

Western Field Ornithologists Birding & Ornithology Conference Pueblo, Colorado August 16-20, 2017

From Broad-tailed and Black-chinned Hummingbirds to Mississippi Kites, that's what we will be finding at WFO's Annual Conference in Pueblo, Colorado. Do you like Pinyon-Juniper habitat? That's where we find, of course, Pinyon Jays. But even better, last year's Western Scrub-jay was split, and Colorado's species is the Woodhouse's Scrub-jay. And in prairie habitat—look for Curve-billed Thrasher, Greater Roadrunner, Scaled Quail, and maybe Ladder-backed Woodpecker. If you fancy sparrows, listen and look for Cassin's and Brewer's Sparrows, along with Green-tailed Towhee. Other woodpeckers can be found in the mountains—Lewis's, along with Red-naped and Williamson's Sapsuckers. Other mountain birds are Plumbeous Vireo and Pygmy Nuthatch. Flycatchers include Olive-sided, Dusky, and Cordilleran—(Can you tell a Cordilleran from a Pacific-slope? Does it make a difference?). You can find Black and Eastern Phoebes, Juniper Titmouse, Cassin's Kingbird, and Canyon Towhee just west of Pueblo. If all that sounds like exciting birdlife, it is. Don't miss it!



Dr. Lauryn Benedict, an expert on animal communication and social behavior, will be our keynote speaker, speaking on “He Sings, She Sings: Female Songbirds in Your Backyard.” Her main research is of bird song for understanding how signals evolve in nature. To understand song function, she examines how individuals use vocal signals within environmental and social contexts. She also studies larger patterns of song evolution by measuring how songs vary through time and space, both within and between species. Some of her current projects examine the function and evolution of song and duets among Colorado wren species, New World sparrows, and Old World warblers. Lauryn is Associate Professor of Biological Sciences

at the University of Northern Colorado. Lauryn also will be giving a workshop, “Birds from the Inside Out,” which will focus on how avian anatomy produces identifying characteristics.

Furthering our understanding of birdsong, Nathan Pieplow's workshop is “Identifying Birds by Their Sounds.” Nathan is the author of the recently released Peterson Field Guide to Bird Sounds of Eastern North America. He also will be presenting his annual “Bird Sound Identification: Team Challenge.” Of course, to learn identification visually, Ed Harper will be presenting his Bird Photo ID Panel.”

Other workshops will focus on how to find birds by learning “What do Birds Eat?” by entomologist Dave Leatherman, “How to Make, Edit, Share, and Publish Bird Vocalizations” by Ted Floyd, “The Ins and Outs of eBird: from the Basics to Advanced Use and Application,” by Scott Somershoe, and “Identification of Shorebirds,” by Jon Dunn.

WFO returns to Colorado for the first time in many years, where there are many species that don't occur in the Far West, including many species of workshop and field trip leaders! Within Colorado, a wide variety of habitats and species near Pueblo is one of the main reasons this venue was selected for WFO's annual conference. Another reason is accommodations at the Marriott Hotel. It is located by a walkway to the Pueblo Convention Center, where all activities will be held—workshops, banquet, reception, and exhibitors.