

WESTERN BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION
Minutes, 2006 Annual Meeting

The 2006 meeting of the Western Bird Banding Association was held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, from September 14 to September 17, 2006. The Board Meeting was held on Friday, September 15, at the Rio Grande Nature Center.

Attendees: Gary Blevins (President), John Alexander (1st Vice President), Diana Humple (2nd Vice President), Michael Boyles (Secretary), Tricia Campbell (Treasurer), Kenneth Burton (Imm. Past President/Membership), Walt Sakai (Outreach), Kay Loughman (Editor), CJ Ralph (At Large), and Roy Churchwell.

Meeting Notes: The notes compiled from e-mail discussions that had occurred since the cancellation of the 2005 meeting were approved by the Board in lieu of official meeting minutes.

Financial Report: Tricia provided a Treasurer's Report covering the period from 4/1/05 to 3/31/06. The report included a proposed 2006 budget. Tricia had indicated that she would be resigning as Treasurer after this meeting. Roy Churchwell (San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory) has agreed to serve as Treasurer. Roy has experience using QuickBooks for tracking finances. Tricia has used Quicken. The two programs are compatible, but WBBA can purchase a copy of Quicken for Roy's use if needed. It was pointed out that because the new Editor may not do layout work for *NABB*, camera ready charges are likely to increase this year and that \$500 may be a better estimate than the \$350 indicated in the Report. The Treasurer's Report was approved as amended.

Membership: Ken provided a report indicating the status of membership as of 8/31/06. The trend of declining membership continued this year. However, we have gained 12 new members just since April 1, whereas a total of 15 new members joined throughout all last year. Ken suggested conducting a survey of former members to find out why they did not renew their membership. One reason may be that the pool of independent banders is shrinking as bird banding becomes more of an institutionally based activity. Ken suggested that WBBA consider merging with the other banding associations, especially if they are also losing members. John likes the small size of WBBA and its western focus. Kay likes the social aspect of seeing friends and familiar colleagues, which is diluted by larger meetings. CJ is less interested in eastern activities and would be less inclined to travel east to attend a meeting. CJ feels that some people may not feel that *North American Bird Bander* is valuable enough to justify membership. Ken has been told by former members that they gave up their membership because they no longer band.

John and Gary feel that we need to recruit actively and that we could do this by having training and workshops at the annual meetings. It was pointed out that you can't always band at the WBBA meetings depending on the comfort level of the permit holder. However, this should not be an issue as long as the master permittee or a sub-permittee is

present when banding is taking place. It may not be possible to have trainings and workshops every year, but meetings are a good time to recruit participants for future workshops. If the training we provide is valuable enough, employers may support the attendance of their employees, which would increase turnout. If we do this, it should be done in conjunction with the North American Banding Council.

WBBA's target audience may be small because we are so focused on land birds. We could be more active in including seabirds, shorebirds, and raptors. We also could include new tracking technologies in addition to banding.

It is also important to think of ways to increase the value of membership for the existing members so that they continue to remain part of the organization. Although we don't want to burden members with too much information, a newsletter might be worthwhile. Hard copy newsletters are expensive, especially if they don't result in the recruitment of new members. Electronic newsletters are cheaper, but they are often ignored by people who are flooded with e-mails. A one-page electronic newsletter may be acceptable, or we could include a hard-copy newsletter with meeting announcements to save on postage.

We have lots of ideas, but many times our ideas are not executed. Although we all have large workloads and busy schedules, people need to be accountable for the tasks they commit to. Deadlines and periodic reminders are important. The President should check in with Board members by e-mail every few months to review the status of tasks.

The Board approved a motion that each Board member will attempt to recruit at least three new members this year.

Dues should not be raised at a time when membership is declining. Recruitment of new members is the best way to improve financial standing. Since Life Member dues go toward grants, the conversion to Life memberships takes money away from the pot that pays our expenses.

TASKS ASSOCIATED WITH MEMBERSHIP

- Ken will draft a survey for former members and send it out for review by the Board.
- Kay will send out the WBBA brochures so that we can start using them again.
- John will send information on Otis Swisher to Kay so that he can be recognized as an honorary member. John also will take the lead in developing criteria for recognizing honorary members and awarding them a lifetime membership.

