



## **PARTNERS IN FLIGHT NEWSLETTER**

<http://www.partnersinflight.org>

January 2007

### **PIF Species Assessment Handbook Translated**

The Partners in Flight Handbook on Species Assessment (Version 2005) has been translated into Spanish by Mariamar Gutierrez Ramirez and will soon be available on the PIF web site. The translation has obvious value as we explore the usefulness of assessment in Central America. The handbook also will be distributed to participants in the upcoming species assessment workshop at the Neotropical Ornithological Congress in Venezuela (see details below).

### **Bird Conservation Through Education: A National Gathering**

In this conference (details below), PIF will be staffing a panel discussion early on the first day entitled, "Educating About Priority Bird Conservation Issues." This will be a key opportunity to reach a number of educators with what we believe to be our most fundamental education needs. If you have issues or ideas or needs that you want to be sure are included, send them to Terry. If you'd like to review our brief presentation as it becomes firmed up, let me know that as well. Others participating on the panel include John Alexander and Ashley Dayer (Klamath Bird Observatory), Melissa Pitkin (PRBO Conservation Science), Amanda Morrison (Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory), and Chris Eberly (DOD).—Terry Rich ([terry\\_rich@fws.gov](mailto:terry_rich@fws.gov))

### **International Migratory Bird Day 2007: Birds in a Changing Climate**

It isn't too early to start preparing your activities for international migratory bird day 2007. This year's theme for International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) spotlights climate change, its effects on birds and their habitats. Louise Zemaitis, an accomplished artist and longtime member of the birding community has created the 2007 IMBD poster. You may order posters and read more about Louise Zemaitis at ([www.birdday.org](http://www.birdday.org)).

### **Bird Monitoring and Detectability: Understanding and Applying Appropriate Methods**

This symposium will be held at the Lory Student Center, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO, on February 27 – March 1, 2007. The agenda,

lodging, registration and other details are available at <http://www.warnercnr.colostate.edu/FWB/Workshops/MonitoringSymposiumMain.html>. This should provide an excellent opportunity to explore in more detail the many options we have for improving population trend assessment.

### **The 4<sup>th</sup> International Partners In Flight Conference**

As you know, our next conference will be held 13-16 February 2008, at the new McAllen Convention Center in McAllen, Texas. The conference theme will be Tundra to Tropics: Connecting Birds, Habitats and People, which will be shared with International Migratory Bird Day (<http://www.birdday.org/>) for 2008. The focus of the conference will be on international connections that further bird and habitat conservation throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Concurrent paper sessions will focus on issues in bird conservation and will be of two types, 1) standard sessions typical of scientific society meetings, and 2) sessions followed by a facilitated discussion session. The goal of each of the latter sessions will be to produce a strategic action plan to be distributed to all partners within weeks of the conference. There will also be keynote speakers, vendors, social events, a poster session, a variety of single- and multi-day birding field trips, and a proceedings that will include papers developed from posters.

**We are seeking \$30,000** in contributions to support student and professional participation. A detailed budget is being refined. Contact Terry if you have any funding that might be available. The Gulf Coast Bird Observatory (<http://www.gcbo.org/>) will be handling contributed funds. Details will be posted on the PIF web site (<http://www.partnersinflight.org>) and distributed through various bird conservation listservs as they develop. In the mean time, contact Terry Rich with inquiries ([terry\\_rich@fws.gov](mailto:terry_rich@fws.gov)).

### **Special Meetings and Workshops at 4<sup>th</sup> International PIF Conference**

We will have access to the McAllen Convention Center on Wednesday, 13 February 2008, and to a number of other venues earlier in the week for those who want to hold a special meeting, a regular meeting, or a workshop in connection with this conference. Many groups took advantage of this type of arrangement at the NAOC, and it worked extremely well. This is a great way to get new people educated or involved in your particular topic. Contact Terry Rich if you want to book space for your meeting.

We also have produced a display for this conference that we encourage partners to put up during other meetings and conferences this winter. The display is small and light enough (12 lbs.) to carry on a plane. It consists of a 3' x 8' cloth banner that rolls out of a base unit like a window shade. It can be set up and taken down in a couple of minutes and can be easily moved with one hand. Contact Terry

Rich ([terry\\_rich@fws.gov](mailto:terry_rich@fws.gov)) to see a digital photo of the display and to reserve it for your meeting.

### **Obtaining Feedback on Stepped-down Population Estimates**

At the AFWA conference in Snowmass in September, the state wildlife agencies offered to take the lead on obtaining feedback on landbird population estimates that PIF has provided. A letter from the AFWA Bird Conservation Committee was sent to all state wildlife agency directors requesting that they each nominate a contact to be the lead for their state.

