

The Roadrunner

Volume 18 (6)

EL PASO/TRANS-PECOS AUDUBON SOCIETY

September 1988

GENERAL MEETING

MON., SEPT. 19, 7:30 PM in the Garden Center, 3105 Grant in Memorial Park. Jabirus, Scarlet Macaws, Fork-tailed Flycatchers and more will be part of the show Sept 19 as Barry Zimmer gives us a special introduction to VENEZUELA, THE LAND AND ITS BIRDS. Working with Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Barry leads birding tours throughout the western hemisphere. Venezuela was one of his more recent, and more intriguing, destinations. From Hato Piñero, a ranch in the llanos of north central Venezuela, to the forested slopes of Tepuis, to the Rio Grande region bordering Guyana, to the savannahs of extreme southern Venezuela, he'll share this country's rich birdlife and its varied habitats with us. It's a "field trip" you won't want to miss.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MON., SEPT. 12, 7:30 PM. The Board will meet at the home of Jane Fowler, 1594 B Bengal Dr. (598-2448). All members are welcome.

ORGANIZATION DAYS

AT

FEATHER LAKE

What is an "Organization Day"? It is a day when an organization gets together for planning or performing a special project which might not get done otherwise. Benefits include, not only a finished product or task, but also development of fellowship and camaraderie in the organization as well. That is what is going to be happening at Feather Lake in the coming months. Organization days are scheduled

for FL on Sat - Sept 24 and Sun - Oct 16. We will start about 8 AM, but come when you can and stay as long as you can. The Sept date is especially important since that is just prior to our reopening of FL to the public. We may need to do a little "sprucing up" to really show off our sanctuary. Come on out and take part in your organization.

/Paul Bingham, Sanctuary Chair/

FEATHER LAKE SCHEDULE

Feather Lake will be open to the public from Oct 1 through the end of Apr. Hours are every Sunday 3:30 PM until sunset and on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month from 8-11 AM. Feather Lake will not be open on the weekends of major holidays (Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's and Easter).

EPTPAS PLACES THIRD NATIONALLY

IN '88 BIRDATHON

Our chapter won 3rd place nationally in the total amount raised in this year's Birdathon for chapters with 300-1000 members. We also placed 2nd in our region. Nationally, 161 chapters participated this year. The winning chapters in our category are 1st place: Frontera Chapter, Texas; 2nd place: Housatonic Chapter, Connecticut; 3rd place: EL PASO/TRANS-PECOS CHAPTER. Regionally, the results are 1st place: Frontera Chapter; 2nd place: EL PASO/TRANS-PECOS CHAPTER; 3rd place: Fort Worth Chapter.

(cont. on p. 2)

rummage sale Nov 7

Thanks to your efforts and donations our chapter raised over \$3,100. Not only does our chapter receive national and regional recognition from the National Office but we will receive the following prizes:

Nikon 9 x 25 Binoculars, Weathermatic Camera by Minolta, Timberland Boots, Pacific Coast Down Comforter, Audubon Sanctuary Vacation for Two, NAS Video Guide to Birds of North America, vol. 1-5, Audubon Adventures Subscription and a Hanging Bird Feeder.

I think we can all be proud of this year's accomplishments. Look for updates on the prizes at future general meetings and in The Roadrunner. Thanks again to our fine counters and sponsors for making this all possible.

/Ann Schultis, Birdathon Chair/

GIFT TO SANCTUARY

We gratefully acknowledge a donation to Feather Lake Wildlife Sanctuary from John Sproul.

BIOLOGICAL INVENTORY OF TPWD LANDS

The Resource Protection Division of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. is developing an inventory of rare species and significant natural communities found in Texas state parks and wildlife management areas. Do you have any records of rare plants, birds, mammals, herps or fish from such areas? Are you aware of any unique plant communities? TPWD would greatly appreciate any input you can provide. Please be as specific as you can (including maps, if possible) and send information to David Diamond, Resource Protection Division, TPWD, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744 (512/389-4586). Thanks!

NEW MEMBERS

We wish to welcome these new members into our chapter and NAS:

Helen Neva Jones, Beverly Smith and family, and Norma Vargas.
Transfers into chapter: Glen Kramer, James and Lizabeth Mitchell, and Glen Wagner.

