



THE ROADRUNNER

NEWSLETTER OF

EL PASO-TRANS PECOS AUDUBON SOCIETY

Published at 4220 Wallington, El Paso, Texas 79902

1974, Vol. IV, No. 6

Geth Osborn White, Editor

CALENDAR

Saturday, June 15 6:30 PM Last scheduled meeting, except for two noted hereinafter. A picnic potluck supper where everyone brings food for his family and guests, we put it all together and feast. Spouses and children are invited. Feature of the evening will be a benefit auction of handmade items contributed by members and auctioned to the highest bidder. The last auction was very creative -- from decoupage to a plate of fudge.

Beverage and homemade ice cream will be furnished, but bring your own food and utensils to Mary Moore's, 4613 Yandell Drive, 565-8065, if you want to call Mary and tell her you're coming -- not necessary, but nice.

--0--

In order to maintain our full chapter status in the National Audubon Society, we have some requirements to meet wherein we need the support of the membership. The recommended activities for Audubon chapters are:

- 1) Sponsored a series of Audubon Wildlife Film Lectures for the general public in your community.
- 2) Sponsored one or more programs or projects in conservation or nature education for youths.
- 3) Sponsored a natural history and conservation book shelf in a public library or school library.
- 4) Established (or maintained) a local wildlife sanctuary or nature preserve that is used, under controlled conditions, by your members and by the general public for the observation and study of wildlife, plants and ecology.
- 5) Conducted or sponsored two or more field trips for the study and enjoyment of wildlife, plant life and ecology or for the study of conservation problems and demonstrations.
- 6) Participated in the annual Christmas Bird Count sponsored nationally by the National Audubon Society, and/or conducted a breeding bird census.
- 7) Led or participated actively in a local civic conservation campaign such as: control of water pollution, control of air pollution, enhancement of natural beauty, preservation of a marsh or other natural area, conservation of the birds of prey, or some other worthwhile conservation undertaking.
- 8) Kept your membership and the local public informed (via your newsletter, press releases and other media) of important conservation bills in the U. S. Congress and in your state legislature.
- 9) Assisted or sponsored the attendance of one or more persons at an Audubon Camp.

SUMMER COURSE IN ORNITHOLOGY -- ANYONE? Cornell University offers a correspondence course in Ornithology for about \$80.00. Some interest has been expressed in forming a group and taking the course which is run on the basis of completing chapters which are mailed in, then another chapter is mailed for the next session. If as many as six people signed up for it, the cost would be modest on a shared basis and the brainstorming session should be stimulating. If you're interested, please call Linda Jones at 584-4652.

THE LIBRARY: ADDITION TO SHELVES, GIFT FROM AUDUBON SOCIETY. The following titles will be added as ordered by the Library:

- LIFE OF BIRDS. Joel Carl Welty.
- ORNITHOLOGY IN LABORATORY AND FIELD. Olin S. Pettingill Jr.
- LIFE HISTORIES OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS. Bent.
- BIRDS OF PREY OF THE WORLD. Mary L. Grossman and Joel Jamlet.
- LIFE OF THE HUMMINGBIRD. Alexander F. Skutch.
- ADVENTURES IN BIRDING. Jean Piatt.
- THE HABITAT GUIDE TO BIRDING. Thomas P. McElroy.
- NEW HANDBOOK OF ATTRACTING BIRDS. Thomas P. McElroy, Jr.
- THE BIRD WATCHER'S AMERICA. Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr.
- BIRDS OF CALIFORNIA. Arnold Small.
- AT A BEND IN A MEXICAN RIVER. George Miskch Sutton.
- THE WIND BIRDS Peter Matthiessen.
- HIGH ARCTIC. George Miksch Sutton.
- WORDS FOR BIRDS. Edward S. Gruson.
- BIRD INFIRMARY. Eva Engholm.
- FINDING THE BIRDS IN WESTERN MEXICO. Peter Alden.
- A BIRDER'S GUIDE TO THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY OF TEXAS. James A. Lane.
- THE BIRD: ITS FORM AND FUNCTION. C. William Beebe.

--0--

SAVE THE WHALE -- did everyone notice the editorial in the El Paso Times May 6. The Audubon Society was not mentioned specifically as was the "Save the Animals League" but we were among the 12 conservation organizations who are urging a boycott against goods from Japan and the Soviet Union until those two countries stop their needless slaughter of whales. The Society is making an effort to identify conglomerates in the two nations specifically engaged in whaling in the hope more specific boycotts can be levelled against them. Japan and Russia are the only two nations specifically engaged in whaling refusing to abide by whaling quotas set by the International Whaling Commission.

ADMINISTRATION BACKS BOTTLE BILL. In testimony before the Senate Environment Subcommittee John R. Quarles Jr., Deputy administrator of the EPA supported S. 2062, legislation to ban non-returnable beverage containers from Interstate commerce; he stressed he was speaking for the Administration, not just EPA. Quarles estimated re-using containers, instead of making a new one each time a beer or soft drink is sold, could save the nation the energy equivalent of 92,000 barrels of oil a day, plus huge tonnages of steel and aluminum. The bottle and can industry is fighting to hold on to the huge business it enjoys under the throwaway system. No bottle hearings have as yet been scheduled in the House.