PIF is not asking for biologists and others to launch into a lot of new work. Rather, we are asking them to review the stateXBCR polygon estimates that have been distributed and which are still located on the AFWA web site – [http://www.fishwildlife.org/allbird\\_landbird.html](http://www.fishwildlife.org/allbird_landbird.html)) – and to provide independent estimates that may already be available so that we can compare and ultimately refine these estimates. Good estimates are important to proper objective setting and conservation design. We want to complete one round of review and revision, and then move on. We agree that there is little to be gained by trying to make these estimates perfect. A handout giving a little more background on this task was distributed in Snowmass and is available from Terry Rich.

### **Neotropical Ornithological Congress Workshops**

PIF has had three workshops accepted for the NOC in Venezuela (see details below). These are: 1) The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act as a Potential Funding Source for Ornithologists of Latin America and the Caribbean, 2) Potential value of the Partners in Flight Species Assessment Process for Avian Conservation in South America, and 3) Improving the Delineation of Winter Ranges and Habitats of Nearctic-Neotropical Migrant Landbirds in South America. Anyone interested in contributing ideas to the formulation of these workshops or in participating in them as a co-leader should contact Terry Rich.

### **Lava Lake Conservation Research Fund**

The Lava Lake Conservation Research Fund was established by the Lava Lake Foundation for Science and Conservation to support research by graduate students and other researchers on topics that will have a direct and positive conservation impact on sagebrush steppe and montane ecosystems in the West. We are particularly interested in research projects related to wide-ranging wildlife species, landscape-scale monitoring, aspen ecology, sagebrush habitat restoration, and noxious weed management. We are encouraging research to take place in south-central Idaho in the Pioneer Mountains and Craters of the Moon area of the Snake River Plain. **Pre-proposal applications are due 31 January 2007.** Contact me for a prospectus.—Tess O'Sullivan ([tess@lavalake.net](mailto:tess@lavalake.net))

## **Private Stewardship Grants Program 2007**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is seeking proposals for conservation projects to benefit imperiled species on private lands through its Private Stewardship Grants Program. This program provides federal grants on a competitive basis to individuals and groups engaged in voluntary conservation efforts on private lands that help federally listed endangered or threatened species as well as proposed, candidate and other at-risk species. The Private Stewardship Grant program is just one of a variety of tools available under the Endangered Species Act that help landowners plan and implement projects to conserve species. These grants and cooperative agreements provide incentives to foster citizen participation in the stewardship of our nation's natural resources.

In 2006 the Service awarded 80 grants totaling more than \$6.9 million to individuals and groups to undertake conservation projects for endangered, threatened, and other at-risk species on private lands in 35 states. Landowners and their partners **must submit their proposals to the appropriate Regional Offices of the Service by 14 February 2007**. For additional information, see ([http://www.fws.gov/endangered/grants/private\\_stewardship/index.html](http://www.fws.gov/endangered/grants/private_stewardship/index.html)).

## **Five Star Restoration Grant 2007**

The Five Star Restoration Program brings together students, conservation corps, other youth groups, citizen groups, corporations, landowners and government agencies to provide environmental education and training through projects that restore wetlands and streams. The program provides challenge grants, technical support and opportunities for information exchange to enable community-based restoration projects. Funding levels are modest, from \$5,000 to \$20,000, with \$10,000 as the average amount awarded per project. However, when combined with the contributions of partners, projects that make a meaningful contribution to communities become possible. At the completion of Five Star projects, each partnership will have experience and a demonstrated record of accomplishment, and will be well positioned to take on other projects. Aggregating over time and space, these grassroots efforts will make a significant contribution to our environmental landscape and to the understanding of the importance of healthy wetlands and streams in our communities. **Applications must be postmarked by March 9, 2007**. Please visit (<http://www.nfwf.org/programs/5star-rfp.cfm>) for more information.

## **New Endowment Created to Manage Funds from Softwood Settlement**

The recently incorporated nonprofit organization, the United States Endowment for Forestry & Communities, Inc., will receive \$200 million to promote sustainable forestry and to assist timber-reliant communities. The funds come to the endowment as a result of the recent Softwood Lumber Agreement between the United States and Canada announced in October. According to Endowment

President, Carlton Owen, over the next few months the Endowment's Board and staff will work to establish operating procedures that will ensure the greatest leverage possible and yield not just charitable investments; rather, systemic and lasting change. The US Endowment for Forestry & Communities, Inc. will be headquartered in Greenville, South Carolina. For more information, visit the website (<http://www.usendowment.org/news.html>).

