

AFO Afield



Vol. 10, No. 1 January 2005

Banding Together

Banding together refers to an activity we share and to our band, the Association of Field Ornithologists. Through our band, we promote field studies of birds. Through banding, we can learn new things but we also touch that beauty of birds that draws professionals and amateurs together. “Getting out there” is what we promote and that is needed more and more, with each new subdivision making it difficult to find what’s out there. Why, then, are there so few of us in the band? At mid-year 2004 there were only 1784 people supporting AFO through membership.

With this mind, the AFO is expanding its Membership Committee. We are fortunate to have Alicia Craig, Director, Bird Conservation Alliance of the American Bird Conservancy to chair it. Lee Robinson and Kimberley Young will provide us with enthusiasm and talent that stretches from coast to coast. The new representative to our membership service, the Ornithological Societies of North America (OSNA), Sandra Gaunt, has a special interest in seeing that we are provided good information about our membership—she was instrumental in starting OSNA over 20 years ago! We are adding a new member service at our annual meetings—the one-on-one student/amateur/professional organizer. Rebecca Holberton and Bridget Stutchbury will come up with innovative ways to get our HY members and AHY members together in a relaxed setting to encourage students and other younger people to join our band.

Our *Journal of Field Ornithology* continues to be a leader among ornithological journals, ranked 7th out of 15 international ornithological journals in its “impact.” Impact has something to do with how many of its articles are cited by other ornithologists in their publications. We also know that *JFO* costs only 10 cents a page compared with the average of 94 cents for other journals. Much of this can be credited with the superb editorial talents of Charles Brown and Mary Bomberger Brown.

Much of your band’s talents and enthusiasm for birds and bird study will be on display at our next meeting, 21–24 April 2005, near the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center where banding comes together. We hope to see you there!

—Eugene S. Morton, President AFO

2004 AFO/WOS Annual Meeting Summary

The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, newly housed in its spectacular Imogene Powers Johnson Center for Birds and Biodiversity, hosted the Association of Field Ornithologist Association and Wilson Ornithological Society joint meeting 22–25 April. Preceding the paper sessions, the Lab treated us to four incredible workshops on Bioacoustics Research, Digiscoping, eBird, and Sound Recording, reflecting only some of the Lab’s activities. In addition to the usual AFO business, AFO hosted meetings of the North American Ornithological Atlas Committee, Partners in Flight, and the North American Banding Council.

Sixty papers and 47 posters were introduced by Stephen Emlen’s opening presentation entitled “Birds ‘R’ Us: Chronicles of an avian anthropologist,” in honor of his receipt of the Margaret Morse Nice Award from The Wilson Ornithological Society.

The Alexander Skutch Fund Award this year went to Carlos Humberto Pereira de Oliveira from Brazil for his study of the behavior and reproductive biology of the Restinga Antwren (*Formicivora littoralis*).

The annual E. Alexander Bergstrom Research Awards were awarded to Miguel A. Acevedo, Alejandro Bodrati, Jeanne Hammond, Adan Oliveras de Ita, Jennifer McNicoll, Kim Mendres Mendillo, Vaness Pompei, Timothy Billo, and Kelly Williams-Sieg.

At the banquet on the final evening, student awards for best paper were presented to Dana Hawley, a graduate student in the department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Cornell University, who won the Alexander Wilson prize for her paper entitled “The relationship between social dominance and disease recovery in captive flocks of House Finches infected with *Mycoplasma gallisepticum*” and to Megan M. Szymanski, a finishing undergraduate in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, for her paper entitled “High lineage diversity and host sharing of malarial parasites in a local avian assemblage.” Rebecca Heiss, a graduating senior in Biological Sciences at Binghamton University, Binghamton won the Lynds Jones Prize for her poster entitled “Mouth color and tail shape as an indicator of age in American Crows.”