THE ROADRUNNER

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Editor - Jane Fowler
Publisher - Mary L. Bradley

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Note to Editors: Articles appearing in THE ROADRUNNER may be reprinted without prior permission. Credit is appreciated.

NEWS FROM FEATHER LAKE

We have had 2 workdays at Feather Lake since the last report. On June 25 we planted grass seed on the embankments in plots that John Sproul had staked out. This involved clearing a few tumbleweeds (a few hundred) from the area, sowing the seed, and covering with a hay mulch. We hope that the grass will take hold and help prevent erosion of the banks. A few Laughing Gulls visited FL while we were there. (It's not all work on a work day--there is time for birding as well.) We also took time out from the seeding to have a meeting to discuss planned developments at the sanctuary. The plans for a new maintenance shed and a permanent rest room are still very much alive.

On July 9 we did some more seeding. Four plots were covered, this time with the synthetic mulch that John had researched and obtained. We have high hopes for this new type of mulch. It is sort of experimental for us, but we have seen this type of mulch used by BLM at Aguirre Springs as an aid to restoring land. Some more fence posts were driven and some fencing was temporarily installed along the embankment edge.
(cont. on p. 7)



PUBLIC LANDS '88

On Sat., Sept 10, the Sierra Club, The Wilderness Society and El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon are sponsoring "Public Lands '88: Organizing for Effectiveness". Plan now to attend this important conference, to be held in the Templeton Suite at the UTEP Student Union from 8:30 AM to 3 PM.

Guadalupe Mountains, Big Bend, Carlsbad Caverns national parks; the Lincoln and Gila national forests; the 7 million acres in the Las Cruces District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) -- we have a tremendous public-land resource in southern New Mexico and west Texas. Whether with groups or on our own, we visit and enjoy these lands often.

Will the scenic beauty, the wildlife, the recreational opportunities that today draw us to our public lands be there tomorrow? Only with careful stewardship, thoughtful planning and informed public involvement. The pressures on our public lands, the challenges to them, are many. "Public Lands '88" will educate us about these lands, the issues facing them and how we can help guide their management.

The speakers? They're impressive. Key-note speaker will be Rick Smith, Associate Regional Director for Operations for the Natl. Park Service in Santa Fe. He'll be followed in the morning by Delbert Griego, Planning Officer for the Gila Natl. Forest; Ed Wood, Planning Officer for the Lincoln Natl. Forest; Jim Fox, District Manager for BLM's Las Cruces District; and Karen Wade, Superintendent of Guadalupe Mountains Natl. Park.

The luncheon speaker will be Dave Foreman, founder of Earth First! and former



Southwest Representative and Chief Washington Lobbyist for The Wilderness Society. In the afternoon, we'll hear from Jim Norton, The Wilderness Society's current Southwest Representative, and the always entertaining Jim Fish, Chair of the New Mexico BLM Wilderness Committee.

"Public Lands '88" will be an unequalled opportunity to learn about our public lands in west Texas and southern New Mexico. Make your reservations now by sending \$4 per person, checks payable to "Sierra Club", to Tom Brasfield, 5223 Santa Elena, El Paso, TX 79932. The price includes lunch. See you there!

NONGAME FUND TO HELP
RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. (TPWD) has announced that the Red-cockaded Woodpecker, critically endangered in Texas, will be the beneficiary of the first 2 projects to be supported by the state's Special Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Fund. One project will be an effort to increase nesting pairs by augmenting bachelor colonies with relocated sub-adult females. The other involves control of vegetation encroachment at colonies on non-federal lands to extend colony-site suitability.



The Texas Legislature created the Nongame Fund in 1983. The fund began accruing revenue in 1984 and today holds approximately \$340,000. The decision to start putting this money to use is very good news. In fact, TPWD has increased its emphasis on nongame and endangered species in a number of ways this past year. How can you encourage them to keep it up? Buy a 1988 Texas Nongame Stamp or Decal! You can get them at our general meetings or by using the order form on p. 9. The \$5 purchase price for each item goes entirely to the Nongame Fund. Do it. It's a natural investment in Texas wildlife.