### **USDA Announces New Conservation Programs**

Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns announced this week the results from the first signup of the Healthy Forests Reserve Program, newly established this year. The news release is entitled "USDA Provides \$2.3 Million For New Healthy Forests Reserve Program. The news release can be found at (<http://www.usda.gov/2006/11/0446.xml>).

### **Eco-Index**

Eco-Index (<http://www.eco-index.org/>), a service of the Rainforest Alliance (<http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/>), is a searchable reference of conservation projects in the Neotropics, with goals, achievements, lessons learned, interviews, reports, and more. The index is sponsored by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, Global Environment Facility-Small Grants Program of Costa Rica, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation - Coral Reef Conservation Fund, Overbrook Foundation, Summit Foundation, Spray Foundation, US Fish and Wildlife Service - International Affairs, and US Fish and Wildlife Service - Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act .

### **White House Awards Partners of Shade Grown Coffee, Puerto Rico**

On November 11, 2006, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in a ceremony held in the Caribbean, handout eleven awards issued by the White House under the White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation Activity to the partners involved in the Shade Coffee Initiative. One of the elements that made the Shade Coffee Initiative standout at the national level was the large numbers of partners involved. But more importantly, the on-the-ground benefits to wildlife (migratory birds, threatened and endangered species) stands out. The awards went to the Department of Agriculture, Department of Natural and Environmental Resources, Agricultural Extension Service, Association of Soil and Conservation Districts, Puerto Rico Conservation Trust, Envirosurvey Inc., (NGO), University of Puerto Rico, Hacienda Central Pellejas, Hacienda Ana Luisa, Hacienda Verde, and Café del Alba.

The Caribbean Field Office also recognized nine individuals whose contribution to this initiative has been fundamental for the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program in the Caribbean. Those individuals are: Jenny Vazquez, Elizabeth Velazquez, Daniel Cruz, Enrique Santiago, Marisel Martinez and Edgardo

Gonzalez, all from DNER and Jose Lino Rivera from NRCS. Visit the following websites for more information about the Shade Coffee Initiative (<http://www.cooperativeconservationamerica.org/viewproject.asp?pid=121>), (<http://www.haciendaverde.org/>) and ([http://www.fws.gov/caribbean-ecoteam/shade\\_coffee\\_FS.pdf](http://www.fws.gov/caribbean-ecoteam/shade_coffee_FS.pdf)).

### **Arctic Birds Breeding Conditions Survey 2005, Annual Report**

News on how migrants fared during the 2005 Arctic breeding season is now available online. The latest issue of "Arctic Birds: Newsletter of the International Breeding Conditions Survey", (English), can now be downloaded from (<http://www.arcticbirds.ru/newsletter2006.pdf>). The reproductive performance of birds in relation to their environment in the Arctic and Subarctic for 2005 is the focus of this important 60-page report. Input from all visitors of the Arctic is greatly appreciated, and each contribution will be properly acknowledged as an electronic publication.—Mikhail Soloviev ([soloviev@soil.msu.ru](mailto:soloviev@soil.msu.ru)) and Pavel Tomkovich ([pst@zmmu.msu.ru](mailto:pst@zmmu.msu.ru))

### **Online Survey Tracks Predators Impact on Wild Birds**

The American Bird Conservancy (ABC) recently launched "Project PredatorWatch," a new citizen-science project to investigate the impact of free-ranging cats and other predators on wild birds in the U.S. and Canada. The PredatorWatch survey can be found at [www.abcbirds.org/cats](http://www.abcbirds.org/cats). Any citizen can participate in Project PredatorWatch and provide valuable information needed to conserve birds and other wildlife. Participants will provide important information to scientists and conservationists such as: 1) helping to identify birds and other wildlife species that are most likely affected by interactions with cats and other predators; 2) determining whether predator/wildlife interactions are affected by season or climate; 3) and determining whether certain wildlife species, age or sex classes are more vulnerable to interactions with predators.—Steve Holmer ([sholmer@abcbirds.org](mailto:sholmer@abcbirds.org)).

## **MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES**

### ***Bird Conservation Through Education: A National Gathering***

The Council for Environmental Education and Flying WILD are sponsoring a national meeting in Austin, Texas, 5-8 February 2007, for professionals involved in educating students and the public about birds and their conservation needs. This conference will bring together leaders from national and regional education programs, wildlife agencies, state education boards, foundations, non-profit organizations, school districts, zoos/aquariums, nature centers, city park departments and bird-related businesses. It will provide a forum for discussion, network building, and planning to further bird education efforts in North America

and beyond. Visit (<http://www.flyingwild.org/BirdEducationConference.htm>) for all details.