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Annual Meeting of the Association of Field Ornithologists and the Wilson Ornithological Society April 21–24, 2005 • Beltsville, Maryland

The Wilson Ornithological Society and the Association of Field Ornithologists will meet jointly Thursday April 21–Sunday, April 24, 2005 at the Sheraton College Park Hotel in Beltsville, Maryland, at the invitation of the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center and the Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS). Except as noted below, all sessions will be held at the hotel. North American Breeding Bird Survey Coordinators will meet on April 21 and will present a symposium “Considerations for Improving the North American Breeding Bird Survey Sampling Frame” during the meeting.

Members or others planning in participating in the meeting are urged to register and to make hotel reservations promptly. Registration for the meeting (see form on page 4) includes a reception at the hotel on Thursday evening, the poster reception on Friday evening (including transportation), and coffee breaks. Buffet breakfasts and lunches will be available at the hotel, where the banquet will also be held on Saturday evening. Field trips may incur additional expense.

ACCOMODATIONS

The Sheraton has set aside a block of rooms at the special price of \$109 per night (plus applicable state and local taxes) for single or double occupancy. Reservations for this block of rooms at this rate must be made by **21 March 2005**. Reservation requests after that date will be accepted on a space and rate availability basis. Reservations must be made directly with Sheraton Reservations at 800-325-3535. You must mention the group name “WOS Conference.”

The Sheraton-College Park is at Exit 29B on I-95, the first exit north of the Capital Beltway (I-495) at Beltsville/Calverton, Maryland. I-95 is the major eastern north-south highway. Baltimore-Washington International Airport (BWI) is the nearest (and generally least expensive) airport, although Dulles (IAD) and Reagan National (DCA) are not far distant. Train service from BWI connects to the Washington Metro system at the Greenbelt station. The Sheraton provides complimentary transportation between the Greenbelt Station and the hotel between 7:00 A.M. and 10:00 P.M. (call 301-937-4422). Travel details will be provided to participants on request.

BUSINESS SESSIONS

Thursday April 21, 1:00 P.M.–6:00 P.M.—Meetings of the WOS and AFO Councils

Saturday April 23, 1:00 P.M.–3:00 P.M.—Consecutive Business Meetings of the Societies for All Members

SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS

The Plenary session on Friday morning will be the Margaret Morse Nice lecture by Eugene Morton and Bridget Stutchbury. There will be a symposium presented by Breeding Bird Survey coordinators on Friday afternoon. On Saturday morning a group of ornithologists from Mexico will present a symposium on the status of various ornithological projects in Mexico, in anticipation

of the North American Ornithological Conference in Veracruz in 2006. A poster session will be held Friday evening at the Patuxent Visitors Center. Concurrent sessions for the presentation of papers by participants will be held Friday and Saturday as needed.

BREAK-THE-ICE STUDENT LUNCHEON

Students, come and have lunch with some of the well-established members of AFO and WOS, on Friday April 22. Meet senior researchers and ornithologists in this informal round-table setting. Tickets are required as seating is limited to 30. Please indicate your interest in participating on the registration form.

FIELD TRIPS

Local members of the MOS will lead short local field trips Friday and Saturday mornings, and longer trips on Sunday. See Life Paulagics [sic] will organize an eight-hour pelagic trip (8:00 A.M.–4:00 P.M.) from Lewes, Delaware, on Sunday April 24, weather permitting, for a minimum of 25 people at a cost of \$75 per person plus food and transportation. Please indicate your interest on the Registration Form. If the boat trip is canceled by the Captain due to adverse weather, a field trip from the boat dock can cover nearby coastal areas. The date may coincide with the large migration of Atlantic mackerel and herring, with the birds and cetaceans that follow them. For more information about the pelagic trip, email <info@paulagics.com>

STUDENT AWARDS

The Wilson Ornithological Society offers the Alexander Wilson Prize for the best student paper presented (orally) at the annual meeting, and the Lynds Jones Prize for the best poster by a student. Criteria are the paper’s contribution to ornithological knowledge, originality of the research, and effectiveness of presentation. For either prize, the student *must* be the first author and presenter (but papers by more than one student are eligible). **To be considered for either award, be certain to indicate on the abstract that you are eligible by putting an asterisk before the title.** Students competing for an award are guests of the WOS at the annual banquet. Simply write “Wilson Prize” on the banquet price line on the registration form. Students will receive their banquet tickets at the society business meetings on Saturday April 23.

