

# Association of Field Ornithologists

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## 2006 Will Be a Banner Year For the Association of Field Ornithologists!

Our intrepid editor-emeritus, Charles Brown, started this early on in 2005. Why don't we join AOU's program to reduce the copy-editing burden on the new editor for JFO? Your Council considered this but felt moving from Allen Press might put us in a quagmire. But the need that Charles pointed out was still there. We need a publisher that will provide editorial help, provide online manuscript handling, publish both online and in the printed journal, and, not least, actively promote the Journal of Field Ornithology.

We considered an offer from Blackwell Publishing to do just that and, on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, signed a contract with them to begin publishing JFO in 2006! OSNA will still handle individual memberships for AFO. Blackwell offers us modern marketing and will add JFO to its impressive list of journals marketed to libraries and other institutions through Synergy,

By the way, joining AFO is a real bargain, only \$20 for a regular membership and \$15 for students. Check out our website at [www.afonet.org](http://www.afonet.org). With a member's discount you will save money if you purchase mist nets from us this year!

But I should back up a minute here. Charles Brown: Editor-emeritus? Charles Brown promised to edit Journal of Field Ornithology for five years. For five astoundingly quick years Charles and Mary Bomberger Brown enhanced the world reputation of JFO by accepting only high-quality papers and thorough efficient editing.

We miss them and still wonder how the time passed so quickly. Charles has been generous with the time he has given for the transition to a new editor.

Welcome to our new Editor, Dr. Gary Ritchison, a person whose research embodies the breadth published in JFO. Gary is a professor at Eastern Kentucky University and always has a bevy of graduate students. He has an interest in vocal behavior, mating systems, behavioral ecology and life history.

He and his students are studying a wide variety of birds ranging from Henslow's Sparrow, Northern Cardinals, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Common Yellowthroat to Eastern Screech Owls and Northern Harriers. Gary will be working closely with our new publisher to upgrade the submission and review proc-

ess for manuscripts submitted to JFO.

Check out Gary's web site at [people.eku.edu/ritchison/homepage.htm](http://people.eku.edu/ritchison/homepage.htm). One of the courses he teaches at EKU is entitled "Scientific Literature and Writing in Biology." I think JFO is in good hands! Gary will be working closely with colleagues at Blackwell Publishing to transform the manuscript submission and handling practices of JFO into state of the art. Look for a new look to JFO as well!

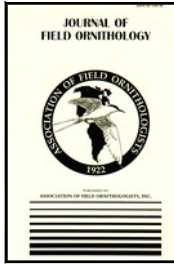
Another significant departure from the AFO Officer core is Don Kroodsma, who served as our Secretary for many years. It was Don who invited me to join the AFO Council back in 2000! Now he is off promoting his wonderful new book. Who could forget Don after reading his new book "The Singing Life of Birds"?

A significant addition to AFO is Lee H. Robinson. In addition to her work with Pigeon Guillemots, she is Treasurer of Bainbridge Ometepe Sister Islands Association (BOSIA), which distributes shade grown, organic, premium coffee. Believe me, it is as good as it gets! Contact Lee and order some!

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## AFO Journal

The Journal of Field Ornithology is the quarterly publication of the Association of Field Ornithologists. The Journal welcomes original articles that emphasize the descriptive or experimental study of birds in their natural habitats. Articles describing techniques or methodological refinements must have relevance beyond a single species or study system. Contributions are encouraged from throughout the world, but must be written in English. The Journal is especially interested in studies conducted in the Neotropics and those involving participation by nonprofessional ornithologists.



**Submission:** For initial submission, submit four copies of the manuscript to the Editor: **Gary Ritchison, Department of Biological Sciences, Eastern Kentucky University, 521 Lancaster Avenue, Richmond, KY 40475 USA.** Also submit a 3.5" disk or CD containing either a word processor (Word or WordPerfect preferred) or PDF version of the manuscript, including figures and tables. A cover letter should include the title of the manuscript, a statement that the manuscript (as a whole or in part) has not been published or submitted for publication elsewhere, and the name, phone number, e-mail address, and mailing address for the next nine months of the corresponding author. Also include the names and e-mail addresses of 3 or 4 possible reviewers of the manuscript.

## 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, however. 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. .

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), e-mail [dbrooks@hmns.org](mailto:dbrooks@hmns.org). Electronic submission of manuscripts to the EAP

## Avian Influenza—What Banders Need to Know

Because ornithologists and bird banders handle live birds, prepare specimens, and handle blood and other tissues of avian origin, they need to understand the means of transmission and know effective means to protect themselves and the birds they study. As this is a rapidly changing situation, this fact sheet will be updated as new relevant information becomes available. Ornithologists, banders, rehabilitators and others who study and handle wild birds should check periodically for updates. A list of general, authoritative sources on the status of H5N1 avian influenza can be found at <http://www.nmnh.si.edu/BIRDNET/OC/avianinfluenza.html>.

