



The All-Bird Bulletin

Bird Conservation News and Information

*From the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI)
February 2003*

Change Is In the Air

The first thing you see on the US NABCI web page is a quote from Henry Ford: “Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, working together is success.” Adapting to change is part of success as well. At the January 2003, meeting of the US NABCI Committee, two noteworthy changes took place. First, the Committee altered its leadership structure from three co-chairs to one chair that rotates annually among federal, state, and non-governmental organization (NGO) interests. The Committee approved Steve Williams, Director of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, as its chair for the next year. Director Williams, a state wildlife agency representative, and an NGO representative will comprise an Executive Committee to make necessary decisions between meetings.

Second, David Pashley is moving on from his role as US NABCI Coordinator after serving in this capacity since 1999. Thanks in large part to David’s hard work and dedication, the US NABCI Committee has matured through the “coming together” and “staying together” phases and moved into the “working together” phase over the last several years. He will continue his work as the Vice President for Conservation at the American Bird Conservancy in The Plains, Virginia. We in the bird conservation community owe David many thanks for helping us progress towards our vision for bird conservation in North America.

The Committee tapped me to be the new US NABCI Coordinator. I strongly believe in the NABCI vision to deliver the full spectrum of bird conservation and I accept the coordinator’s role with enthusiasm. The NABCI Committee serves as a forum to discuss the most pertinent actions for the future of bird conservation, including the creation of a sustainable upland bird funding source and the development of regional partnerships, such as Joint Ventures.

In the future, I will use this bulletin, as well as other sources, to keep people up to speed on current action item discussions, the progress and expectations of the US NABCI Committee, and the ongoing work for North American bird conservation.

Until next time,

– Bob Ford, US NABCI Coordinator
US Fish and Wildlife Service
Arlington, VA

State All-Bird Conservation Workshops Continue

State fish and wildlife agencies continue to sponsor state-wide and region-wide all-bird conservation workshops to foster better communication and coordination among local conservation groups. On February 4-5, 2003, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources hosted the first annual meeting of the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative, a coalition of public and private interests working together on behalf of birds in that state. More than 70 participants heard presentations on national, regional, and local bird conservation efforts and held fruitful discussions on priority conservation needs and important bird areas.

Upcoming workshops are planned for the Central Grasslands (BCRs 18, 19, and 22) in Salinas, Kansas, on March 4-6; the Nebraska Partnership for All-Bird Conservation in Kearney, Nebraska, on March 11; and the Appalachian Mountains (BCR 28) in Blacksburg, Virginia, on March 13-14. In addition, a Western States All-Bird Workshop emphasizing the Great Basin (BCR 9) will be held March 18-21 in Boise, Idaho. Visit <http://www.iwfv.org> for more details.

Contact Rick Kearney, IAFWA Migratory Bird Coordinator, rkearney@sso.org, 202-624-8917, for more specific information about upcoming or past workshops.

Trinational Projects Funded

As reported in the last issue of this bulletin (Nov 2002), Mexico identified the following six hub sites to serve as linkage points to Joint Ventures in the United States and Canada: Northeastern Yucatán peninsula (Ria Lagartos in Yucatán, Cozumel, and Sian Ka'an in Quintana Roo); El Triunfo (Chiapas); Chihuahuan Desert grasslands (including Janos-Nuevo Casas Grandes in Chihuahua); Marismas Nacionales (Nayarit-Sinaloa); Chamela-Cuixmala (Jalisco); and El Cielo (Tamaulipas).

A series of regional workshops in Mexico, focused on these priority areas, are helping to build regional alliances in Mexico and promote the development of trinational projects. Organizational meetings have been held or are planned for the Yucatan, El Trunfo (Chiapas), and Janos and Marismas Nacionales. A follow up technical workshop on standardized monitoring and critical management issues is scheduled in the Yucatán.

Partners have funded three 'pilot' trinational projects which target a shared continental conservation concern and shared species, with local groups leading each national component. All projects are well-linked to ongoing conservation work and involve excellent leverage of federal funds. A final report on all three projects will be available by June 2003.

For more information, in the US contact Bob Ford Robert_P_Ford@fws.gov, 703-358-1784; in Mexico contact Humberto Berlanga hberlang@xolo.conabio.gob.mx; and in Canada contact Art Martell a_martell@ducks.ca

Workshop Produces Consensus on Bird Conservation Priorities

On January 26-27, 2003, nearly 70 leaders of federal, state, and private conservation organizations from across the nation met in Washington, DC at the Bird Conservation Workshop hosted by the Wildlife Management Institute. On the first day, representatives from coalitions and groups such as Partners In Flight, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, Waterbird Conservation for the Americas, the US Shorebird Conservation Plan, and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Resident Game Bird Working Group and Migratory Shore and Upland Game Bird Working Group described their planning and conservation

efforts and highlighted their most urgent program needs. Participants also heard excellent presentations on how to most effectively advance their conservation agendas with the Administration and Congress.