FIELD TRIP CALENDAR

FT. BLISS PONDS

SUN., SEPT. 11. Always a great place for a variety of birds. Migration is in progress so we could see something unusual. Meet at 7:30 AM, 4801 Fred Wilson (formerly Furrows). Leader: John Sproul (545-5157 h, 541-6126 w).

FT. DAVIS AND BALMORHEA

SAT.-SUN., SEPT. 17-18. Perhaps we can find the Montezuma Quail this time. There is a nice state park for campers, with various types of sites--basic tent, partial or full hookups, or try the Indian Lodge in the park (1-426-3337). In Ft. Davis, you'll find Stone Village Motel (1-426-3941) and Limpia Hotel (1-426-3254). Cabins are available at The Crow's Nest (1-426-3300) which is located 12 mi. west of town. Meet at 7:30 AM at Feather Lake, 9500 N. Loop, or at 1 PM at the Ft. Davis courthouse. Leader: Joyce Davis (581-9470 h, 544-6772 w).

DURLING'S FARM/OWENS

SUN., SEPT. 25. This is a short trip (about 3 hrs.) so you'll be home for lunch. Time for the fall migration--flycatchers, warblers and sparrows. Meet at 7:30 AM at the Crossroads Pond, Doniphan and Country Club. Leader: Larry Jordan (833-5969).

AGUIRRE SPRINGS

SAT., OCT. 1. This will be a 6-8 hour trip to the Organ Mts., west of the White Sands Missile Range, so bring lunch and snacks. Acorn Woodpeckers and nuthatches will be there. Meet at 7 AM at the K-Mart parking lot, 9484 Dyer. Leader: Paul Bingham (755-9496).

MEMORIAL PARK

WED., OCT. 5. See the last of the warbler migration. Meet at 7:30 AM at the Garden Center, 3105 Grant. Leader: Jo Nagel (566-2143).

CENTRAL EL PASO PARKS

SUN., OCT. 9. Mission Hills, Arroyo, Tom Lea and Memorial Parks. Many of our winter visitors will have arrived which makes for good birding in early fall. Meet at 7:30 AM at the Garden Center. Leader: Peggy Riede (833-4881).

COUNTRY CLUB AREA

SAT., OCT. 15. This is always a pleasant area for birding. Meet at 8 AM at the Crossroads Pond, Doniphan and Country Club. Leader: Sarah Jane Dodds (533-4150).

SITTING BULL FALLS/DOG CANYON

SAT.-SUN., OCT. 22-23. This trip is for campers only as there are no motels nearby. See fall foliage and montane birds. Meet at 7:30 AM at Avila's restaurant, 10600 Montana. A leader is needed; call Bob Johnson if you can volunteer. (751-0125 h, 757-1876 w).

FT. HANCOCK/TORNILLO

SAT., NOV. 5. This is a very good trip to see winter swimmers and waders, and often a rarity is seen here. It's approximately an 8 hour trip so bring lunch and snacks. Meet at 7:30 AM at Feather Lake, 9500 N. Loop. Leader: Bob Johnson.

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
Membership Application

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and of its local chapter, El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society. Send AUDUBON magazine and membership card to:

Name.....

Address.....

City.....State.....Zip.....

Membership category desired:

Introductory Membership (1st year only)/\$20

Individual/\$30

Senior Citizen Individual/\$21

Family/\$38

Student/\$18

Senior Citizen Family/\$23

Please make checks payable to National Audubon Society. Send check & this form to AUDUBON, % N. Keith, 1525 Meadowview, El Paso, TX 79925. Send your renewals directly to Natl Audubon Soc.

LOCAL CHAPTER

EL PASO/TRANS-PECOS

W10

7XCH

(Observations cont.)