Students planning an oral presentation are invited to apply for a travel award from the AFO and WOS. These awards are intended to encourage student participation by providing part of the cost of attendance at the meeting. To apply, send an expanded, detailed abstract of the paper to be presented (not to exceed two typed pages) and a budget of anticipated travel and subsistence costs, as well as a copy of the abstract sent to the Scientific Program Committee) by **1 March 2005** to Leann Blem, preferably by email <lblem@saturn.vcu.edu> or regular mail: Department of Biology, Virginia Commonwealth University, 1000 W. Cary St., P.O. Box 842012, Richmond, VA 23284-2012 .

REGISTRATION FORM—AFO & WOS Annual Meeting

April 21–24, 2005 • Beltsville, Maryland

Each person attending must submit a form

Name(s): _____

Employer or affiliation (for badge): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone (daytime): _____ FAX: _____

Email: _____

Meeting Registration (per person cost):

Received on or before 20 March

General: \$125 \$ _____

Student: \$95 _____

After 15 March

General: \$150 _____

Student: \$125 _____

Saturday Banquet: \$30 _____

Meal choice:

Prime Rib of Beef

Chicken Chesapeake

Vegetarian

Special diet _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Make check payable to *Friends of Patuxent*
and mail with this form to
Friends of Patuxent
WOS-AFO Meeting
10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop
Laurel, MD 20708

Other events

Thursday reception (no charge)

Friday Reception and Poster Session (no charge)

Break-the-Ice Student Luncheon (no charge)

Pelagic Field Trip, April 24: \$75

RELEASE

*This release must be signed
before registration can be accepted.*

Each registrant desires and intends to participate in field trips and other activities of the joint annual meeting of the Wilson Ornithological Society and the Association of Field Ornithologists. Therefore, each registrant knowingly and voluntarily grants to each society and its officers, the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center and the Maryland Ornithological Society, and members of the organizing committee and others engaged in activities connected to this meeting, a full release from any claim, liability, or cost of any nature on account of personal illness or bodily injury, loss of life, or loss of or damage to property directly or indirectly arising as a result of participation in this meeting.

Name (print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

*For questions about this meeting
write or call the Chair of the Organizing Committee*

Richard C. Banks,

USGS-PWRC,
National Museum of Natural History, MRC-111
P. O. Box 30712,
Washington, DC 20013-0712,
phone 202-633-0783,
email: banksr@si.edu

*For questions about the scientific program
write or call the Chair of the Scientific Program Committee*

James D. Rising

Department of Zoology
Ramsay Wright Zoological Labs
University of Toronto
Toronto, ON M5S 3G5, Canada.
email: rising@zoo.utoronto.ca

The "Ahh, how cute" Bird-banding Experience

Alicia Craig

I recently had the pleasure of being exposed to several banding projects of the Northern Saw-whet Owl. I was warned when first invited to participate in a banding session, that I would say "ahh, how cute!" and that this would soften my outdoor-woman reputation. Hmmm, yes the first time I held the small owl, I did indeed say "ahh, how cute!"

Saw-whets are rusty brown below, chocolate-colored above with white spots, with large yellow eyes. Holding one in hand and having it stare up with those big yellow eyes just melted my heart. Which was a good thing because the rest of me was freezing. Banding birds in the winter night was much colder than banding birds during the spring and summer!

A small forest-dwelling bird that preys primarily on mice and small rodents, Saw-whets nest in tree cavities, with the males advertising their territories beginning in late winter. The Northern Saw-whet Owl, is named for the "whetting" sound of the teeth of a saw. The male's territorial call is a repetitive "tooting" that sounds very much like the back-up alarm on construction vehicles. It is this call that is recorded and played at the banding sites. The mist nets were set up and the birds that flew into the nets were retrieved, measured, banded, examined and then released. The largest numbers



were caught on nights with a moonless sky, calm or light winds, and chilly temperatures (very chilly on the nights I helped band birds).

