



PARTNERS IN FLIGHT NEWSLETTER

<http://www.partnersinflight.org>

January 2005

PIF Awards

The 2004 PIF awards nomination deadline has been extended to 15 January. Nominators may download the simple forms and instructions at <http://www.partnersinflight.org/awards/>. Please submit one form for each nomination. Recipients will be announced in March and will be able to receive their awards at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference to be held this year in Arlington, VA. For more information, contact: Dr. Richard A. Fischer (fischer@wes.army.mil)

ABA Continues to Support PIF Awards

The American Birding Association (<http://www.americanbirding.org/>) is once again providing full sponsorship of the 2004 PIF Awards. ABA continues to be an outstanding supporter of PIF.—Rich Fischer

North American Landbird Plan Reprinted

The original print run of 10,000 copies of the PIF Continental Plan have been distributed and another 5,000 have been printed, thanks to additional contributions from the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, and Cornell. We will continue to send 1-5 copies to any requester free of charge but are requesting donations of \$10 each for more than 5 plans. We expect to have a pdf or other web version for downloading *very soon now*.—Terry Rich (terry_rich@fws.gov)

Bird Conservation Magazine and Birder's World Reprints

I still have copies of the Bird Conservation magazine issue (August 2004) and Birder's World magazine article (October 2004) devoted to the PIF Continental Plan. These are most suitable for audiences with some interest in the science of broad-scale multi-species assessment of birds in North America but who may not want to take on the entire plan itself. Let me know if you can use copies of one or both.—Terry Rich (terry_rich@fws.gov)

Asilomar Proceedings

Sources inside the Redwood Sciences Laboratory have advised me that the two-volume proceedings of the PIF Asilomar conference will be printed by early March.—Anon.

New PIF Pins Now Available

A new batch of tri-lingual PIF lapel pins have been produced. The cost is \$1.55 each plus shipping (that's at cost). Please call or e-mail Susan Bonfield (970-513-7017 or Sbonfield@aol.com) to arrange for an order. These are terrific for publicizing PIF and for handing out to potential new partners at conferences and meetings. Don't leave home without a pocket full.

New Co-chairs for the International Working Group

The PIF International Working Group has two new co-chairs – Carol Beidleman and Jose M. Zolotoff-Pallais. As nearly everyone knows, both Carol and Jose Manuel have been active in PIF for many years now. Carol is currently heading up the Park Flight Migratory Bird Program with the National Park Service and can be reached at BeidlemanC@aol.com. Jose Manuel continues to serve as editor of our most valuable bilingual newsletter, La Tangara (<http://www.latangara.org/>), when his real job at Fundación Cocibolca allows a little free time. He can be reached at: Fundación Cocibolca: P.O. Box C-212, Managua, Nicaragua, 505-248-8235, 505-249-4144 (fax), and zolotoff@ibw.com.ni.

Please send a note of thanks to our outgoing chairs Megan Hill and George Wallace who continue to contribute greatly to bird conservation through their organizations, RARE (<http://www.rareconservation.org>) and the American Bird Conservancy (<http://www.abcbirds.org/>), respectively.—Terry Rich (terry_rich@fws.gov)

Update of PIF Continental Plan

Species assessment for the entire Mexican avifauna has been completed and there is considerable interest in Mexico in having the update of the PIF Continental Plan be an all-bird plan, not just a landbird plan. The Mexican NABCI committee is expected to make a formal proposal on the scope and nature of the plan update after their next meeting. Mexico has used the PIF Species Assessment Process for all their birds.

PIF Mesoamerican Meeting

The PIF Mesoamerican working group met on 17 November 2004 in Managua, Nicaragua in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Mesoamerican Society for Biology and Conservation. The Meso PIF meeting was titled *Symposium on*

Bird Conservation in Mesoamerica - Strengthening the Partners in Flight Mesoamerican Group. The symposium was divided in two parts: presentations by each country during the morning and working groups during the afternoon.