Sandpipers were reported at HT 8/6 (BJ+). Fifteen Upland Sandpipers were found in a field near T 8/7 (BJ). A Marbled Godwit was reported at FB 8/7 (LJ). W. Sandpipers were seen at FB 7/10 (BJ+). Least Sandpipers were found on FM76 7/16 (JS). Wilson's Phalaropes were reported at ML & T 6/18 (JS,JF), T 7/2 (JS), FB 7/10 (BJ+). Forster's and Black terns were seen at FH 8/7 (BJ) and FL 8/9 (JF,JN). A rare sighting (2nd for area) of 2 Laughing Gulls was recorded by several observers at FL 6/25 (JS,BJ,JD,et al.). Four Ring-billed Gulls were seen on RG 7/2 (JS). Yellow-billed Cuckoos were reported from T 6/4 (LJ), RP 6/5 (LJ+), TR 8/7 (BJ) and at RP 6/5, ML & T 6/12, FQ 6/18, RB 6/19, LM 6/26, RG & T 7/2, RG 7/16 by (JS). A Common Barn-Owl was seen at FQ 6/18 (JS,JF). Belted Kingfishers were found at CP 6/26 (JD) and FH 8/7 (BJ).

FLYCATCHERS - VIREOS

A pair of Vermilion Flycatchers was found at FQ 6/18 (JS,JF). An unusual sighting of a Tree Swallow was made at FB 7/10 (BJ+). N. Rough-winged Swallows were found at LM 6/26 (JS). Cave Swallows were seen at ML 6/18 (JS,JF), RG 7/2 (JS), ML 8/7 (BJ,AH,NW). Bewick's Wrens were spotted at FQ 6/18 (JS,JF). A House Wren and Hermit Thrush were seen in H 5/6 (*A&MG). Chihuahuan Ravens were found at Ow 6/26 (JS) & AA 7/3 (JS). Phainopeplas were reported at RP 6/5 (LJ+), CL 6/6,11 (JD), LM 6/26 (JS). Bell's Vireos were found at FQ 6/18 (JF,JF) and RG 7/2,16 (JS).

WARBLERS - WEAVER FINCHES

A late Yellow Warbler was seen in H 5/18 (*A&MG). Summer Tanagers were reported at RP 5/22 (P&TB), FQ 6/18 (JS,JF), RG 7/2 (JS). Pyrrhuloxias were seen at Ow 6/26, T 7/2 & AA 7/3 (JS). A Black-headed Grosbeak was spotted in e. El Paso 7/14 (*AA). Painted Buntings were found in RB 6/19 & RG 7/2,16 (JS) and on HT-Fabens Rd. 8/7 (BJ,AH,NW). Lark Sparrows were seen at T 6/4 (LJ), FQ 6/18 (JS,JF), RG 7/2 (JS) and from HT to ML 8/7 (BJ,AH,NW). Lark Buntings were found in H 5/11 (AG) and HT 8/6 (BJ+). Eastern Meadowlarks were heard at FQ 6/18 (JS,JF).

Yellow-headed Blackbirds were seen at FB 7/10 (BJ+), in e. El Paso 7/11 (*AA), DP 7/16 (JD,SJD). A female Bronzed Cowbird was spotted at T 6/4 (LJ). Orchard Orioles were seen all summer in MtP (*JB) and at FQ 6/18 (JS,JF). Hooded Orioles were reported in H 5/14 (*A&MG) and all summer in MtP (*JB). Two male Red Crossbills came to a feeder in MtP 6/10 (*TC). Pine Siskins and Lesser Goldfinches were found in H 5/6 (*A&MG). Lesser Goldfinches were also reported at FQ 6/18 (JS,JF).

OBSERVERS: Art Arteaga, Pat & Tom Brasfield, Janet Brockmoller, Tom Carson, Joyce Davis, Sarah Jane Dodds, Robert Doss, Jane Fowler, Al & Madeline Gavit, Anne Hussmann, Larry Jordan, Jo Nagel, Ann Schultis, John Sproul, Nancy Wilson.
/Joyce Davis, Observations Editor/
(581-9470 h, 544-6772 w)



EL PASO/TRANS-PECOS AUDUBON SOCIETY Officers

President	Tom Baker	877-3365
President-elect	John Sproul	545-5157
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Secretary	Ann Schultis	584-7382
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Publications	Sarah Dodds	533-4150
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Sanctuary	Paul Bingham	755-9496
Ways & Means	Larry Jordan	833-5969
ACT Delegate	John Sproul	545-5157
Clean Air Coalition Representative	Joyce Davis	581-9470
Franklin Mts. Coalition Representative	Gloria Woelfel	

OBSERVATIONS

(uncommon, rare & accidental sightings)

June 1 - August 13

Sightings by a field trip member are noted by a "+" after the leader's initials. Sightings in an observer's yard are indicated by an "*" before his/her initials. A few May sightings were reported after the last deadline.

