. Our keynote speaker was Rich Hoyer, Birding tour leader for Wings, who provided an interesting and informative presentation entitled, *Polyglottal Passerines – Mimicry is not just for Mockingbirds*, on the use of mimicry by many species of birds. Sunday events included another trip to the Rocky Point banding station and several all-day birding field trips.

The Grants Committee selected and the Board approved two recipients for this year's grant awards: **For Monitoring:** Luis Morales at San Pancho Bird Observatory: *Promoting economic and community development through bird conservation science, education and capacity building in Western Mexico*; and **for Research:** Carl Lundblad at the University of Arizona: *Elucidating the causes of partial migration in Yellow-eyed Junco using a marked population*.

WBBA continues to support the bird banding journal, *North American Bird Bander*, and encourages western area bird banders to submit articles for publication.

The membership voted in the 2012 slate of officers and board members:

**Howard Browers - President**  
**Renée Cormier - 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President**  
**Wade Leitner - 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**  
**C. John Ralph - Past President**  
**Pat Leitner - Treasurer**

**Danielle Kaschube - Membership Chair**  
**Walter H. Sakai - NABB Editor**  
**Kay Loughman - At-large Board Member**  
**Josée S. Rousseau - At-large Board member**  
**John D. Alexander - NABC representative**

The 2013 meeting is currently being planned and will be held 12-14 Sep in southeast Arizona.

## **SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM ABSTRACTS**

(Listed alphabetically by  
last name of lead author.)

### **Wild bird Monitoring and Surveillance for Avian Influenza in the United Arab Emirates**

Ahmed, Shakeel, Shahid. B. Khan, Junid. N. Shah, Eissa Ali Al Hammadi, Abdullah Ali Al Hammadi and Sàlim Javed. Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

Surveillance of wild birds was carried out to determine highly pathogenic (HP) and low pathogenic (LP) avian influenza viruses (AIVs) in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) during 2005 – 2010 as part of the national avian influenza action plan. Weekly and fortnightly monitoring were conducted at selected sites along the coast, islands, lagoons, inland wetlands, and other known waterbirds congregatory sites. Apart from recording the numbers of all the species, any sick or fresh dead birds were recorded, collected and sent to designated laboratories across the country to be tested for AIV. Diagnostic investigations were conducted using RT-PCR and ELISA techniques. Specimens were collected from 44 survey sites. Of these, 63.6% were coastal/creeks and inland wetlands and 36.4% were islands. Of 44 sites, 75% (n=33) were monitored in Abu Dhabi Emirate, 9% (n=4) in Fujairah, and 5% (n=2) each in Dubai and Ras Al Khaimah. A total of the 452 individuals, 81% (367) were collected from Abu Dhabi Emirate followed by 10% (47) from Ras Al Khaimah nearly 4% (17) while the rest of the emirates accounted for the remaining 4.6% (21). Virological studies were performed on 144 out of a total of 452 bird samples collected, which represented 39 different species. We determined the cause of death in 57% (19) of the collected specimens from *Escherichia coli* (*E.*

*coli*) and 27% (9) with other commonly occurring bacterial infections such as coligranuloma, *Salmonella Pullorum*, proteus infection, entritus, and *Proteus mirabilis*. None of the samples were diagnosed with AIV. Although not a single wild bird was detected with AI viruses, it is important to undertake regular monitoring at key congregatory sites of birds for an early detection and mitigation in case of any incidence of an outbreak.

### **Song Sparrows that breed in low and high elevations: Some stay and some go, but where?**

Alexander, John D. and Barbara W. Massey, Klamath Bird Observatory, Ashland, Oregon

Song Sparrows can be found throughout the year in low elevations of the Rogue Valley, Oregon, but the assumption that they are residents is not necessarily correct. Song Sparrows also breed in the mountains surrounding the Rogue Valley; these birds leave their high-elevation breeding grounds during the winter. We used banding data and isotopic markers to gain a better understanding of seasonal movements of Song Sparrows that breed at both low and high elevations in the Rogue Valley and surrounding mountains. Recapture data from a low elevation banding station operated year-round include individuals captured during both the breeding and wintering seasons, an indication that at least some of the low elevation breeders are year-round residents. With this baseline understanding, the relative difference between Deuterium ( $\delta D$ ) ratios in feather and toe nail samples collected during the early breeding season at both low and high elevations were used to better predict where high-elevation breeders winter. Preliminary results suggest that high-elevation breeders might winter towards the north or east of their breeding grounds.

### **Report from the Point (PRBO): Banding and Research at the Palomarin Field Station**

Dybala, Kristine and Geoffrey Geupel, PRBO Conservation Science, Petaluma, California

Using long-term nest and banding data, we investigated factors influencing the survival of juvenile Song Sparrows (*Melospiza melodia*). Since 1980 we found 1,866 nests that fledged 1,795 color-banded individuals. Of these juvenile Song