Ornithologists, banders, and bird observatories can greatly extend biosurveillance capacity, and are invited to work through the Ornithological Council, North American Banding Council, and other professional organizations to coordinate these efforts among themselves and with the federal and state agencies. US scientists and veterinarians who work w/ birds in outdoor aviaries (including rehabilitation facilities, zoos and other educational facilities) should be involved in the monitoring process and take extra precautions when handling their subjects. It is important to develop and adhere to standard protocols, including data standards, to direct effort where it is needed, and to share the most current information about testing protocols, health precautions, and other aspects of this work.

For more information, visit BirdNet : [www.nmnh.si.edu/BIRDNET](http://www.nmnh.si.edu/BIRDNET)

## Who is AFO?

The Association of Field Ornithologists (AFO) is dedicated to the study and conservation of birds and their natural habitats. It was founded in 1922 as New England Bird Banding Association, and shortly thereafter became the Northeastern Bird-Banding Association. The organization broadened its interests and re-named itself the Association of Field Ornithologists in 1987. The AFO prides itself as serving as a bridge between the professional and the amateur ornithologist. The organization's membership and governing council consist of both amateur and professional ornithologists, in recognition of the contributions that both make to ornithology.

AFO and its members contribute to ornithology by:

- Awarding annual grants for students and amateurs from the E. Alexander Bergstrom Research Fund.
- Awarding the Alexander F. Skutch Award for excellence in neotropical ornithology
- Conservation input via the Bird Conservation Alliance (facilitated by American Bird Conservancy), of which AFO is a member.
- Participation in the Ornithological Council, founded in 1992, including seven scientific organizations, and designed to link the scientific community with public policy and decision-makers.
- Taking part in the Partners in Flight program, with its emphasis on the preservation of neotropical migrant landbirds.

One of six major ornithological societies in North America (together comprising the Ornithological Societies of North America, or OSNA), the Association of Field Ornithologists provides its members with:

- The quarterly Journal of Field Ornithology
- The bimonthly Ornithological Newsletter
- The newsletter, AFO Afield
- An invitation to the AFO annual meeting
- Discounts on mist nets

## Join AFO

Joining AFO is a real bargain, only \$21 for a regular membership and \$15 for students. Check out our website at [www.afonet.org](http://www.afonet.org). With a member's discount you will save money if you purchase mist nets from us this year!

Professors and others take note: become members of AFO to take full advantage of all we have to offer: Bergstrom Awards, Travel Awards, Skutch Award.

Use the form to the right, or visit: <https://www.sgmeet.com/osna/membership/newmember.asp> to join on line.

## Become a Member of AFO

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (for member directory) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (for member directory) \_\_\_\_\_

Send this form to:

### Membership/Subscription Category

Individual (\$21) \_\_\_\_\_

Student (\$15) \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting (\$50 or more) \_\_\_\_\_

Life (\$650) \_\_\_\_\_

Patron (\$1,000 or more) \_\_\_\_\_

Ornithological Societies of  
North America  
5400 Bosque Blvd., Suite 680  
Waco, Texas 76710-4446 USA

AFO membership

## AFO grants:

AFO offers two grant programs to encourage work in the field.

**The E. Alexander Bergstrom Memorial Research Award** promotes 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 (US & Canada) and Latin American work is eligible for support.

**The Alexander F. Skutch Award** for excellence in eotropical ornithology. The Pamela and Alexander F. Skutch Research Award for Studies in Avian Natural History is offered annually and the grantee may be an amateur or professional ornithologist of any nationality.

Visit the AFO Website for more information or for information about applying for a grant.

[www.afonet.org](http://www.afonet.org)

## SORA

The SORA project (<http://elibrary.unm.edu/sora>) is an open access electronic journal archive and is the product of a collaboration between the American Ornithologists Union, the Cooper Ornithological Society, the Association of

Field Ornithologists, the Wilson Ornithological Society and the University of New Mexico libraries and IT department. This archive provides access to an extensive Ornithological literature of international scope, and de-

tailed material documenting the history of Ornithology in North America over the last 120 years. The hope is to expand the content as more Societies and journals join the SORA Project.

## Breeding Bird Survey

Breeding Bird Surveys (BBS) are conducted each year during the height of the avian breeding season. Over 2500 skilled amateur birders and professional biologists collect bird population data over 4100 roadside survey routes located across continental U.S. and southern Canada. The BBS is a long-term, large-scale, international avian monitoring program. The BBS was started because of a concern of the use of pesticides. In the mid-twentieth century, as pesticide use grew, concerns regarding their effects on wildlife began to surface. Local studies had attributed some bird

kills to pesticides, but it was unclear how, or if, bird populations were being affected at regional or national levels. Responding to this concern, Chandler Robbins and colleagues at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center developed the BBS to monitor bird populations over large geographic areas. Once analyzed, BBS data provide an index of population abundance that can be used to estimate population trends and relative abundances at various geographic scales. Declining population trends act as an early warning system to galvanize research and man-

agement action to determine causes of avian declines and reverse them before populations reach critically low levels. BBS data has been instrumental in focusing research and management action on neotropical migrant species in the late 1980s, and on grassland species in the mid-1990s. The BBS is jointly coordinated by the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Centre and the Canadian Wildlife Service, National Wildlife Research Centre. For more information about the BBS, visit [www.pwrc.usgs.gov](http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov).