There were 60 participants who discussed a number of key questions: 1) Is a regional structure necessary? 2) Does replicating PIF North America's structure in Mesoamerica make sense? 3) What mechanisms should be used to choose a regional coordinator? 4) What mechanisms can be found to fund the regional coordinator? There were further discussions on the need for establishing a set of objectives and perhaps a strategic plan for the region or for each country. Preliminary minutes and the list of participants were distributed to the listserv on 27 December. Anyone who did not see these but would like to should contact Jose Manuel (zolotoff@ibw.com.ni).

Coordinated Bird Monitoring

As requested, PIF provided comments to NABCI on the IAFWA report, *Monitoring Avian Conservation: Rationale, Design, and Coordination* (September 2004). An *ad hoc* NABCI committee was formed to receive comments from all sources, to consolidate them, and to seek ideas for the next steps. Forty-nine sets of comments were received from a variety of organizations including U.S. Federal Agencies (3), State Fish and Wildlife Agencies (21), Universities (2), Non Governmental Organizations (5), Joint Ventures (3), Bird Conservation Initiatives (5), and international partners (1). That committee issued their report, *Report to the U.S. NABCI Committee: A summary of comments to the IAFWA report on coordinated bird monitoring*, on 14 December. Further comments were then solicited from all partners as to what our next steps should be. PIF has submitted those comments as well.

If this all seems very process heavy, it is. But this is a complicated task with many partners, many existing programs, different ideas, people with various agendas, and newly identified monitoring needs in the mix. Somehow, we must work our way through this puzzle to optimize our collective bird monitoring investment. This will take continued discussions over time, but we are moving ahead. Anyone who would like to see a) the original IAFWA report, b) the PIF comments on the report, c) the NABCI analysis of the comments, or d) the subsequent PIF recommendations on the next steps, should contact me.—Terry Rich

Updated "PIF Publications" on Web Site

I am happy to announce that we now have an updated "PIF Publications" section on the web (<http://www.partnersinflight.org>). Click on "Other PIF Resources" and then on "PIF Publications." I have tried to make this easy to use. I have also focused on the things/categories that will be most useful and that will require a minimum of regular maintenance. So, for example, under "PIF

National Minutes" I only have the PIF Implementation Committee minutes because, with Chris Eberly's help, we've been able to keep those up to date. If there are folks who want to take on the responsibility for keeping other national minutes collections up to date and have access to FrontPage (a website software package), I'd be glad to provide you with a FrontPage template so that you can get the minutes in the correct format.

Information about PIF Regional Working Groups is in a separate location on the website and, as each regional working group develops a website, we'll be glad to make links to such a website, where regional minutes could be made available. You can get ideas from the Northeast WG who already has a website up and served through USFWS.

I have added a new section - "Best Management Practices" – after hearing several requests at recent meetings for making such resources available. PLEASE help me populate that page. As you'll see, the page is quite limited right now to the relatively few resources that we had in hand. If you are aware of BMPs that are valuable, please let me know and we'll consider adding them to the list.—Janet M. Ruth (janet_ruth@usgs.gov)

Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act

We received 118 proposals for NMBCA (<http://birdhabitat.fws.gov>) funding for this round. Although there are fewer proposals this year, the quality continues to be very high. Despite a tough climate for spending, and thanks to heroic partner efforts, the appropriation is similar to last year at about \$3.94 million. We are once again submitting a nomination package to the Secretary of Interior for formulation of an Advisory Group. As in the past, the nomination is for the North American Wetlands Conservation Council plus additional members. Finally, the NMBCA will expire this year, so reauthorization is essential before next fiscal year. Our partners tell us that there is interest in introducing a bill early in the next session of Congress.—Doug Ryan

Species Assessment Database Funding Sought

The annual cost for maintaining, updating, and serving the PIF Species Assessment Database is \$60,000, which includes the cost of a full-time Database Coordinator, travel, equipment, web services, and training. Past funding has been collected on an *ad hoc* basis from various partners in the U.S. and Canada. However, this approach is no longer sufficient for securing the future of this increasingly important foundation for bird conservation in North America.