AA - Americas Ave.
 CL - Cement Lake
 CP - Crossroads Pond
 DP - Doniphan Playa
 FB - Ft. Bliss Ponds
 FH - Ft. Hancock reservoir
 FL - Feather Lake
 FQ - Ft. Quitman vicinity
 FM76 - farm rd. 76 between Fabens & Clint
 H - Horizon City
 HT - Hueco Tanks
 LM - La Mesa Lake
 ML - Madden Lake
 MSL - Mt. Shadow Lakes
 MtP - Mt. Park area
 Ow - Owens
 RB - Rio Bosque Park
 RG - Rio Grande levee in lower valley
 RP - Rapdel's Pool
 S - Socorro sewage ponds
 T - Tornillo reservoir
 TR - Tornillo rest stop
 V - Vado bosque

LOONS - IBIS

Pied-billed Grebes were seen at FL all summer (RD,JF,JS+), CL 6/6 (JD), at T 6/18, 7/2,7 (JS), CP 7/16 (JD,SJD), 8/7 (BJ) and 8/13 (JD). Eared Grebes were found at S 7/3 (JS) and at FB 7/10 (BJ+). A Clark's Grebe was spotted at FH 6/4 (LJ). Double-crested Cormorants were found at FH 6/4 (LJ) and 8/7 (BJ), FL 6/15 (JF,RD), FQ 6/18 (JS,JF). Olivaceous Cormorants in breeding plumage were seen at FH 6/4 (LJ) and 8/7 (BJ). The Great Blue Heron, which is fairly common most of the year, was seen only 5 times--at RG 6/26 and 7/2 (JS), FB 7/10 (BJ+), and T 7/2 (JS) and 8/7 (BJ). Snowy Egrets were found from 6/4 to 8/7 at CL, CP, DP, FL, V, T (JD,AS,JS,BJ). Fifty to 100 Cattle Egrets were reported at V 6/26 (JS). Green-backed Herons were seen regularly at FL during June & July and also from 6/4 to 7/16 at CL, FQ, ML, LM,

AA, RG & T (RD,JS,JF,JD). Black-crowned Night-Herons were spotted at RP 6/5 (LJ+), CL 6/11 (JD), V 6/26 (JS), RG & T 7/2 (JS), FL 7/3 (JS) and T 8/7 (BJ). White-faced Ibis were seen at FL 5/18 (JS) and at V 6/26, T 7/2,16 (JS) and FB 7/10 (BJ+).

DUCKS - FALCONS

A Green-winged Teal was spotted at CP 6/5 (LJ+). Ten N. Pintails were found at ML 6/18 (JS,JF). Blue-winged Teal were seen at MSL 5/11 (A&MG), FL 5/18 (JS), ML and T 6/18 (JS,JF), S 7/3 (JS). Cinnamon Teal were reported from 5/18 to 7/10 at S, FL, CL, DP, RG, ML, T & FB (JD,AS,JS,BJ). N. Shovelers were seen at CP 6/4 (JD) and 6/5 (LJ+), T and FL 7/2 (JS), S 7/3 (JS), FB 7/10 (BJ+). Gadwalls were reported at CP 6/5 (LJ+), ML 6/18 (JS,JF), DP 7/23 (JD). Am. Wigeons were spotted at T 6/18 (JS,JF) FL 6/19 (JS). Redheads were found at FL 6 days in June and July (JS), at ML and T 6/18 (JS,JF), FB 7/10 (BJ+). A Lesser Scaup was spotted at CP 6/5 (LJ+). Ruddy Ducks were seen frequently during June and July at CL, CP, DP (JD,AS,SJD) and at FL, ML & S (JS). Approximately 100 ruddys with young were seen at FB 7/10 (BJ+). A Mississippi Kite hovered over Sunset Rd. 7/6 (JD,SJD). Harris' Hawks were reported near FH 6/4 (LJ) and 7/16 (JS) and at FQ 6/18 (JS,JF).