On the second day of the workshop, seven breakout groups convened to identify the most urgent bird conservation issues to address as the federal government develops its 2005 budget. All seven breakout groups considered the following action items as most pressing: increasing appropriations for (1) the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, (2) the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (along with increasing its maximum authorized funding level), (3) Joint Venture support, (4) State Wildlife Grants, and (5) Science Support to bird conservation across federal agency budget lines.

Based on the consensus developed in the workshop, these five items will become a focus for political action among members of the bird conservation community. In the months ahead, the US NABCI NGO Subcommittee will fine-tune the message and develop consensus on the specific dollar requests for fiscal year 2005 so that the bird conservation community can speak with a unified voice to maximize effectiveness.

For more information on the Bird Conservation Workshop and activities resulting from the workshop, contact Jim Woehr, Wildlife Management Institute, 202-371-1808, WMIJW@aol.com

North American Waterfowl Management Plan Looking South

Long known for its continental approach to conservation, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) has lead the way in bird conservation by identifying and protecting important wetland and associated upland habitats. Although Mexico has been a signatory to the NAWMP since 1994, its waterfowl conservation efforts have not been guided by a comprehensive assessment of waterfowl needs and priorities. Unlike Canada and the US, where Joint Ventures have developed regional objectives and strategies in support of the NAWMP's continental objectives, Mexico needed a national planning effort to focus conservation efforts on the most pressing needs for all waterfowl, resident as well as migratory.

This need has now been met with the completion of a draft *Plan for Waterfowl and Waterfowl Habitats in Mexico*, prepared by the Advisory Sub-Committee

on Waterfowl, a group of private, state, and university waterfowl biologists formed by SEMARNAT, the Mexican federal wildlife agency. An important benefit of the new plan will be the identification of priority areas and objectives for waterfowl, which can be used to develop NABCI trilateral projects and create specific linkages to areas and projects across the three nations.

The Advisory Sub-Committee intends for the plan to serve as the implementation strategy for the NAWMP in Mexico. As such, the *Plan for Waterfowl and Waterfowl Habitats in Mexico* will be incorporated into the 2003 NAWMP Update, thus providing a greater level of detail on Mexican conservation needs and strategies than ever before. Furthermore, SEMARNAT's Dr. Fernando Clemente, the Mexican NAWMP Co-Chair, expressed a desire to seek advice from the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Canadian Wildlife Service on developing a comprehensive waterfowl conservation program in Mexico to include waterfowl surveys, harvest management, law enforcement, and hunter education. For more information on Mexico's waterfowl planning efforts or the NAWMP, contact Seth Mott, Fish and Wildlife Service, 703-358-1784, seth_mott@fws.gov or Eduardo Carrera González, Ducks Unlimited of Mexico A.C. ecarrera@dumac.org, 011-528-18-335-1212.

International NABCI Web Site Live

The International NABCI web site is now live and dedicated to advancing and promoting integrated bird conservation throughout North America. The site supports three language options and provides links to the national NABCI sites. Visit the site at <http://www.nabci.org> to find out more about NABCI, the Trilateral Committee, and to download proceedings from NABCI's two trilateral workshops held in Mexico as well as other products.

Birders' Exchange Creates Links to Latin America and the Caribbean

Birders' Exchange is a project founded by the Manomet Bird Observatory, now the Manomet Center for Conservation Science (MCCS), as a consequence of the Wood's Hole 1989 meeting on Neotropical migrants which had a seminal influence in the early days of Partners In Flight.

The purpose of Birders' Exchange is to get bird study equipment into the hands of those educators, researchers, and conservationists in Latin America and the Caribbean who need it badly. In the past three years, Birders' Exchange has collected and shipped over 600 new and used binoculars, 85 spotting scopes, and more than 350 field guides to our counterparts living and working in the Americas to our south.

This kind of sharing of tools, and personal investment on both sides of the border, helps to cement alliances among groups throughout the hemisphere striving to conserve Neotropical migratory and resident birds. While this project started with a PIF focus, it has grown considerably. There is not a country south of our border that this project has not touched and not a species group that goes lacking.

In 1996, MCCS partnered with the American Birding Association (ABA) to run Birders' Exchange, and in the last year, ABA has run the program in its entirety based on the vision set forth by the MCCS. For details, including how to make equipment contributions, how to serve as a courier for equipment, and for applications for those in Latin America and the Caribbean (in English and Spanish), visit <http://www.americanbirding.org/bex>.