PIF has secured a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for \$30,000 to be matched by \$30,000 in non-federal funds. The U.S. Forest Service has contributed \$10,000 which, although it cannot be used as a match,

can be used to support the work directly. The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies has contributed \$10,000 and PIF Canada has \$5,000. Thus, we are still in need of over \$15,000 in non-federal funds.—Terry Rich (terry_rich@fws.gov).

North American Wetlands Conservation Council Project Recommendations

At its 7 December 2004 meeting, the North American Wetlands Conservation Council selected 17 U.S. project proposals to recommend for funding to the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission at its March 2005 meeting. The projects are located in 14 states. Grant requests total more than \$14.3 million, with partners' contributions amounting to more than \$81.5 million. The Council also selected 14 Mexican proposals in 10 states, with grants totaling \$2,373,388 and partners' contributions totaling \$3,424,828. To review the Council meeting highlights, which include a listing of the selected U.S. proposals, please visit <http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWCA/nawccminutesDEC04.htm>.--Dee Butler, (DBHCcommunications@fws.gov)

Wilderness Area Grants

In 2005, the National Forest Foundation will accept applications from non-governmental, nonprofit organizations to accomplish ecosystem restoration-related work in Congressionally designated Forest Service Wilderness Areas. Community-based nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations, Resource Conservation and Development Districts, Native American tribes and educational institutions, especially those with a focus on wilderness areas, are eligible to apply. State and county governments are also eligible, provided that their matching funds are not federally sourced. Applications cannot be accepted from federal agencies, nor can any funds be directed back to the USDA Forest Service or any other federal agency. Applicants should submit seven copies of their proposal via mail to the NFF for receipt in the office by **4 March 2005**. For further information, contact Mary Mitsos (mmitsos@natlforests.org) or Alexandra Kenny (akenny@natlforests.org).

Yellowstone to Yukon Grants

Y2Y Conservation Science (<http://www.y2y.net/>) announces its Requests for Proposals for the Grants Program for 2005. The Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Science Grants Program has three objectives:

- Enhance the scientific knowledge base of conservation activism in the Yellowstone to Yukon ecoregion.

- Establish bridges between the conservation non-profit community and the region's academic and research institutions.

- Foster support for young scientists to participate actively in the region's conservation community.

The priority research theme for 2005 funding is science that addresses ecological connectivity. Proposals will be relevant if they address one or more of the following issues: habitat fragmentation; reconnection or restoration; species migration, dispersal or recolonization; use of indicator (or focal) species of ecological connectivity; or ecological processes. Deadline for submissions is **17 February 2005**. Awards will be determined in early April 2005 and promptly disbursed. Click on "Y2Y Science" and then "Granting Process" for details, or contact sciencegrants@y2y.net.

Conservation Partnership Initiative

The Conservation Partnership Initiative (CPI) is a voluntary program established to foster conservation partnerships that focus technical and financial resources on conservation priorities in watersheds of special significance and other geographic areas of environmental sensitivity. Under CPI, funds are awarded to State and local governments and agencies, Indian Tribes, and non-governmental organizations that have a history of working with agricultural producers. The CPI is administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Applications are due **17 February 2005**. For more information, consult the NRCS Web site at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cpi> or contact Kari Cohen (kari.cohen@usda.gov).

Colorado Wildlife Conservation Grant announcement

CWCG projects should focus on species and habitat conservation, particularly for threatened, endangered, or declining wildlife species in Colorado. A small percentage of a project can support education projects. Proposals should be consistent with the Division of Wildlife's Strategic Plan whose four "High-Priority Achievements" are:

- Habitat to support the broadest sustainable wildlife populations,
- Conservation partnerships with private landowners,
- Protect and enhance species at risk of becoming threatened or endangered,
- Implement recovery plans.

Projects that do not fall under this category but are consistent with other Strategic Plan goals (www.wildlife.state.co.us) will be considered. The submission deadline is **15 February 2005**. For grant-related questions, contact Jim Guthrie (jim.guthrie@state.co.us) and for information on priority birds and habitats, contact David Klute (David.Klute@state.co.us).

Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Conference Update

The Interim Steering Committee (ISC) created at the Chile conference met for the first time on August 10-13, 2004, to follow-up on charges tasked to it in Chile. The meeting took place in Sarapiquí, Costa Rica. The main outcome of the meeting was a draft document describing the vision, mission, guiding principles, objectives, Steering Committee structure, membership, and other elements of the

initiative. This draft document has been presented to the environment ministers of nations in the Hemisphere for their consideration. Subsequently, the document will be circulated to all Chile conference participants and other interested entities with a call for support of this initiative. A subcommittee of the ISC has been created to discuss possible themes, dates, locations, and funding sources for the next WHMSC plenary meeting. If you have particular suggestions or comments, please contact me.—Herb Raffaele (herb_raffaele@fws.gov)

Management Recommendations for Priority Species in North Carolina

Development of fact sheets is part of an ongoing effort by the NC Partners in Flight conservation/management committee. These fact sheets feature habitat management recommendations suitable for use by private landowners and land managers. Species completed to date include Loggerhead Shrike, Prairie Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Henslow's Sparrow and Brown-headed Nuthatch. A Grasshopper Sparrow fact sheet should also be online in early 2005. In addition, there are also 20 other neotropical migratory bird species profiles and a variety of other information on the NC web site (<http://www.faculty.ncwc.edu/mbrooks/pif/>).—Mark Johns (johnsme@mindspring.com)

Assessment of Southwestern Grasslands

This report is volume 1 of a two-volume ecological assessment of grassland ecosystems in the Southwestern United States. This broadscale assessment is a syntheses of current scientific knowledge, including a description of uncertainties and assumptions, to provide a characterization and comprehensive description of ecological, social, and economic components within the assessment area. Volume 1 of this assessment focuses on the ecology, types, conditions, and management practices of Southwestern grasslands. This General Technical Report, edited by Debbie Finch, is now available online at http://www.fs.fed.us/rm/pubs/rmrs_gtr135_vol1.html.—Deborah M. Finch (dfinch@fs.fed.us)

Forest Service Research Natural Areas in California

A much expanded and updated version of "Ecological Surveys of Forest Service Research Natural Areas in California", written originally by Todd Keeler-Wolf, is now available as General Technical Report 188. The citation is: Cheng, Sheauch (Editor). 2004. Forest Service Research Natural Areas in California. USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Research Station, General Technical Report, PSW-GTR-188. 338 pages. To order a copy, go to <http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/publications/> and request GTR 188. An electronic version will soon be available there as well.

Also now available is the PSW Research Natural Areas Website:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/programs/rna/>. This site will be growing as we add more documents, especially scanned copies of paper documents that currently exist only in files, additional photos, and further RNA documentation. We hope these tools help you to more effectively use and understand the Research Natural Areas in California.—Connie Millar (cmillar@fs.fed.us) and Sheau-chi Cheng

2004 NAWMP – Strategic Guidance

Secretary Norton has signed *Strategic Guidance, 2004 North American Waterfowl Management Plan*. Signature by her Canadian and Mexican counterparts is imminent, at which point we will proceed with printing and distribution of the document. In the meantime, a PDF version is available at: <http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWMP/images/NAWMP2004.pdf>. The longer companion document, *Implementation Framework*, is in final production and will be available soon.—Seth Mott (seth_mott@fws.gov)

Sagebrush Bird Conservation Network

The Sagebrush Bird Conservation Network (www.sagebrushbird.org) is committed to the preservation and enhancement of shrubsteppe bird populations and the sagebrush ecosystems they depend on. We strive to improve coordination among individuals and institutions that conduct research on sagebrush associated birds and provide science based recommendations and decision support tools for land managers. With representatives from a variety of non-governmental organizations and universities, as well as State, Federal, and International land management agencies, our goals are to:

- Provide support to and coordination among groups engaged in research and/or monitoring of shrubsteppe bird populations.

- Encourage the development and use of standard methods and the sharing of relevant data.

- Promote the study of factors effecting demographic parameters (survival and reproductive success) at multiple scales.

- Provide information to state and federal agencies, private landowners, the Intermountain West Joint Venture, and others engaged in conservation planning on how land management affects shrubsteppe birds.