QUAIL - WOODPECKERS

Summer rains brought out a Sora at HT 8/6 (BJ+). A Black-bellied Plover was spotted at FB 6/5 (BJ). A Semipalmated Plover was found at FB 8/7 (LJ). Black-necked Stilts were seen at FL May to July and from mid-June to 8/7 at ML, T, FB, & DP (BJ,AH,NW,JS,JN,JD,SJD,JF). Young stilts were seen at FL and DP. Am. Avocets were reported at ML and T 6/18 (JS,JF), FB 7/10 (BJ+), T 7/2 (JS). Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs were found at ML 6/18 (JS,JF), T 7/2 (JS), FB 7/10 (BJ+). Lessers were also seen in a field on FM76 on 7/16 (JS). Willets were spotted at FB 7/10 (BJ+), FM76 7/16 (JS), FB 8/7 (LJ). Spotted

(News from FL cont.)

Many thanks to those who came out and pitched in on the 2 days. They included: Tom Baker, Bob Johnson, John Sproul, Ann Schultis, Joyce Davis, Jeannette Cole, Debbie Johnson, Jo and Evan Nagel, Scott Cutler, Helen Stoughton, Robert Doss, Jane Fowler, Sid Shepperd and Matt and Paul Bingham.

We look forward to seeing all who turned out before, as well as some new faces, at the next FL meetings scheduled for Sept 24 and Oct 16. We will be starting at 8 AM on those days. Come out and join in. /Paul Bingham, Sanctuary Chair/

DESERT VERTEBRATE FIELD STUDIES

This course is designed to introduce participants to the variety of reptile, bird, and mammal life that inhabits the Chihuahuan Desert. Life histories, adaptations to desert life, means of identification, and study techniques will be presented in class. Time will be made for studying specimens in class to become familiar with necessary identifying characteristics of representative species. A weekend field trip will provide an opportunity to apply skills acquired in the classroom to live animals in their natural environment.

Dates of classroom sessions and field trip:

- Sept. 15 Introduction, overview, plan trip
- Sept. 22 Study of Reptiles
- Sept. 29 Study of Birds
- Oct. 6 Study of Mammals
- Oct. 8-9 car camp field trip (no back-packing)

Scott Cutler is the instructor for the course. Classes will be held at Hanks High School, room number to be announced. The cost is \$25.00, plus gas money for the field trip. For more info, contact: Kathleen Lopez, Personal Enrichment Program, EP Community College, 594-2117.

NEW BIRD CHECKLIST

The Big Bend Natural History Association has recently published a fourth revision of the Bird Checklist to Big Bend Natl Park. If you would like a copy of this

handsome, informative checklist, send a self-addressed, stamped business envelope and 31¢ for the checklist to: Big Bend Natural History Association, Box 68, Big Bend Natl Park, TX 79834 (915/477-2236).

CHAPTER RUMMAGE SALE

Are you still putting aside those items for the rummage sale to be held on Nov 6? Good! If you have large items that you wish to have picked up and stored, call Larry Jordan, Ways & Means Chair (833-5969) or Bob Johnson (751-0125 or 757-1876).

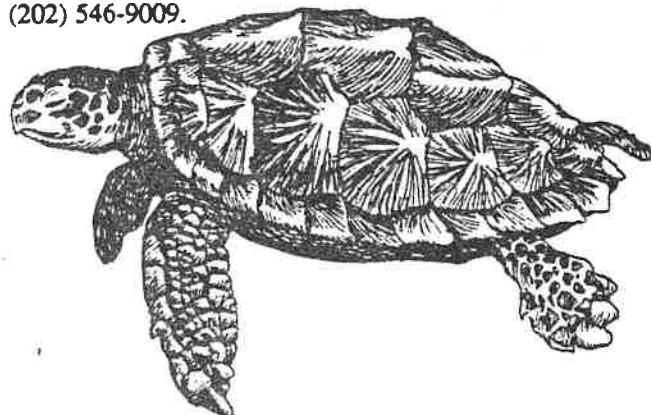
Audubon and Stroh Renew TV Partnership

The Stroh Brewery Company has extended its sponsorship of the Audubon Television Specials for another two years. Said Audubon President Peter Berle, "We are immensely grateful to Peter Stroh and The Stroh Brewery Company for their continued support."

