

# Ornithological Newsletter

American Ornithological Society  
Raptor Research Foundation

Association of Field Ornithologists  
Wilson Ornithological Society

Cheryl L. Trine, Editor

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## ORGANIZATION NEWS

THE ORNITHOLOGICAL NEWSLETTER ON-LINE can be found on the OSNA Member Portal <https://customer265664c9b.portal.membersuite.com>. Click on the tab for Newsletters. You do not need to log in to read the Newsletters.

OSNA - <http://osnabirds.org>

AOS - <http://www.americanornithology.org>

AFO - <http://www.afonet.org>

RRF - <http://raptorresearchfoundation.org>

WOS - <http://www.wilsonsofociety.org/>

BIRDNET - <http://www.nmnh.si.edu/BIRDNET/>

2018 AOS RESEARCH AWARDS - Information on the 2018 AOS Research Awards can be found at <http://dev-merger-aos.pantheonsite.io/content/aos-student-and-postdoctoral-research-awards>. The deadline for submission is **Friday, 26 January 2018 @ noon (EST)**. Questions should be directed to the Chair of the AOS Research Awards Committee, BRIAN PEER (EM: [BD-Peer@wiu.edu](mailto:BD-Peer@wiu.edu)).

## NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**SERIOUS THREAT TO MIGRATORY BIRD TREATY ACT** – The oil and gas industries and others would have a complete pass for the incidental take of birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act should the SECURE American Energy Act (H.R. 4239) become law. In recent years, numerous industries have been charged with violations of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) when their otherwise lawful activities resulted in the deaths of bird species protected under that law. Telecommunications companies, power transmission companies, wind energy producers, and others paid fines, despite the fact that the law is unsettled as to whether the MBTA applies to what is called "incidental take." During the Obama administration, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) developed a policy pertaining to the wind industry that offered permits to the industry for incidental take in exchange for the use of mitigation measures and oversight. Later, the USFWS attempted to develop a comprehensive policy pertaining to incidental take, despite the legal uncertainty. That effort, which almost certainly would have resulted in litigation, was initiated far too late in the second term to have had any hope of completion and, even if completed, would almost certainly have been reversed by the current administration. The potential for industry pushback in the form of attempts to persuade Congress to change the MBTA has always been a concern and now, it is more than a potential. The oil and gas industries and others would have a complete and full pass should legislation sponsored by Steve Scalise (R-LA) become law. That legislation, known as the SECURE American Energy Act (H.R. 4239), includes this Provision, Sec. 207. Clarification Regarding Liability under Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Section 6 of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 707) is amended by adding at the end of the following: "(e) This Act shall not be construed to prohibit any activity proscribed by section 2 of this Act that is accidental

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*or incidental to the presence or operation of an otherwise lawful activity."* This amendment was offered by Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) during the mark-up. It will strip the USFWS of any leverage it has to push industries to use best practices (siting, technology, etc.) to minimize or eliminate incidental take. The bill is problematic for other reasons. It would encourage offshore drilling by distributing revenues from oil and gas leasing on the outer Continental Shelf to certain coastal States, requiring sale of approved offshore oil and gas leases, promoting offshore wind lease sales, and empowering States to manage the development and production of oil and gas on available Federal land, and for other purposes. WRITE YOUR REPRESENTATIVES: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/> and YOUR SENATORS: <https://www.senate.gov/senators/contact> (This news and analysis published on Ornithology Exchange by the Ornithological Council [http://ornithologyexchange.org/articles/\\_/community/serious-threat-to-migratory-bird-treaty-act-r257](http://ornithologyexchange.org/articles/_/community/serious-threat-to-migratory-bird-treaty-act-r257))

**HURRICANE HARVEY AND ATTWATER'S PRAIRIE CHICKEN:** Mostly Bad News – In April of 2016, 130 highly endangered Attwater's Prairie Chickens existed in the wild at only two locations west and south of Houston. Then came the "tax day floods" dropping 16-17 inches in two days over parts of Houston which decimated the population and wiped out a years worth of breeding; the population dropped to 42 wild individuals. A year later, along comes Hurricane Harvey. Of 29 individuals being tracked before the storm (generally hens only), only five had been confirmed alive. The good news is that a group of birds that were prepared for release were taken back to the safety of the Houston Zoo just a day ahead of the storm and were released once conditions improved. Another 54 birds were brought in and released in early fall. Two years in a row with extreme weather has all but wiped out this bird and, but for the captive stock, it would most likely be extinct in a very few years.