This website is meant to provide information and products including monitoring protocols and version 1.0 of the SBCN interactive study areas map. As an up-to-date spatially-referenced inventory of available data on sagebrush associated songbirds, this tool will facilitate meta-analyses and identify significant data gaps.—Aaron Holmes (aholmes@prbo.org)

New Oregon/Washington Web Site

There is a new Oregon and Washington Partners in Flight website (www.orwapif.org) with updated links and information.—Aaron Holmes (aholmes@prbo.org)

Handout on Coastal Scrub Available

Thanks to the help of the Education and Outreach Staff at PRBO Conservation Science, a one-page handout is now available for enhancing coastal scrub and chaparral habitat on your land. This is also available on our web site at: <http://www.prbo.org/calpif/html/docs/scrub.html>.—Kim Kreitinger (kkreitinger@prbo.org)

Version 2.0 of California PIF Riparian Bird Conservation Plan

Version 2.0 of the Riparian Bird Conservation Plan is now available as a hardcopy. This new version includes updated focal species range maps, population targets for select focal species, new conservation recommendations, new tables reflecting bird/habitat associations, estimates of nest success, and riparian songbird nesting seasons by bioregions, and a new chapter on landscape-scale factors affecting riparian birds. California Partners in Flight would like to thank Bob Shaffer of the Bureau of Reclamation for making this publication possible. If you wish to receive a copy, please email your request to me.—Kim Kreitinger (kkreitinger@prbo.org)

BNAs now Online

The Birds of North America species accounts are now online. The cost is \$40 for a one-year subscription. In addition to simply having the 18,000 pages from all 18 volumes covering 716 species in an online, searchable format, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology has added video and sound recordings for each species. Additional photos are available in some cases. Cornell states that the accounts will be updated regularly, too. Check it out at <http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/BNA>.

Birds and their Songs

The "Birds and Their Songs" web site sponsored by Arizona State University's "Ask A Biologist" and Audubon Arizona is now accessible at <http://askabiologist.asu.edu/expstuff/experiments/birdsongs/index.html>. Chuck Kazilek, Pierre Deviche, and I thank all the many contributors on the AZ-NM bird list serve who sent us suggestions and/or photos. The site will continue to grow, and we would eventually like to have more than 200 bird species included. We are planning to add more educational tools for use in K-12 and continue to make it useful for beginning and intermediate birders. Please send your suggestions, criticisms, and ideas for improving it to us.—David L. Pearson (dpearson@asu.edu)

Playa Lakes Radio Series

DeSha Agrimedia of Amarillo, Texas and the Playa Lakes Joint Venture are teaming up to bring the 'voice of conservation' to radio listeners throughout the Southern High Plains. Starting January 7, the Playa Lakes Radio Series will air on six radio stations heard by hundreds of thousands of farmers, ranchers, and other rural residents in the Texas and Oklahoma Panhandles and eastern New Mexico. The series is a weekly report on conservation issues and efforts in the high plains, focusing on the people and partnerships that are making a difference in the conservation of wetlands, water and prairies.—Debbie Slobe (debbie.slobe@pljv.org)

Playa Post

The Playa Post is an electronic newsletter published by the Playa Lakes Joint Venture (PLJV). The PLJV's mission is to conserve playa lakes, other wetlands and associated landscapes through partnerships for the benefit of birds, other wildlife and people in the western Great Plains. PLJV partners consist of federal and state wildlife and natural resource agencies, non profit conservation groups and the private sector. Learn more about the organization on the PLJV web site: <http://www.pljv.org>.—Debbie Slobe (debbie.slobe@pljv.org)

La Tangara

La Tangara No. 53 in English is ready to download at <http://www.latangara.org/archive.htm>. In this issue:

Call for Information/Contributions on Threatened Birds in the Americas

Bird Monitoring in Alta Verapaz, Guatemala

New Coastal Reserve in Río Gallegos, Argentina

Reporting Bird Bands from Mexico

SalvaNatura's 2nd Bird-a-Thon in El Salvador

And much more.—José M Zolotoff-Pallais (Zolotoff@ibw.com.ni)

