

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

At a special meeting held on 1 August 1995, the Board of Directors of the Western Field Ornithologists elected me to fill its presidency. I've been a member of this organization for well over half of my life, all the while in awe of the "who's who" of western North American field ornithology who have worked hard to build WFO into the premier organization of its kind. Being asked to fill the role of its president was an honor, but not without its challenges.

Another important item of business at the August 1995 meeting was the replacement of three retiring directors. Bruce Deuel, Peter Gent, and Steve Summers have stepped down as directors; we thank them, for the organization has benefited greatly from their input. Their departure, and the expiration of Bob McKernan's term as director, left four positions to be filled. Happily, we've brought ex-president Tim Manolis back as a director, and have added three of the more active field workers in the West: Dan Gibson from Fairbanks, Alaska, Dave Shuford from Stinson Beach, California, and Mike San Miguel from Arcadia, California. Mike has further agreed to step into the role of vice-president. I welcome all of these talented folks to the board and look forward to working with them. Finally, I thank Bob McKernan for his years of service as WFO president and look forward to his input as an ex-officio member of the board.

What WFO does, it does well, *Western Birds* is perhaps the premier regional field ornithology journal in North America. But this is a case where bigger is actually better, and we are exploring means of raising additional revenues through advertising and marketing that can be channeled directly into an even better *Western Birds* with more papers, more pages, more photos, and more color. Other planned ventures include the publication of new check-lists, a book (nearing completion in draft form) detailing the decisions of the California Bird Records Committee, and a WFO presence on the World Wide Web.

Is WFO a California organization that has a token extension into neighboring states and provinces? I believe the answer is, and should be, no. But a California emphasis is clearly reflected in our current membership. We need to build partnerships with other state and regional field ornithology organizations, benefiting from each other's strengths. We must all work to increase our membership. With a hard-working Dori Myers to run our membership, circulation, and treasury functions, it's up to us to get her some business!

Our 1996 meeting will be held jointly with the Colorado Field Ornithologists in Estes Park, Colorado; Steve Bouricius of CFO is chairing the meeting, and Peter Gent is acting as WFO liaison. The 14–16 June meeting dates are right before the American Birding Association's biennial convention in Park City, Utah. Plan to attend both! The 1997 WFO meeting will be in California's Imperial Valley; details are being developed by Roger Higson. Finally, we owe our thanks to Bill Tweit and Russell Rogers for organizing the successful Spokane meeting in June 1995.

I welcome any ideas from the members—this is *your* organization, after all. Write me, or send me an e-mail message at garrett@bcf.usc.edu.

Kimball L. Garrett