Saw-whets are probably common within their range, but their shy nature often makes them difficult to study. The saw-whet owl's breeding range stretches from northern Pennsylvania to central Canada west to southern Alaska and south in the

Rockies to Mexico; a small population lives in the southern Appalachians. Recent research suggests this small owl is more abundant and widespread than originally thought. Thanks to bird banders, scientists are learning more and more about these secretive owls.

There is still a lot to learn about saw-whet owl migration and ecology. Knowing more about their migration is crucial for managing landscapes and protecting this small owl for future generations.



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All profits are applied toward the purposes of
the Association of Field Ornithologists.

ABOUT

AFO BANDING SUPPLIES

AFO Banding Supplies began as "AFO Mist Nets" in the early 1950s by E. Alexander Bergstrom. The business operates as a service to banders throughout the world, providing a source for quality products—including banding tools and the best grade mist nets we can find. We offer mist nets, banding pliers, bags for carrying birds, wing rulers, portable scales, calipers, and many other items useful to field ornithologists and banders. All profits are applied to the purposes of AFO.

To receive our catalog by mail (produced only occasionally), send your name and address to AFO, c/o Manomet, PO Box 1770, Manomet, MA USA 02345, or email <AFOBAND@manomet.org>

For more information, visit us at <www.afonet.org>, call 508-224-6521, or contact us at the addresses above.

The E. Alexander Bergstrom Memorial Research Award

E. Alexander Bergstrom (1919–1973) was Vice-President of the Northeastern Bird-Banding Association (now AFO) and the Editor of *Bird-Banding* (now *Journal of Field Ornithology*) for 21 years. This fund is named to honor his memory and is intended to further research on birds, which he promoted and to which he was so dedicated.

Purpose of the Award: To promote field studies of birds, by helping to support a specific research or analysis project. In judging among proposals of equal quality, special consideration will be given to those on avian life history, that use data collected all or in part by amateurs, or that employ bird banding or other marking techniques. Both domestic (U.S. and Canada) and Latin American work is eligible for support.

Frequency and Amount: Approximately five Domestic awards (maximum \$1,000 each) and approximately three Latin American Awards (maximum \$1,500 each) will be awarded annually. Applications may be made for a grant of AFO mist nets in lieu of a cash award. Applications may be submitted in English, Spanish, or Portuguese.

Application for Year 2005 Awards: By February 15, 2005, applicants must submit a completed application form, a one-page resume, one letter of reference, and a research proposal (maxi-

mum three single-spaced pages). For an application visit <www.afonet.org/english/bergs.html>

Applications must be mailed to: Cecilia Riley, Bergstrom Awards Committee, Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, 103 West Highway 332, Lake Jackson, TX 77566. Phone: 979-480-0999. Email: <criley@gcbo.org>

Skutch Research Award

The Pamela and Alexander F. Skutch Research Award for Studies in Avian Natural History is offered annually by the Association of Field Ornithologists. The Fund is intended to support the study of life histories, especially social relations and reproduction, of little known birds of the Continental Neotropics including Trinidad and Tobago, with a minimum of disturbance. The funds requested from the Award should be adequate for the intended study to avoid seeking additional funds. The grantee may be an amateur or professional ornithologist of any nationality. It is highly desirable that he or she has some previous experience of the region and birds (and if possible, the locality) where he or she will study. One award of up to \$10,000 will be considered annually.

Application deadline: February 15, 2004. For application guidelines, please visit the AFO web site <www.afonet.org> or write Elissa Landre, Broadmoor Sanctuary, Massachusetts Audubon, 280 Eliot St., Natick, MA 01760. Email <elandre@massaudubon.org>. No phone calls, please.

CALL FOR PAPERS: AFO & WOS Annual Meeting

Members and guests are invited to present submissions on any ornithological topic for presentation at the meeting, either orally (15-minute time slot) or as a poster.