Audubon's acclaimed television specials reach more than 20 million people on SuperStation TBS and on public television stations. A new Audubon Special, "Sea Turtles: Ancient Nomads," will air on TBS this fall. Air dates are October 7 (10:05 p.m. EST); October 15 (10:05 p.m. EST); October 22 (8:05 a.m. EST); and October 25 (9:05 p.m. Pacific Time).

A number of exciting new materials are also available from National Audubon's Television Department: videocassettes of the television specials with accompanying teacher's guides; *Life in the Balance* by David Rains Wallace, the companion book to the specials; *Audubon Wildlife Adventures* computer software with activities designed to supplement the TV specials; and an *Audubon TV News Bulletin* with complete information on TV programs and projects.

For information, write Audubon Television, 801 Pennsylvania Ave., SE, Washington, D.C. 20003, or call (202) 546-9009.



PAST FIELD TRIPS

(and what was good about this summer)

John Sproul led 11 birders into the West Franklins on June 11. They spotted 16 species, including Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Black-headed Grosbeak and Black-chinned Sparrow.

Tom Baker led 12 campers to the Gila on June 18-19. They saw 40 species; tops for them were the Hepatic Tanager, Purple Martins and the Great Blue Heron rookery.

The Randall Davey Audubon Center in Santa Fe, NM welcomed 7 El Pasoans led by Bob Johnson on July 2-4. They had a great trip; some of their sightings were Lewis' Woodpecker, Black-billed Magpie, Lazuli and Indigo buntings, Gray Catbird, an Am. Dipper feeding a young one, a pair of Gray Jays, and 2 adult Downy Woodpeckers with young.

Rain on July 10 drove 5 wet bird watchers out of the Franklins and to the Ft. Bliss Ponds where the usual aquatic birds were seen.

The weekend of July 16-17 found 12 owl searchers being hosted by Anne and Hampton Bowman plus sons Peter and Danny at their cabin in Cloudcroft. (And we thank you DEAR people for your wonderful hospitality which we warmly remember; we can only vaguely recall the road, Anne.) John Peterson (our speaker for Oct) and other Lincoln Natl Forest biologists showed us Spotted Owls and how they use live mice to track them. Other birds seen were Band-tailed Pigeons, Evening Grosbeak and Mountain Bluebirds.

Eight hungry people braved the threat of rain (which did not fall) for our annual picnic at Hueco Tanks Aug 6. Unusual for the area were 2 Spotted Sandpipers and a Sora.

Aug 14 found Tom Baker and others looking for birds in the EP Country Club area. A Mississippi Kite soared near the golf course, and Crissal Thrashers were at Randal's Pool. The best bird: a rare Tricolored Heron at the Crossroads Pond.
/Bob Johnson, Field Trips Chair/

September Audubon Celebrates Ancient Forests

AUDUBON magazine, National Audubon Society's flagship publication, puts its powerful print and incomparable images at the service of those fighting for America's great virgin forests, East and West. In its September 1988 issue, AUDUBON once again calls attention to one of the society's high-priority campaigns, the nationwide effort to save our precious old-growth forests.

The cornerstone is an article about Redwood National Park. Called "Unfinished Redwood," the story chronicles one of America's most profound and most bitterly fought conservation battles, and tells why, 20 years after its creation, the redwood sanctuary has an aura of a forgotten park. Montana's black-timber country is featured in "That Special Thirst," author Paul Quinnett's poignant commentary on the values of uncut forests.

Life in the forests is celebrated as well. "The Beaver Is One Smart Rat" relates author Hope Ryden's observations of a beaver clan that has set up dam-keeping in a New York state park, and ten pages of color photographs show the hidden beauty of mosses.

Catch Potomac Fever

National Audubon takes its local activists seriously. So, to help you ignite your concern into real, hard-hitting action, Audubon's Washington, D.C., office offers an intensive week-long citizen lobbying training workshop each year. The last one was held in April 1988.

