

## WESTERN BIRDS HAS A NEW EDITOR

As long as anyone can remember, Alan Craig has been the editor of *Western Birds*.

Thirteen years, and thirteen volumes, to be exact; ever since *Western Birds* appeared as the "mature adult" form of the fledgling journal *California Birds*, in its fourth year of publication.

Actually, Alan was there at the beginning, as one of the original editors of *California Birds*. Indeed, Alan wrote the first sentence that appears on page one of the first issue of the first volume of the journal, just as he would write the first sentence to appear in *Western Birds*.

Needless to say, then, *Western Birds* and, indeed, Western Field Ornithologists, owe a great deal of their current stature in the ornithological community to Alan. Our pride in our journal and our organization is in large part pride in the results of long hours of work Alan has selflessly devoted for the past 17 years.

Alan's accomplishments as editor have been many. A stickler for detail, he has produced issue after issue virtually error-free. He has maintained high standards for the quality of the information presented in the journal's pages. But perhaps his most valued and lasting contribution has been his willingness to nurse "greenhorn" authors—the student and amateur field ornithologists for whom Western Field Ornithologists and *Western Birds* came into being—through their first published papers. I know, because I was one.

But Alan's long stint (no, that isn't a new species of *Calidris*) as editor has taken its toll on other aspects of his life. Work and other commitments forced Alan to tender his resignation a couple of years ago—a resignation the board was unable to accept, until now, because of an inability to find anyone willing and able to fill his shoes.

We are now pleased to announce that Philip Unitt has volunteered to take on the editorship of *Western Birds* in the fine tradition established by Alan Craig.

Philip brings excellent credentials to the job. A member of Western Field Ornithologists since its inception, Philip has made substantial contributions to field ornithology in Southern California, many of these being published in *Western Birds* over the years. His most notable achievement to date has been the monumental task of summarizing the wealth of information about what is perhaps the most ornithologically complex California county, resulting in *The Birds of San Diego County*. In addition to being a widely respected ornithologist, Philip is a technical editor by profession. Most importantly, Philip brings a strong commitment to the enhancement of field ornithology in the West that we know will serve him well as the editor of *Western Birds*.

And so the editorship of your journal has passed to good hands. We will miss Alan's steady guidance, but we are also happy to see him find time at last for other goals in life. And we will always be aware of the indelible mark of quality that is his legacy to *Western Birds*.

*Tim Manolis, Acting President*