Grants: Diana presented the recommendations of the Grant Committee for this year's research and monitoring grants. The Board approved the recommendations. The funded projects were 1) Lena Usyk, The ecology of LeConte's Sparrows and other grassland birds at Munuscong Bay, and 2) Lia Jacobsen Prellvitz and Raissa Iris de Carvalho, Breeding ecology of the southern Black-backed Gull (*Larus dominicanus*) in Deserta Island, Arvoredo Marine Reserve, Santa Catarina, Braz. Diana will work with Roy to get

the money to the recipients. Diana also provided Procedural Guidelines for awarding grants. The application deadline was extended so as not to conflict with field season. The Board approved the Guidelines, with the caveat that they are amended to include a reporting requirement for the recipients.

There was some discussion about whether \$500 is still a worthwhile amount. We could have a single \$1,000 grant, or spend more on each of the two grants. Grants are one of our most important functions, so we may not want to make them dependent on the latest budget. In considering grant requests, it is important to consider the total project cost, so that the grant represents a substantial proportion and makes a noticeable difference. Certain aspects of research, such as molecular analyses and avian flu testing, are very expensive. Awarding two grants, rather than a single grant for a larger amount, helps diversify the investment. CJ also pointed out that grant awards look good on résumés, so that by awarding two we are helping twice as many people than if we award only one. We may not want to commit to spending over \$1,000 unless we know we have the funds. The auctions help to raise money. We need to increase our focus on making the meetings profitable; a small increase in the registration fee can go a long way if attendance is large.

Editor's Report: Kay provided an Editor's Report to the Board. Dr. Dunning is retiring, so the future of Significant Encounters is up in the air. There has been some tension with the Bird Banding Lab regarding publishing before BBL has had a chance to verify the information. The editors may have someone in mind to take over, but if not, the Board should think of possible successors.

There has been no progress enhancing access to *North American Bird Bander* in SORA. Searching with SORA is troublesome. Some of this difficulty may be alleviated when a Google search function becomes available for volumes already included in SORA. There has been no progress on adding back issues. Kay is finished with her commitment as a *NABB* editor after the current volume, but she will continue working to make articles more accessible through SORA .

NABC: John prepared a NABC Report. The Evaluation and Certification Committee finished compiling the certification materials. There are now two complementary committees. A certification renewal process is in place with an appeals policy. There are now various levels at which people can be certified: bander, assistant bander, *etc.* There are changes in raptor and waterfowl certification. There has been more work on issues outside the U.S. NABC will have a poster at the NAOC meeting. The Education Committee can help with developing animal care protocols required by universities. It is also developing photographic keys for age and sex determinations.

John's term with NABC has expired, but he is interested in continuing. Jim Tietz is the alternate representative. The Board approved renewing John's appointment as representative. The Board also agreed to fund the attendance of the alternate. The Board approved Jim as the continued alternate, and WBBA will expect his attendance at NABC based on WBBA's financial support. In the future, we need to think about potential new blood for this function as well as for all WBBA roles.

Nominations: The Board recommended the following slate for 2007:

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| President | John Alexander |
| 1 st Vice President | Diana Humple |
| 2 nd Vice President | Mike Boyles |
| Secretary | Tina Fabula |
| Treasurer | Roy Churchwell |
| Imm. Past President | Gary Blevins |
| Membership | Ken Burton |
| Editor (beg. NABB 32:1) | Walt Sakai |
| Board Member | CJ Ralph |
| Board Member | Kay Loughman |
| Board Member | Tricia Campbell |

This slate was presented to the WBBA members following the paper session on Saturday, September 16. The slate was approved.

2006 Meeting Review: The meeting brought in \$3,060 (including the workshop, which brought in \$1,200). Expenses for the workshop were \$940, and expenses for the meeting were \$1,800. After paying for the WBBA-host bar, there was a small profit. The auction scheduled for Saturday was expected to make some money as well.

Web Site: It takes a long time to get things posted to the Web site. We may need more self-involvement. Timeliness is a priority. We can discuss ways to improve this situation with Lisa. If we have more control over the site, we can include things that would make it more popular with members. John can provide links to the site through KBO's site. There are photos in the gallery that display improper techniques. There are also problems with the comment section, and we should ask Lisa to disable the comments. We should require that people wishing to post pictures contact a Board member. We need to ensure that people appearing in posted pictures have given their permission for the photo to be used. We also should establish a timeframe during which pictures are posted so that people don't view the same pictures for years. The President is ultimately responsible for the content of the site.

TASKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE WEB SITE

- John will talk to Lisa about removing the public's ability to add to the website.
- Ken will prepare guidelines for Photo Gallery contents to ensure that contributions are appropriate.

Membership Survey: We need to know how to serve our members better.

TASKS ASSOCIATED WITH MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

- Gary will send out an e-mail to get input on how we can better serve members.

Storage of WBBA Documents: All documents prior to 1991 were destroyed in the 1991 Oakland firestorm. We need to know the locations of all documents that have been

prepared since that time. We need to find an effective way to store meeting minutes and other WBBA documents. To qualify as a non-profit organization, we may be required to have printed records of our minutes. Roy mentioned that Google now has Web storage.

TASKS ASSOCIATED WITH STORAGE OF WBBA DOCUMENTS

- Diana will look for the 1991-1994 records.
- Ken will look to see what sets of meeting minutes he has.
- Diana will explore the keeping of records on the Web/electronic bulletin boards.
- John will help explore possibilities, including an FTP site.

On-line Store: The on-line store is no longer worth maintaining.

TASKS ASSOCIATED WITH ON-LINE STORE

- John will contact Lisa about removing the link to the store.

2007 Meeting: Diana will host the next meeting at PRBO Conservation Science in Petaluma. In scheduling the meeting, we need to avoid conflicts other meetings to the extent possible. Meetings to consider are IBBA, AFWA, AOU, Wildlife Society, WFO, and CA PIF. We may want to invite some of these groups to our meeting.

TASKS ASSOCIATED WITH 2007 MEETING

- Diana will suggest possible dates for the meeting to the Board, with the above considerations in mind.

2008 Meeting: Ken Voget would consider hosting a meeting in Idaho, but his location is not easy to get to. Other possibilities include Ken and CJ hosting in Arcata (but this would mean having back-to-back meetings in northern California), returning to Ashland, or approaching IBO about hosting in Boise. Manuel Grosselet has expressed an interest in hosting a meeting in Oaxaca, Mexico.

Board Development and Roles: Now that Mike is 2nd Vice President, he will take over the responsibilities for grants from Diana. We need to consider having training and certification workshops for the meetings. Support from bird observatories would help with this. Greater bird observatory involvement in general could improve WBBA and its meetings. It would be nice if people running a banding station could help put on a workshop at a WBBA meeting, but it is important that the banding station can run independently and that extra support is provided for the workshop so that the workshop doesn't interfere with the banding operation. There are lots of options for workshops at PRBO.

In an e-mail correspondence immediately following the meeting, Ken agreed to chair the Nominating Committee for the coming year.

TASKS ASSOCIATED WITH BOARD DEVELOPMENT

- Kay will send out a calendar summary of how to prepare for a WBBA meeting.

The WBBA Board meeting was continued briefly over lunch on Saturday, September 16 to finish any remaining business. It was at this meeting that the Board decided to recommend Tina Fabula as Secretary. Kay stated that she will continue to keep both the original and the digital version of the WBBA logo and can make it available on request. Tricia will close out the finances for this meeting and then transfer her files to Roy. We will need to contact the Bank of Petaluma about putting Roy on the accounts.

TASK SUMMARY

Ken

Draft a survey for former members and send it out for review by the Board.
Prepare guidelines for Photo Gallery contents to ensure that contributions are appropriate.
Check to see which sets of meeting minutes are in your possession.

Kay

Send the WBBA brochure to the Board members.
Send a calendar summary of how to prepare for a WBBA meeting to the Board members.

John

Send information on Otis Swisher to Kay so that he can be recognized as an honorary member.
Develop criteria for recognizing honorary members and awarding them a lifetime membership.
Talk to Lisa about removing the public's ability to add to the Website.
Explore possibilities for electronic storage of WBBA documents, such as an ftp site.
Contact Lisa about removing the link to the on-line store.

Gary

Send an e-mail to get input on how we can better serve WBBA members.

Diana

Look for the 1991-1994 records.
Explore the keeping of records on the Web/electronic bulletin boards.
Suggest possible dates for the 2007 meeting to the Board (avoiding conflicts with other important meetings).

All

Attempt to recruit three new WBBA members this year.