**PUERTO RICAN PARROTS AND UNCERTAIN FATE** – Anyone following the news since two recent hurricanes passed through the Caribbean knows that some of the islands may take a very long time to recover. The damage to Puerto Rico has been especially devastating. The unknown fate of the iconic Puerto Rican Parrot is indicative of what the long road to wildlife recovery may hold for a number of species. While there were probably tens of thousands of these parrots on the island in pre-Columbian times, the population dropped to little more than a dozen by 1975. This was the result of deforestation, hunting, and possibly species competition. Once major conservation efforts and captive breeding began, the situation improved... Before Hurricane Maria, the captive and wild population together numbered over 500 individuals. The Puerto Rican Parrot is a Federally Endangered species that lives in the 28,000-acre El Yunque National Forest and the Río Abajo State Forest. Following the hurricane, at least seven parrots died in captivity because of the stress induced by the storm and high temperatures created by the lack of a canopy. As a result, more parrots may have to be brought into captivity. Because known nesting and roosting trees were destroyed, real concerns for the species' future have been raised. Indeed, the worst hit areas of El Yunque forest "might take a century to recover," claimed Grizelle Gonzalez, a project leader at the International Institute of Tropical Forestry, which is part of the US Department of Agriculture. Much of that forest is completely defoliated. Searchers going through the forest, at least the accessible parts in the eastern part of El Yunque, have had poor results locating parrots, and access to the western part of El Yunque has been very limited. Still, locals have reported seeing several "cotorras," (i.e., parrots), carrying radio collars and leg bands from ongoing studies. A few radio-tagged parrots even returned on their own to the aviary. And the significant parrot population in the Río Abajo State Forest - more than 80 parrots - have been confirmed. (Excerpted from Birding Community E-Bulletin, Dec. 2017, <http://refugeassociation.org/news/birding-bulletin/>)

## POSITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

The OSNA Ornithological Jobs page is currently unavailable. To POST or FIND ornithological jobs, please go to the Ornithology Exchange, <http://ornithologyexchange.org/jobs/index.html>.

THE BIRDSJOBS-L E-LIST will continue to be an option for receiving notices about ornithological jobs. Subscribers to this list will receive the same announcements that appear on Ornithology Exchange, in a weekly/biweekly list. To subscribe, send the following message to: <lyris@cornell.edu>, in the body of the message type: join Birdjobs-L "your name". The subject line should be blank. Please use the "plain text only" e-mail format option, include your own name in the message, and put quotation marks around your name. If you need help, contact [ctrine@andrews.edu](mailto:ctrine@andrews.edu).

## GRANTS AND AWARDS

FOR INFORMATION ON CONTINUING GRANTS PROGRAMS relevant to ornithological research, visit: <http://www.nmnh.si.edu/BIRDNET/grants/index.html>. For other grant opportunities, visit: <http://ornithologyexchange.org/forums/forum/139-grants-awards/>

TIOF ENDOWMENT FUND PROPOSAL – The International Osprey Foundation (TIOF) is seeking applications for its 29th annual grant program to support research activities of graduate students primarily focused on osprey. However, research work with other raptor species will also be considered. The award recipient will be expected to provide a report of his or her research and use the funds within one year of receiving the grant. To apply, send a project description of no more than two pages, an itemized estimate of expenses and the name and address of the graduate supervisor. This project description and estimated budget, along with a cover letter giving whatever personal data you wish to furnish, will serve as your grant application. No further documents are required. Applications must be submitted **by 31 Jan 2018** to: TIOF Endowment Fund, P.O. Box 250, Sanibel, FL 33957. Grants will be awarded on 31 March 2018.

## MEETINGS

A 'permanent' meeting list is maintained on BIRDNET (URL: <http://www.nmnh.si.edu/BIRDNET/ornith/birdmeet.html>) showing planned ornithological meetings as far into the future as possible.

\* in this section indicates new or revised entry

THE 136<sup>TH</sup> STATED MEETING OF AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGY will be held in Tucson, Arizona, USA, **9 to 14 Apr 2018**.

