



Western Regional News

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WBBA President's Message

Greetings everyone! In lieu of exacerbating the continuing cases of covid, we opted to hold our annual meeting virtually this year in mid-September. We started off with a virtual happy hour to catch up and kicked off our first night with a fantastic, wide-ranging keynote by Jared Wolfe on using banding data to understand how changing climate is decreasing bird diversity. Be sure and check this and the others at our website (www.westernbirdbanding.org).

We started out the next day bright and early with a banding demo from the station I am currently working at, Rushton Farm, Pennsylvania, followed by an excellent banding demonstration from Nancy Ransom in Chico Basin, Colorado (courtesy of Bird Conservancy of the Rockies), then made our way down south for a fascinating banding demonstration from Pedro Martins of the Mantiqueira Bird Observatory in Brazil.

We took a rest and had some important virtual scientific talks., Be sure to check out the abstracts in this issue of NABB. Then we finished off with a insightful and entertaining keynote from Stu Mackenzie of Bird Studies, Canada, about some of the recent findings using Motus transmitter technology.

Overall, it was a great way to stay connected and learn more about bird research and bird banding. We are very excited to remind you of our upcoming in person meeting at the Great Bear Divide near Los Angeles for the last weekend in April. Dates are still being finalized, but we are

looking forward to seeing everyone for some epic western spring migration.

Are you interested in getting more involved in WBBA?? We are currently seeking active and interested people to help on our board or planning committees. Be sure to shoot me or CJ Ralph an email if you're interested. We hope your fall migration banding is off to a good (and safe) start, and we're looking forward to seeing some station reports in upcoming issues. Cheers from the west coast!

Holly Garrod

Save the Date for Annual Meeting 29 Apr to 1 May 2022 in southern California

This coming spring of 2022, we will host our annual meeting at a recently-discovered Pacific Flyway dawn migration site in southern California. The meeting will be held from 29 Apr to 1 May 2022 during the potential peak migration. Thousands of birds have been documented passing through the site known as Bear Divide each morning during spring migration. It is located in the Angeles National Forest, approximately 9 km east of Santa Clarita in Los Angeles County, in the San Gabriel Mountains. Large numbers of spring passerines have been documented using this narrow pass during migration, including Western Tanagers, Lazuli Buntings, Gambel's White-crowned Sparrows, Warbling Vireos, Black-headed Grosbeaks, 10 species of warblers, and many more.

Meeting activities include opportunities to visit Bear Divide and observe this amazing dawn migration spectacle, and the two ongoing studies in the area: a point count study led by Dr. Ryan Terrill (beardivide.org) and a banding study led by Tania Romero, Lauren Hill, and Jayde Blair. Additional activities include social events, talks, workshops, and presentations with a focus on bird migration and banding. We will also be planning birding field trips, such as to the high desert of the Antelope Valley at Piute Ponds, a visit to the bird collections at the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, and more.

The meeting itself will be held a few kilometers down the hill from Bear Divide at Placerita Canyon Nature Center in Santa Clarita, Los Angeles County, in a lush riparian center of bird abundance. A banding station at Placerita Canyon will likely also be in operation. It will be a pleasure to have you join us next spring and share with you Bear Divide.

**Please contact us for more information.
Tania Romero (t41romero@gmail.com)**

**Abstracts of the Western Bird Banding
Association Virtual Annual Meeting,
September 2021.**

Compiled by Danielle Kaschube <dkaschube[at]birdpop.org>

We had an exciting, albeit virtual, meeting with several very interesting presentations. Take a look at them and enjoy them from the links to the meeting on WBBA's web page (westernbirdbanding.org).

Invited Keynoters

Using bird banding and wildlife monitoring data to mechanistically understand how climate change diminishes biodiversity.

Jared Wolfe (Michigan Technological University, [jdwolfe\[at\]mtu.edu](mailto:jdwolfe[at]mtu.edu)), David Luther, and John Vucetich (George Mason University).

Scientists are increasingly using bird banding data to understand the varied mechanisms through which climate change is impacting biodiversity and ecosystem function. Most prior work has emphasized the mechanistic role of (i)

species' physiological limits, (ii) mismatch between life history and phenology, and (iii) species' limited capacity to shift geographic ranges. What may be underappreciated are mechanisms involving trophic interactions and how those mechanisms are likely to result in many unforeseeable impacts of climate change on wildlife. Here, I will draw attention to several case studies, based on long term monitoring data, that have just now become available. Findings from these studies should raise concern for the conservation of birds and mammals in both pristine and human dominated systems.

Wingtips at our fingertips: understanding the complex lives of migratory animals.

Stu McKenzie (Migration Ecology, Birds Studies Canada, [smackenzie\[at\]birdscanada.org](mailto:smackenzie[at]birdscanada.org)).

The protection of migratory birds and their habitat requires a complete understanding of how they use landscapes and habitats throughout their full annual cycle. This information not only tells us where we should invest our limited time, resources and energies, but it also communicates the story of migration to engage and link people and communities in conservation action. Join Stu Mackenzie, to learn how scientists are advancing the understanding, appreciation and conservation of migratory animals through the Motus Wildlife Tracking System.

The Motus Wildlife Tracking System (Motus) is an international collaborative research network that uses coordinated automated radio telemetry to facilitate research and education on the ecology and conservation of migratory animals. Motus is a program of Birds Canada in partnership with collaborating researchers and organizations. Motus allows researchers to track the smallest animals possible (birds, bats, and insects), with high temporal and geographic precision, over great distances and reveal important aspects of their life movements, connectivity, ecology, and life histories. Motus combines the collective impact of local, regional, and even hemispheric projects into one massive collaborative effort that expands the scale and scope of everyone's work and maximizes the use of scarce resources.