## AFO Participates in Conservation Alliance

Through membership in the Bird Conservation Alliance, AFO participates in issues concerning bird conservation. The Bird Conservation Alliance, a network of organizations whose focus is the conservation, study, and observation of birds. The Alliance's goals are to prevent further bird extinctions, to reverse declines in bird populations, and to assure the protec-

tion and management of sufficient habitat to effectively conserve populations of the full range of native, wild bird species for the future..

AFO has signed onto a number of letters initiated by BCA members. These letters included, Songbird Trade from USA to EU, Carbofuran Environmental Risk Assessment directed to the EPA,

Opposing H.R. 3824 in congress, Preventing Avian Mortality at Communication Towers. and most recently a letter concerning the Griffith bill declaring a moratorium on landings or importation of horseshoe crabs in VA. For more information about Bird Conservation Alliance and bird conservation issues visit: [www.birdconservationalliance.org](http://www.birdconservationalliance.org)

## BIRD BANDING TIP #1

I work with pigeon guillemots (*Cepphus columba*) and when I catch the adults, they are not happy birds. While they would like to poke out my eyes, they end up going for the hands that hold them - I have scars on the backs of my hands to prove it. I tried wearing bicycling gloves that have leather palms and exposed fingertips, but the birds would snag their bills on the polyester fabric on the backside of the glove. Then several years ago I

found a pair of my grandmother's white, cotton, church gloves in my girl's dress-up box. It dawned on me that these would be the perfect "wear" to protect the backs of my hands and the soft fleshy area between my thumb and index finger.

So off came the tips of the gloves and I have been using them quite successfully ever since. They are easy to wash, stain quite lovely, and the birds' bills don't get snagged

on the material.

Lee Robinson



Photo by Karen Robinson

If you have a bird banding tip to include in AFO AField, please send to:  
[K108108@aol.com](mailto:K108108@aol.com)

## 2006 Will Be a Banner Year *con't from page 1*

Your Council has several noteworthy people added to its ranks thanks to the efforts of our Nominations Committee, chaired by past-President Scott Sutcliffe. These include David Bonter, an ornithologist at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, who is also director of research at the Braddock Bay Bird Observatory in Rochester, New York. David has taken over as AFO's webmaster as well.

Reed Bowman is Associate Director of Research and head of the Avian Ecology Lab at Archbold Biological Station.

Eduardo E. Iñigo-Elias Cornell Lab of Ornithology continues to help us with a second term as Councilor. Descriptions of all of our Councilors can be found on the AFO website. Check out what a great group we have working for AFO!

We are looking forward to meeting in 2006 with the other North American societies at the North American Ornithological

Conference to be held in Veracruz, Mexico. The 4th NAOC is being organized jointly by the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, CIPAMEX (Sección Mexicana de Consejo Internacional para la Preservación de las Aves, A. C.), Cooper Ornithological Society, Raptor Research Foundation, Society of Canadian Ornithologists, Waterbird Society, and our old friends, Wilson Ornithological Society, with CIPAMEX acting as local host.

The conference theme is "Wings Without Borders," and will feature a rich scientific program, symposia, plenary lectures, business meetings of societies, and social activities. Pre- and post-conference activities will include training workshops, and birding, culture, and nature tours. Your AFO, through the efforts of Elissa Landre, Cecilia Riley, Eduardo Iñigo-Elias, and Mike Braun, is planning a symposium in honor of Dr.

Alexander Skutch featuring the past winners of the annual Skutch Award! For more information about the NAOC visit: [www.naoc2006.org](http://www.naoc2006.org)

Veracruz is home to a rich avifauna, with over 700 species reported for the state, of which >230 species are Neotropical migrants and >20 species are endemic to Mexico. The conference is scheduled to coincide with the peak of the migration season in the world's largest raptor migration bottleneck. So, soar on down there and join with all your friends for our annual AFO meeting!

We are pleased at how successful our Student Affairs Committee, chaired by Becky Holberton and Bridget Stutchbury has been. In addition to fomenting contacts for students with ASY ornithologists, Student Affairs will be promoting attendance at the NAOC for students.

*Eugene S. Morton, President AFO*



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## IV North American Ornithological Conference

The 4th NAOC is being organized jointly by the American Ornithologists' Union, Association of Field Ornithologists, CIPAMEX (Sección Mexicana de Consejo Internacional para la Preservación de las Aves, A. C.), Cooper Ornithological Society, Raptor Research Foundation, Society of Canadian Ornithologists / Société des Ornithologistes du Canada, Waterbird Society, and Wilson Ornithological Society.

Mark your calendars now, plan to attend, and watch [www.naoc2006.org](http://www.naoc2006.org) for further details.

## AFO Banding supplies

The Association of Field Ornithologists sells mist nets for approved purposes as a service to members and the scientific community, and to support AFO's research and publications programs. Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences (Manomet, Inc.) acts as the agent for AFO in the sale of Mist Nets.

Also available: banding pliers, bags, wing rulers, portable scales, calipers and more!

<http://www.afonet.org/english/mistnets.html>