THE 2018 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WILSON ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY will be jointly held with the Association of Field Ornithologists on **7-9 Jun, 2018** at the Chattanooga Convention Center in Chattanooga, TN. Inexpensive room blocks will be available at the attached Marriot Chattanooga Downtown and the nearby Days Inn Chattanooga-Rivergate. Chattanooga is a family-friendly location with lots of activities in the downtown areas and a plethora of local eateries. June will be an excellent time for local birding and several field trips will be available to participants. If you have questions about the meeting, please contact WOS representative MARK DEUTSCHLANDER (EM: [deutschlander@hws.edu](mailto:deutschlander@hws.edu)) or local host DAVID ABORN (EM: [David-Aborn@utc.edu](mailto:David-Aborn@utc.edu)).

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR BEHAVIORAL ECOLOGY, **11-17 Aug 2018**. The biennial ISBE conference will be held in Minneapolis, MN, hosted by the University of Minnesota. More information at <http://www.behavecol.com/meetings-conferences/>

27<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS, **19 - 26 Aug 2018**, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. The meeting venue is the Vancouver Convention Centre. For general meeting information and updates, including special events, field trips, local attractions, and links to social media pages, please register on <http://www.IOCongress2018.com>. Mid-Congress Tours on Friday, 24 Aug 2018 will showcase the best of birding on the spectacular west coast of beautiful British Columbia. Pre- and post-Congress tours will not only include prime Canadian, including the Arctic, destinations but also Ecuadorian Cloud Forest, Amazon and Galapagos expeditions - in celebration of this being the first Congress on the Pacific Coast of the Americas.

\*2018 ANNUAL MEETING INTERNATIONAL WADER STUDY GROUP (IWSG), Workum, The Netherlands, **28 Sep - 1 Oct 2018**. Registration to the conference will open in April 2018. <http://www.waderstudygroup.org/conferences/2018/>

RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION 2018 CONFERENCE on **12-16 Nov 2018** is planned for Skukuza, Kruger National Park, South Africa. Information on the conference can be obtained at: <http://www.raptorresearchfoundation.org/conferences/kruger/>

## IN MEMORIAM

THOMAS G. BALGOOYEN, a member of AOU, AFO, COS, RRF and WOS since 2007, died suddenly on Oct. 29, 2016 at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago, Illinois. After obtaining a Ph.D. in Zoology of University of California, Berkeley in 1972, he became a Professor in San Jose State University from where he retired in 2011..

## THE FLOCK - SPECIAL SECTION

To correct your address in the membership database please send the new information to the OSNA Membership Office, 5405 Villa View Dr., Farmington, NM 87402 (EM: [OSNAMembers@gmail.com](mailto:OSNAMembers@gmail.com), PH: 312-883-4670) or change it yourself online in the OSNA Member Portal (URL: <https://customer265664c9b.portal.membersuite.com/Login.aspx>). To alert your colleagues of new address information, contact the *Ornithological Newsletter* Editor, CHERYL L. TRINE (EM: [ctrine@andrews.edu](mailto:ctrine@andrews.edu))

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THE MOST RECENT NUMBERS of the Society journals and the month of mailing are: *Auk*, 2017, Vol. 134, #4 (Oct); *Condor*, 2017, Vol. 119, # (Nov), *J. Field Ornith.*, 2017, Vol. 88, #3 (Sep), *Raptor Res.*, 2017, Vol. 51, #3 (Sep), *Wilson J. Ornith.*, 2017, Vol. 129, #3 (Sep). Numbers follow at about 3-month intervals. If you are missing an issue, please contact OSNA. New members receive the first issue of the volume year. Please check your address label to confirm membership information and address.

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THE NEXT NEWSLETTER will be issued in February. Items you wish to have included must reach the Editor, CHERYL L. TRINE, 3889 E. Valley View, Berrien Springs, MI 49103 (PH: 269-471-7886; EM: ctrine AT andrews.edu), **by 15 January 2018**. Please submit announcements by email (in the body of the email message--not an attached file). Items sent to the OSNA office may not reach the Editor in time. Items with deadline dates should be submitted at least four months in advance of that date to allow time for response.