COURT RULING MAY ENCOURAGE HARMFUL RIVERBANK POLICY. In the semi-arid regions of the west, the federal government has long had a program to control "phreatophytes" (deep-rooted trees and shrubs such as cottonwoods, mesquite, willows, salt cedars, growing beside waterways and drawing up water from the ground. The government contends less phreatophytes means less water drawn up, hence more water left for irrigation and other purposes. This is an entirely unproven theory and environmentalists say that in the long run these plants generally aid, rather than reduce, water retention. Trees stop hot dry winds from sweeping across streams; their long roots retain gravels and porous rocks in place, aiding underground water flow that recharges wells. The shade of trees reduces evaporation. Farmers have been receiving added water rights by permitting the Federal government to remove phreatophytes along waterways on their property when the government decided to do so. Now a court decision in Colorado threatens to open the door to farmers to claim water rights for removing phreatophytes on their own. Nobody mentions how the beauty of the landscape is marred with the removal of these desert survivors from stream-sides. The Rio Grande has long been channeled to serve agriculture, but does every cottonwood have to be chopped down? Lining irrigation ditches with concrete is a measure which would destroy the growth. The Whites recently refused to allow the cottonwoods cut on their old irrigation canal, Three Saints in Mesilla Valley, asking Soil Conservation Service to provide for water for them in the plan. Otherwise they would die when the concrete lining was put in. One of the most important habitats for wildlife in the desert is the irrigation drainage ditch. Most of the bosques along the river have been long ago removed making way for agriculture. Should efficiency and economic gain be the only criteria?

00-00

BIRD SIGHTINGS.

4/7	Lazuli bunting	Linda Jones	-Memorial Park vicinity.
5/10	" "	Santaellas	Mountain Park
5/7	Prothonotary warbler	Santaellas, Geth White, Sarah Jane Dodds	Memorial Park
5/7	Mourning Warbler	Santaellas, et al "	" "
5/7	Black & white warbler	" "	" "
5/25	" "		
6/1	" "		
5/25	Warbling vireo	GOW and EW	Memorial Park
5/3	Blue-throated hummingbird	Santaellas	Pettigrew's place in upper valley.
5/10	" "	GOW and EW	" "
			Photo sent in to Texas Records Comm.
5/19	Long-billed dowitcher (5)	GO. & EW, Al and Patti	Canaris -- Rio Grande, lower valley.
	Spotted sandpiper (4)	"	"
	American Avocet (15)	" "	Horizon Lake
	Mississippi Kite	" "	Water table lake, N. Loop Road.
	Blue-winged Teal	" "	"
5/31	American Redstart	Charlie Jensen	In his garden, Coronado district.

COOPERATIVE BREEDING BIRD SURVEY OF NORTH AMERICA

Geth and Ed White have agreed to run a route, 901 Cornudas, Texas beginning on Farm Road 1111 just off the Carlsbad Highway, a largely uninhabited high desert area running ultimately to Sierra Blanca.

This is a study of migratory non-game birds conducted by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. Its purpose is to obtain, by random sampling, an index of abundance of breeding birds. This survey provides information on distribution and relative abundance of North American birds and specifically measures changes in abundance that result from such factors as changes in land use and widespread applications of pesticides.

The sampling technique is this: each one-degree block of latitude and longitude (about 55 miles wide, east to west, by 70 miles long) is sampled by one or more random transects or "routes." Starting points and compass directions have been determined at random in each state or province. Each route is covered once each summer by beginning exactly one-half hour before sunrise; make 50 stops one-half mile apart and count all birds heard at each stop or seen

within 1/4 mile during a 3 minute watching and listening period. One observer must do all the observing on a given route, but he may have an assistant to help with recording or driving. Unless driving conditions are very poor, most routes should be completed in 4 to 4 1/2 hours. A species data sheet must be filled out and each bird counted. All material is returned to Laurel, Maryland to become a part of the total statistical record.

--0--

Congratulations to BYRON ALEXANDER who will be doing graduate work at Leland Stanford University and has a future research assignment in Africa with Jane Goodall. Byron has done some of the excellent drawings for our series of newspaper articles.

--0--

Set aside July 13th for a picnic at the Durling Farm in the Upper Valley. It is a great place to bird while you enjoy your supper. Go out Country Club Road and turn right on West Side Road. Turn left on Gardner Road and drive almost to the end. The farm is the beautiful grove of trees on the left. If you think you may have trouble getting there, meet at Coronado Shopping Center at 5:30 by the Photo Booth.

El Paso-Trans Pecos Audubon Society  
4220 Wallington  
El Paso, Texas 79902

FIRST CLASS



Mr. Herbert Morrow  
Centennial Museum  
U.T.E.P.  
El Paso, Texas 79999