

---

## Western Bird Banding Association 2011 Annual Meeting Report

The 2011 annual meeting of the Western Bird Banding Association (WBBA) was held 12-14 Aug in beautiful northern Utah. The total number of registered attendees was 28, hailing from Arizona, California, Colorado, Maryland, Nevada, Oregon, and Utah. Events were held at Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge near Brigham City, UT, and at the Ogden Nature Center in Ogden, UT.

Friday's events began with mist netting at the Ogden Nature Center—a first-time event for the nature center. Even though bird activity was slow due to the time of the year (mid-August), it allowed an opportunity for inexperienced banders to learn from some of our more seasoned banders. It also opened the door to possible future banding at the nature center. A small group of attendees was treated with an airboat tour of the southern part of Bear River Refuge adjacent to the Great Salt Lake, where thousands of shorebirds and waterbirds were sighted. Following lunch at the refuge, Danny Bystrak from the USGS Bird Banding Lab presented a workshop on using the newest version of the banding data program "Bandit." Mr. Bystrak also presented an update on the Bird Banding lab during the Saturday paper session. The annual WBBA board meeting was also held Friday afternoon.

On Friday evening a lively social was held at the Nature Center, including a delicious Dutch oven cookout, a Utah specialty. Following dinner, Cagan Sekercioglu, University of Utah, gave an informal presentation (with wonderful pictures!) on his banding operations in Ethiopia and Turkey.

Saturday events began with an early morning birding trip by car to parts of Bear River Refuge. Unfortunately, we ended up canceling a Saturday morning banding session at the Nature Center due to a tight time schedule.

The scientific session was held on Saturday in the auditorium at Bear River Refuge. The sessions were attended by all 28 registered participants plus

a few guests. Fifteen interesting and informative presentations were given. Topics were wide-ranging and included ecology of the Great Salt Lake, research on Burrowing Owls, Snowy Plovers, dippers, Golden-crowned Sparrows, and Canada Geese, as well as the use of different techniques for bird capture and data acquisition and analysis.

At the end of the scientific session on Saturday, a WBBA general meeting was held where the Board reported on the year's activities and the decisions made during the Board meeting.

The Grants Committee selected and the Board approved two recipients for this year's grant awards: Ross Crandall for Monitoring: "50-year population trends of a breeding Golden Eagle population in south-central Montana." and Taza Schaming for Research: "The impact of whitebark pine (*Pinus albicaulis*) mortality on Clark's Nutcracker (*Nucifraga columbiana*) demography and habitat use."

WBBA continues to support the quarterly journal, *North American Bird Bander* and encourages Western bird banders to submit articles.

WBBA board members continue to be active on the North American Banding Council (NABC). Our own John Alexander is now Chair of NABC and C.J. Ralph is Vice-Chair.

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

C.J. Ralph - President  
Howard Browers - 1st Vice President  
Renée Cormier - 2nd Vice President  
Mike Boyles - Past President  
Andrea Wuenschel - Secretary  
Pat Leitner - Treasurer  
Danielle Kaschube - Membership Chair  
Walt Sakai - *NABB* Editor  
Kay Loughman - At Large Board Member

Josée Rousseau - At Large Board Member  
John Alexander - At Large Board Member and  
NABC representative

The Saturday evening banquet events were held outdoors at the Ogden Nature Center. The locally catered banquet supper was ample and delicious. A competitive silent auction featuring books, T-shirts and wildlife prints netted \$486 which helps fund WBBA's research and monitoring grant program. Our keynote speaker was Dr. Cagan Sekercioglu, who provided an interesting and informative presentation on his work regarding birds and climate change.

Sunday events included two all-day field trips: Deseret Land and Livestock Ranch—spectacular high altitude scenery, gorgeous weather, and at least 50 bird species seen; and hotspots of the Great Salt Lake where thousands of waterbirds and shorebirds were sighted.

Plans are in the works for our 2012 annual meeting to be held jointly with the Oregon Field Ornithologists. The meeting will take place 22-24 Jun 2012 at the Running Y Ranch near Klamath Falls, Oregon.

*Howard Browers*

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice-president and Conference Chair**

---

## 2011 Meeting Abstracts

(In alphabetical order by lead author)

### **ESTABLISHING THE BREEDING PROVENANCE OF A TEMPERATE- WINTERING NORTH AMERICAN PASSERINE, THE GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW, USING LIGHT-LEVEL GEOLOCATION**

*Renee L. Cormier, Nathaniel E. Seavy, Diana L. Humple, and Thomas Gardali, PRBO Conservation Science, Palomarin Field Station, Bolinas, California, USA*

The migratory biology and connectivity of passerines remains poorly known, especially for those that move primarily within the temperate zone. We used light-level geolocators to describe the migratory geography of a North American temperate migrant passerine. From February to March of 2010, we attached geocator tags to 33 Golden-crowned Sparrows (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*) wintering on the central coast of California, USA, and recovered four tags the following winter (October to December 2010). We used a Bayesian state-space model to estimate the most likely breeding locations. All four birds spent the breeding season on the coast of the Gulf of Alaska, but their breeding locations spanned 1300 km and did not overlap. Speed of migration was nearly twice as fast during the spring compared to the fall. The return rate of birds tagged the previous season (33%) was similar to that of control birds (39%), but the interpretation of return rates was complicated because 7 of 11 birds had lost their tags. Our results provide insight into the previously unknown breeding provenance of a central coastal California wintering population of Golden-crowned Sparrows and provide more evidence of the contributions light-level geolocation can make to our understanding of the migratory geography of small passerines.

### **THE INSTITUTE FOR BIRD POPULATIONS: HAPPENINGS AND RESULTS FROM IBP'S PROGRAMS**

*David F. DeSante, Phil Nott, Peter Pyle and Jim Saracco, The Institute for Bird Populations, P0 Box 1346, Point Reyes Station, 94956, California. Presenter: Danielle Kaschube, The Institute for Bird Populations*

The Institute for Bird Populations (IBP) has several programs for which we will present an update of results or current direction. Analyses continue on 15 years of Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS) data that will culminate in the production of a scientific monograph and the development of a dedicated website to disseminate detailed results. The first goal was to document and