Participation is by invitation only. Approximately 20 volunteers are chosen by Audubon regional offices. Participants chosen will have shown the potential and serious interest in working with Audubon, both locally and nationally, on important environmental issues.

The workshop begins on Saturday evening and runs through Friday evening; the schedule is demanding. During the week, attendees meet with key agency and administration officials, Members of Congress, and the staffs of other environmental groups. There's even a chance for lobbying on a particular issue.

The workshop costs \$275; many local chapters will pick up the cost. National Audubon takes care of other expenses, such as plane fare, hotel, and meals.

If you're interested, let your Audubon regional office know, or write National Audubon Society, Action Desk, 801 Pennsylvania Avenue S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003

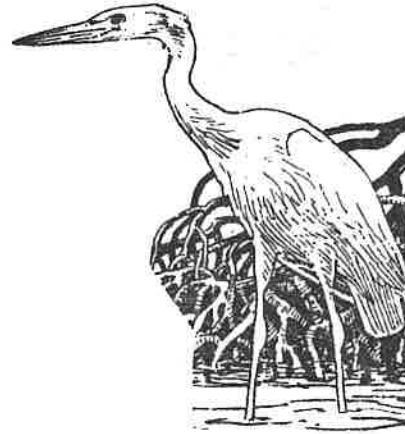
Heron Study Under Way on Florida Bay

By Dr. George Powell, Research Biologist
National Audubon Society

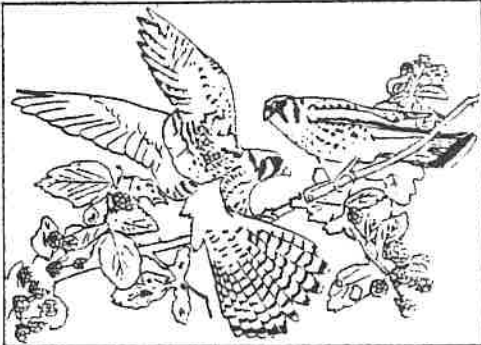
Young great white herons raised this year in Florida Bay colonies are leaving home with tiny radio transmitters strapped to their backs. An Audubon research team is spending days and nights on the bay studying this pure-white race of the familiar great blue heron. Recent monitoring of the great white heron population in Florida Bay has indicated that these birds are in trouble. An earlier study raised the possibility that the birds were no longer able to find enough food to successfully raise their young. In an attempt to test this hypothesis and to discover some of the other causes behind the population decline, the research team has focused on the young birds and their struggle to survive.

Sightings of herons marked with wing tags established that most of them did not survive their first year, and those that did surprisingly seemed to leave Florida Bay and move north—some as far away as Texas and Georgia. To get more data, the Audubon team has begun radio-tagging young birds. Nestling great whites receive their transmitters just before they are ready to leave the nest. Daily radio checks from a boat keep tabs on the young while they are still close to their nests. Many young are lost to starvation, disease, parasites, and predation soon after leaving the nest, but some survive to fly north, where their movements are tracked from a small plane.

The evidence suggests that parasites and predators—including the bald eagle and possibly alligators and racoons—play a role in heron mortality. However, results so far point to starvation as the major cause of death among the young birds. Great whites leave the bay within a few days after their parents stop feeding them, quickly move north, and settle in the Everglades. There, they must find an abundant food supply to make up for their inefficient foraging abilities. Our study indicates that they are not finding what they need. The ecological problems of the Everglades—man-made and otherwise—may be placing yet another species at risk.



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COMING ATTRACTIONS



OCT 17--A very special and fascinating program on the Mexican Spotted Owl research in the Lincoln Natl Forest. John Peterson (that dynamic U.S. Forest Service wild-life biologist) will tell us in his own words about "The only owl that comes when you call it."

NOV 21--"THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME" by Ray Waite (extra-ordinary AVES photographer). More about Ray next month.

SHOWTIMES ARE 7:30 PM

All programs are rated "G" (general audiences) so bring the whole family. Come early for mouth-watering refreshments at the snack bar.

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