Celebrate IMBD 2003

International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD), to be celebrated on May 10, 2003, is an invitation to celebrate and support migratory bird conservation. In addition to being a day to foster appreciation, Partners In Flight (PIF) created IMBD as a call to action.

Although it has become the hallmark outreach event for PIF, IMBD provides educational opportunities for all migratory bird initiatives. Events and activities held in honor of IMBD, as well as the nationally coordinated suite of products and messages, need not be limited to landbirds, nongame birds, or neotropical migrants. This is reflected in the theme and artwork for IMBD 2003: *Birds: Catalysts for Conservation*. This theme explores how birds have been the inspiration for some of the most significant conservation actions in the Americas, and highlights ten species – a full taxonomic variety – symbolic of these actions.

If you are interested in the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats, support and celebrate IMBD! Activities can be large or small, target any number of audiences, highlight almost any

conservation issue, and be scheduled for whatever date or season best fits your locality. Raising awareness and concern for any group of migratory birds and their habitats will ultimately benefit them all. For more information on IMBD, please contact Jennifer Wheeler, IMBD@fws.gov, or Susan Bonfield, MigratoryBirdDay@aol.com, or visit the IMBD web site at <http://www.birdday.org>

Birds of Conservation Concern 2002 Report Released

Emphasizing the need to conserve declining species long before they require the protection of the Endangered Species Act, the US Fish and Wildlife Service released in early February 2003, its *Birds of Conservation Concern 2002*. The report identifies more than 100 bird species that deserve prompt conservation attention to stabilize or increase their populations or to secure threatened habitats.

Developed in consultation with the leaders of ongoing bird conservation initiatives and partnerships such as Partners in Flight, Waterbird Conservation for the Americas, and the US Shorebird Conservation Plan, the list prioritizes species based on the threats they face and the declines they have suffered. Included in the list are species that are currently declining or uncommon, have small ranges, and/or face significant threats to their future survival. A broad array of agencies and organizations will use the list to shape spending and research priorities, habitat acquisition and restoration needs, and to minimize the impacts of their activities on identified species.

A 1988 amendment to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act of 1980 mandates the development of an "early warning" list of bird species in potential trouble. The number of such species has grown from 30 in 1987, to 122 in 1995, to 131 in 2002. This growth partly reflects the addition of eligible species in Hawaii and other US Pacific Islands, and additional scientific knowledge about the status of some bird species.

The newly revised report is actually a series of 45 individual lists that identifies bird species of concern at national, regional and landscape scales. The lists include a principal national list, seven regional lists corresponding to the Service's regional administrative units, and species lists for each of 37 Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the US designated and endorsed by the North American Bird Conservation Initiative. The BCR lists will help focus on-the-ground conservation actions on the highest

priority species. The 1987 and 1995 reports did not identify species at the BCR level, thus limiting their effectiveness for identifying species that may be relatively abundant nationally or regionally but in steep decline in smaller but still ecologically significant areas such as BCRs.

Copies of *Birds of Conservation Concern 2002* may be obtained by writing to the Chief, Division of Migratory Bird Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop 4107, Arlington, VA 22203-1610, ATTN: BCC 2002. It is also available for downloading on the Division of Migratory Bird Management's web page at <http://migratorybirds.fws.gov>

Cerulean Warbler Workshop Held

The Cerulean Warbler Conservation Initiative, a coalition of government agencies, NGOs, academia, and the forest products industry, held a second Cerulean Warbler workshop in December 2002. Concern for this species is based on its persistent and widespread population decline, the potential effects of land management practices on its population, and its consideration for listing under the Endangered Species Act. It breeds in mature forests of eastern North America and winters on the midslopes of the Andes of northwestern South America. Causes for apparent declines are essentially unknown.

The Initiative does not take a stand on the listing issue, but rather is seeking means of increasing Cerulean Warbler populations to the extent that conservation concern for the species can be reduced. The Initiative brings stakeholders to the table, including the private landowners who manage the vast majority of habitat for the bird. It is concerned with system-wide conservation issues of which this species is a flagship rather than single-species management, and it is a logical progression to a potentially promising State Conservation Agreement for this bird. Balance, integrity, and partnership are the philosophical themes that tie the Initiative together. For more information, contact Pat Keyser at PDKEYSE@meadwestvaco.com

The All-Bird Bulletin is a news and information-sharing publication for participants of the North American Bird Conservation Initiative. To receive *The All-Bird Bulletin*, contact [Roxanne Bogart@fws.gov](mailto:Roxanne_Bogart@fws.gov). Contributions to the next issue are welcome. 200-word limit. Include the following information with each submission: author's name, organization, address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address. E-mail: Roxanne_Bogart@fws.gov or call 703-358-1784.