### **Southeast Partners in Flight Annual Meeting**

SEPIF will meet in Memphis, TN 7-10 **February 7-10, 2007**. **Session will include the SEPIF** Steering Committee Meeting, Southeast Quail Study Group Steering Committee Meeting, Bottomland Hardwoods, Grassland birds, and International issues. As usual, there will also be a poster session and field trips. Visit the SEPIF web site for details (<http://www.state.tn.us/twra/pifmeeting.html>).

### **Bird Monitoring and Detectability: Understanding and Applying Appropriate Methods**

This symposium will be held at the Lory Student Center, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO, on February 27 – March 1, 2007. The agenda, lodging, registration and other details are available at <http://www.warnercnr.colostate.edu/FWB/Workshops/MonitoringSymposiumMain.html>.

### **Next National PIF Committee Meetings**

The next PIF Implementation Committee meetings will be held in Portland, OR on 18-19 March 2007. As usual, these will occur immediately prior to the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference which will be held at the Hilton Portland and Executive Tower Hotel in Portland (<http://www.wildlifemanagementinstitute.org/pages/main.html>). IC meeting details will be distributed via the IC listserv as they are developed. If you are not on the listserv you can send inquiries to me.—Dave Mehlman ([dmehlman@tnc.org](mailto:dmehlman@tnc.org))

### **North Carolina Partners in Flight Spring Meeting**

The spring NC Partners in Flight meeting will be held on 27 March 2007 at Blue Jay Point County Park from 9:30am - 4:30pm. In addition to NC bird conservation project updates, the tentative agenda also includes presentations about pollution effects on high elevation birds; the USDA wildlife service program and aviation safety; recent bird sampling and detection rates, as revealed by using all bird radios, and much more.—Mark Johns ([johnsme@mindspring.com](mailto:johnsme@mindspring.com))

### **VIII Neotropical Ornithological Congress, Venezuela**

The VIII Neotropical Ornithological Congress will be held in Maturin, Venezuela, 13-19 May 2007. The congress is being hosted by the Neotropical Ornithological Society and the Venezuelan Ornithological Union. Details are available at <http://www.nocvenezuela.org/en/index.cfm>. **The deadline for paper abstracts**

is 15 January.—Patricia Escalante ([tilmatura@ibiologia.unam.mx](mailto:tilmatura@ibiologia.unam.mx)) and Carlos Bosque ([carlosb@usb.ve](mailto:carlosb@usb.ve)).

### **Migratory Bird Education for Educators**

This course will be held at the USFWS National Training Center, Sheperdstown, WV, on 18-21 June 2007. The objective is to teach the knowledge, skills, and strategies necessary to educate others about birds and their conservation. Participants will learn to teach others basic bird identification, explore a wide array of available educational resources, and identify potential cross-culture connections. Some key objectives include how to work with teachers to incorporate migratory bird education into school curriculum, how to analyze how a program could be integrated internationally, and describe processes to incorporate inquiry science into education programs. Details are available at (<http://traing.fws.gov/catalog/cousecontents.html>). **The registration deadline is 27 April 2007.**

### **The Wildlife Society - Tucson 2007**

The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of The Wildlife Society will be held in Tucson, AZ on 22-26 September 2007 (<http://www.wildlife.org/conference/index.cfm>). With the support of the TWS Biological Diversity Working Group, PIF will be conducting a symposium on how the conservation of priority bird species contributes to the conservation of biodiversity. If you have not already been contacted to present in this symposium but believe you have a strong presentation on this topic, please contact Terry Rich ([terry\\_rich@fws.gov](mailto:terry_rich@fws.gov))

### **The 4<sup>th</sup> International Partners In Flight Conference**

Our next conference will be held 13-16 February 2008, at the new McAllen Convention Center in McAllen, Texas. The conference theme will be Tundra to Tropics: Connecting Birds, Habitats and People, which will be shared with International Migratory Bird Day (<http://www.birdday.org/>) for 2008. Details will be posted on the PIF web site (<http://www.partnersinflight.org>) and distributed through various bird conservation listservs as they develop. In the mean time, contact Terry Rich with inquiries ([terry\\_rich@fws.gov](mailto:terry_rich@fws.gov)).

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The next newsletter will be issued on 1 April 2007. Items are due 15 March 2007 to Terry Rich ([terry\\_rich@fws.gov](mailto:terry_rich@fws.gov)). The PIF Newsletter is assembled by Jina Mariani and Terry Rich.