Deadline for receipt of abstracts is March 18, 2005. Send them to Chair of the Scientific Program Committee, Dr. James D. Rising, preferably by Word or WordPerfect attachment to email <rising@zoo.utoronto.ca> or by snail mail (3 copies) to Department of Zoology, Ramsay Wright Zoological Labs, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON M5S 3G5, Canada.

Your abstract should not exceed 250 words in total, and should be in the format of the example shown below, which shows how to handle multi-authored papers and to identify those in competition for student awards.

Skip a line after the abstract and then put in (1) the name, email, and telephone number of the corresponding author, (2) whether the paper is to be presented orally or as a poster, and (3) the means you'll be using to make an oral presentation: slide projector, overhead projector, or PowerPoint (please give version number of PowerPoint software). PowerPoint slides should be burned onto a CD, for uploading onto computers provided at the meeting. Please bring your own tacks or pins for hanging posters.

Example of abstract

HOW TO PREPARE A PERFECT ABSTRACT. Neva Dunit and Major Professor, Department of Integumentary Biology, Wannabe College, Wanton, NY 12345, and Ida Know, Other Department, Junior College, Birdsville, NH 01234.

Indent the beginning of the abstract on the next line. For multi-authored papers, put an asterisk* after the name of the person presenting the paper. Papers eligible for student awards should have an asterisk* at the beginning of the title, as this one does. On lines below the abstract, give the name and email address of the person to contact if questions arise, whether the paper is intended for oral presentation or as a poster, and A-V needs for presenting oral presentations (including PowerPoint software version). Please indicate if you are willing to chair a papers session.

Contact: Major Professor <mprof@wannabe.edu>
Presentation: Oral
A-V: PowerPoint 2002 (e.g.)

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AFO & WOS Annual Meeting

REGISTRATION INFORMATION INSIDE

Editorial Assistance

The Association of Field Ornithologists offers a free service assisting authors of ornithological articles who are not native speakers of English. The goal of the Editorial Assistance Program (EAP) is to enable and encourage Latin American and other ornithologists to publish their work in widely read international journals. This is not a translation service. Manuscripts must be written in English (even if flawed), and an AFO volunteer will work with the authors to refine the writing into idiomatic English appropriate for scientific publication. It is often useful for the English version to be accompanied by one in the authors' native language. It is important to realize that scientific content will not generally be addressed through this program, rather only suggestions for improving clarity and grammar will be provided. While submission of appropriate articles to the AFO's own *Journal of Field Ornithology* is encouraged, it is not required for this program. In fact, editors of English-language ornithological journals are encouraged to direct manuscripts to this service when it can improve an article's chance of acceptance. The EAP has created a database of AFO members willing to assist authors with their manuscripts. If interested in helping out as a volunteer with this program, please contact the EAP Coordinator. All inquiries from authors about manuscripts should be directed to Daniel M. Brooks, EAP Coordinator, Department of Vertebrate Zoology, Houston Museum of Natural Science, One Herman Circle Drive, Houston, Texas 77030-1799 USA, (phone 713-639-4776), email <dbrooks@hmns.org>. Electronic submission of manuscripts to the EAP Coordinator via an email attachment is strongly encouraged.



SORA is here:

AFO just completed a project that makes every *Journal of Field Ornithology* and *Bird-Banding* (former name of *JFO*) article ever published accessible to anyone, anywhere in the world. In 2003, the AFO Council voted to digitize the entire *JFO* archive (1930-1999) and in 2004 the Council voted to incorporate it into SORA, the **Searchable Ornithological Research Archive**. SORA is a convenient, easy-to-use-and-search Internet database that has compiled archives from many of the leading ornithological organizations.

If you are looking for archival materials from the leading bird journals, visit SORA, accessible through AFO's own website <www.afonet.org> or directly at SORA <elibrary.unm.edu/sora>. For up-to-date abstracts from current issues of the *Journal of Field Ornithology*, visit <www.BioOne.org>.