Flight Log #14

Hardcopies of the California PIF newsletter, Flight Log, are now available. This new edition contains articles on the conservation and management of coastal scrub and chaparral birds and habitats. If you would like to receive a copy or request multiple copies to distribute at your agency/organization, please email me. Include the number of copies you are requesting and your mailing address.—Kim Kreitinger (kkreitinger@prbo.org)

MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

Annual Meeting of the Waterbird Society

The Waterbird Society will hold its 28th annual meeting 19-23 January 2005, at the Hilton Portland and Executive Tower, Portland, OR. This meeting will be held jointly with the Pacific Seabird Group. In addition to platform and poster sessions on a variety of topics and species groups, the scientific program will include two symposia, three special paper sessions, and three plenary lectures. Pre- and post-meeting field trips will include a pelagic trip, birding trips to Oregon coastal habitats and the Willamette Valley, and a wine-tasting trip to the Willamette Valley. Social events include a welcome reception, evening poster sessions, and banquet. For details, see <http://www.waterbirds.org/>.

WSO/WBCI Symposium 2005

The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology (<http://www.uwgb.edu/birds/wso/>) and Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative (<http://www.wisconsinbirds.org/>) are holding a symposium entitled, *Neotropical Migrants: Insuring their Return*, on 4-5 February 2005 at the Hotel Mead and Conference Center, Wisconsin Rapids. The focus will be on how the birds that breed in the Great Lakes area are living on their own wintering grounds and what trials they will face during their return journey. We will cover recent developments in monitoring as well as what individuals can do to insure their return. We have lined up a number of experts for the event, including Chan Robbins. Conference details are available at http://www.uwgb.edu/birds/wso/symposium_reg.pdf or contact Christine Reel (dcreel@execpc.com)

Southeast PIF

The annual Southeast Partners in Flight meeting will be held 16-18 February 2005 in McAllen, Texas. This meeting will be a terrific opportunity to meet and discuss bird conservation with our colleagues from Mexico. Attendees will be able to attend the full meeting and enjoy morning and post-meeting field trips. For current details, please see the meeting webpage at (www.agfc.com/sepif). The webpage will be updated as planning progresses, so check back regularly for details on registration, agenda, and field trips.—Catherine Rideout (cwrideout@AGFC.STATE.AR.US)

Shorebird Summit

We are planning to hold a shorebird summit in Galveston, Texas, 22-25 February 2005. The general plan is to evaluate where we are with the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan, through presentations, and to hold working sessions to outline future strategies. All-day field trips will be planned for Friday, 25 February and plan to fly in on 21 February. The meeting site, the Hotel Galvez, is an

historic building located about 50 miles from the Houston International Airport.—
Brad Andres (brad_andres@fws.gov)

Next National Partners in Flight Meetings

The next national PIF Implementation Committee (IC) meeting will be held on 14-15 March 2005 at the Patuxent National Wildlife Visitors' Center in Laurel, MD. This is immediately prior to the 70th annual North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference which will be held at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, VA (<http://www.wildlifemanagementinstitute.org>). Logistical details for the IC meetings will be distributed shortly.—Terry Rich (terry_rich@fws.gov)

Western Working Group

The PIF WWG will meet on 13-15 April 2005 in Brigham City, UT. Details will be distributed via the listservs when available.

Ecology and Management of Pinyon-Juniper and Sagebrush Communities

The subject conference is being sponsored by the Uncompahgre Plateau Project and will be held on 16-19 May 2005 in Montrose, CO. Topics will include general ecology, fire ecology, big game management, and sage-grouse management. Deadline for the call for papers is 15 January. For further information, contact Steve Monsen ([sbmonsens@comcast.net](mailto:sbmonsen@comcast.net)) or Rick Sherman (stsherman@montrose.net).

Other Professional Society Meetings

Be sure to check web sites for other professional societies and arrange to present a PIF or landbird paper at every opportunity.

The next newsletter will be issued on 1 April 2005. Items are due 15 March 2005 to Terry Rich (terry_rich@fws.gov).