Editor's Report to the WBBA Board, September 2006

Major Manuscripts - Received

- Burton, K. Molts, Plumages, and Age Classes in Passerines and Near-Passerines: a Bander's Overview. Rec'd 10/30/05. Rejected on advice of reviewers 1/04/06. Author invited to re-write and re-submit. Resubmitted August 2, 2006. Accepted for publication after incorporation of revisions specified by reviewers, 8/21/06.
- Collins, C. Banding Studies of Caspian Terns in Southern California. Rec'd 11/14/05
Published in NABB 31:1
- Collins, C. Banding Studies of Elegant Terns in Southern California. Rec'd 11/15/05.
Published in NABB 31:1
- Colwell, R. Female Anna's Hummingbirds Require a Larger Band Size. Rec'd 8/10/06. Reviews due before 10/01/06.
- Grosset, M. Winter Site Fidelity of Migratory Songbirds in Oaxaca, Mexico. Rec'd 6/30/06.
Accepted for publication after incorporation of revisions specified by reviewers, 8/18/06.
- Johnson, K. Insect and Bird Species Diversity in Habitat Undergoing Restoration to Tallgrass Prairie and an Unrestored Site. Rec'd 7/10/06. The co-author for this manuscript is Mara McDonald, who was the recipient of a WBBA grant to partially fund the purchase of equipment for this project. Because the authors are in the midwest, and because the research took place in Wisconsin, I asked IBBA Editor Peter Lowther to shepherd this excellent paper through to publication.
- Sakai, W. The Influence of Mist Net Color on Capture Rate: Are Black Mist Nets Really Superior to Colored Mist Nets? Rec'd June 29, 2005. Rejected on advice of reviewers 8/23/05. Author invited to re-analyze data, rewrite, and re-submit paper.

News, Notes, Comments - Published:

- 30:3 Grosset, M. Recommended Band Size for Inca Dove.
Colwell, R. Addendum to Hummingbird Paper.
Craig, S. Stainless Steel Bands.
- 31:1 West, S. First Winter Band Recovery of Cave Swallow from Mexico

For the WBBA section - Published:

- 30:3 WBBA Annual Report of Birds Banded, 2004. (Othahal)
Introduction to the WBBA Annual Report. (Blevins)
Important membership notice (Burton)
- 30:4 Annual Meetings - 2005 and 2006. (Blevins)
Representing the Western Bird Banding Association on the North American Banding Council.
(Alexander)
The Institute for Bird Populations and the Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS)

Program.(Kaschube)

Western Station Reports: Golden Gate Raptor Observatory, Fall 2005 (Hull),
Alaska Bird Observatory, Denali Institute Migration Station (Walker),
Klamath Bird Observatory, 2005 Banding Report (Frey/Alexander)

- 31:1 2006 Annual Meeting Announcement (Alexander/Cox)
Apply for WBBA Grants (Humble)
- 31:2 Western Station Reports: San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory Spring Migration (Barton),
An Outstanding Wintering Ground Banding Station in Mexico (Grosselet),
Alaska Bird Observatory. Spring Migration Report for Creamer's Field Migration Station,
Fairbanks, AK (Guers)
Welcome to New Members (Burton)
Howard Cogswell, January 19, 1915 - June 8, 2006 (Loughman/Ralph)

Anticipated in coming months:

- 31:3 WBBA Annual Report of Birds Banded, 2005 (Sakai)
WBBA Officers for the coming year. (Loughman)
Report on the 2006 Annual Meeting. (Who?)
- 31:4 Abstracts of papers presented at the annual meeting. (Loughman)
Representing the Western Bird Banding Association on the NABC. (Alexander)
- 32:1 First issue for new WBBA Editor

Reviewers: The following people have acted as referees for papers submitted to me for publication in NABB since August 2005: Gary Burness, Barbara Carlson, David Craig, Geoff Geupel, Keith Larsen, Adrienne Leppold, William D. Loughman, Robert Mulvihill, Peter Pyle, C. J. Ralph, Ruth Russell, Fred Schaffner, and Yasuko Suzuki, Susan Wethington.

Accomplishments: As noted during the past year, Dr. John (Barny) Dunning is retiring after editing NABB's Significant Encounters column for nearly twenty years. I helped him to complete his final column, which will appear in NABB 31:3.

Issues: No progress has been made on enhancing access to NABB material already in SORA, though a September 5 e-mail from Blair Wolf suggests there may be things we can do. I will pursue. No progress has been made on adding back volumes to SORA.

Resignation: After shepherding 25 NABB issues through to publication, I am stepping down from my assignment as WBBA's Editor. My last issue will be NABB 31:4.

Kay Loughman