

the ROADRUNNER.....



newsletter of

EL PASO-TRANS PECOS AUDUBON SOCIETY

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Lucretia Chew, Editor

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Saturday, December 11
7 a.m.
FIELD TRIP
Sewage Ponds
Trip to the Fort Bliss Sewage Ponds to look for water birds. Should be excellent now. Meet at the sewage ponds at 7 a. m. or call Kevin Zimmer, 581-0552, for directions to the ponds.
- Sunday, December 19
All Day
CHRISTMAS COUNT
AFTER PARTY
El Paso area bird count, sunrise to sunset. Party afterwards at the Charlie Jensens, 5816 Vista Clara. Details inside this newsletter.
- Sunday, January 2
All Day
HUECO TANKS COUNT
AFTER PARTY
Bird count at Hueco Tanks and Horizon Lake, sunrise to sunset. Details inside this newsletter.
- Wednesday, January 19
7:30 p. m.
REGULAR MEETING
EL PASO GARDEN CENTER
3105 Grant
It will be our pleasure to have as our guest Dr. Dede Armentrout, new Southwestern Regional Audubon Representative, who will present a program on the adaptation of herptiles to desert environment. Put this on your calendar now and let's show her a good West Texas welcome.

BIRD LISTING CONTEST

From Kevin Zimmer comes the reminder that the final quarter of the Bird Listing Contest ends on December 31. Kevin says that the field is wide open this time. Most of the regular competitors have been less active due to the pressures of school work and some out-of-town trips.

Here's an excellent chance to add considerably to your list by participating in the two El Paso area Christmas counts. Members are urged to send their fourth quarter lists and their 1976 year lists to Kevin Zimmer, 8911 Galena, El Paso, TX. 79904, as soon as possible after the first of the year.

Since the information taken from these lists will be used to revise and update our current El Paso area checklist, everyone's sightings would be appreciated even though you may feel that your list is not long enough to be in the running for a trophy.

NATIONAL AUDUBON CONVENTION

The annual National Audubon Convention has been announced for June 10-12, 1977, at the YMCA Conference Center at Estes Park, Colorado, right at the gates of Rocky Mountain National Park. Each chapter is being urged to send at least one delegate.

This convention will be rather different--the outdoor setting in more economical accommodations--and it will probably be as close to those of us in the Southwest as we can ever expect. It seems an ideal time and place. Reservations must be made by May 15, and additional details are available by calling the newsletter editor at 532-6410.

SUMMER WORKSHOPS

Also recently announced are the National Audubon Society Summer Workshops. The Ecology workshops in New York divided into 8 sessions; Western Workshop at Dubois, Wyoming, in 4 sessions, and workshops in Maine and Wisconsin, 4 sessions each. Brochures including costs and additional data on all these activities are available from the newsletter editor.

LONG-BILLED CURLEW BANDING

Our local society has received a notice through National Audubon from Julia Fitzner, who has banded long-billed curlews as part of her study on these birds. The following is reprinted at her request.

Adult and juvenile long-billed curlews have been banded with red, yellow, green, or light blue plastic leg bands (and with U S Fish and Wildlife Service metal leg bands) in the Columbia Basin of southeastern Washington. The bands are the same size as the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service bands and are placed on the opposite leg. They each have a black number (from 1 to 100) printed on them, and are visible on standing or perching birds.

Status, behavior, migration, and territory selection are several of the more important of the points being studied.

Should you see any of these birds, please write: Bird Banding Laboratory, Office of Migratory Bird Management, Laurel, Maryland, 20811. Include date, time of day, and location of the observation; plus name of observer(s), color of band, and if possible the number printed on the band. Also include the activity of the bird at the time of sighting; the type of habitat it was sited in, and the number of other curlews associated with the marked individual(s).

T O S MEETING

Kevin and Barry Zimmer, whose father now works in Amarillo, were in attendance at the recent Texas Ornithological Society fall meeting, and they report a very unusual phenomena. The two days of field trips dawned beautiful and warm and were in every way a success, not even any wind. And this was sandwiched in between two of the snowiest November weekends West Texas has seen in a very long time! How about that for cooperation?

FEATHER LAKE UPDATE

While progress at Feather Lake continues to be much slower than we would like, recently there have been several exciting developments. On November 8, President Charlie Jensen represented the local chapter before the City Zoning Board of Adjustment and was granted a two-year variance which will allow us to put a single trailer mobile home on a piece of property within the city limits. Because this variance is not renewable at the end of the two years, Ed Gilboe has agreed to work toward getting the City ordinance amended.

With the variance granted, plans have been carried out to provide for a trailer. Water, sewage, and electrical connections, which have now been requested, should be installed by January 1, and 28 yards of gravel for a trailer pad and road were spread on November 24. Arrangement for gas is still to be made. We are indebted to Joe Quinn for most of the legwork necessary to these advancements in the project, and also to Ed Gilboe, Ed White, and Charlie Jensen.

Meanwhile Bill and Florence Fritch, who came to El Paso early in October in answer to our newspaper ad for caretakers, remain at the Carlsbad Trailer Park, pending the completion of these various details which would permit them to move their motor home onto the Feather Lake property. If there are no more setbacks, the Fritches would be in residence as caretakers by the end of the year.

One major problem which remains is that of financing, and it becomes far more crucial now that funds have been expended for the various utility hookups. Since the appeal for funds in the October newsletter, contributions totaling \$400 have been received, and while this is gratifying, it is at the same time discouraging. This amount represents the giving of only a few people. If each of the 170 members of the local chapter would give \$5 or \$10, there would be sufficient money to meet utility expenses and begin work on other related projects at the site.

Contributions should be earmarked for the Feather Lake Project and mailed to Miss Dorothy Williams, 1307 Idlewilde, El Paso, TX., 79925.

THIS AND THAT

At the regular November meeting a small but dedicated group enjoyed a very thought-provoking film on Continental Drift which had been secured from the public library by Charlie Jensen.

It is our pleasure to welcome back among us, Bob Bleicher, who has just completed a year's tour of duty in Korea.

On Saturday, November 18, a field trip group led by Charlie Jensen spent the morning in the Lower Valley/McNary area.

Our El Paso area made the "yellow pages" of the National Audubon magazine recently in the form of an article on the Rio Grande channelization. It contains much factual information; you should look it up if you have not already done so.

There are reports from various sources that two whoopers have returned to the Bosque del Apache Wildlife Refuge.

The ROADRUNNER is much in need of an entire new staff, from editor to typist to mimeographer to folder to stapler and stamper. The current editor will complete two years in January, and the rest of the staff (her husband) has taken a job in Idaho. Some volunteers to help with any or all of these jobs would be much appreciated.

CHRISTMAS COUNT STATISTICS

Those species listed below have been seen in the El Paso count circle on at least one Christmas count in the past five years. Capitals indicate species seen all five years; * indicate species seen on only one Christmas count.

Grebe, Horned	Sandpiper, Baird's	Bluebird, Mountain
Grebe, Eared	*Yellowlegs, Lesser	*Solitaire, Townsend's
Grebe, Pied-billed	SANDPIPER, LEAST	*Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray
Heron, Great blue	*Dowitcher, Long-billed	*Gnatcatcher, Black-tailed
HERON, GREEN	Sandpiper, Western	*Kinglet, Golden-crowned
*Heron, Little blue	*Phalarope, Northern	KINGLET, RUBY-CROWNED
*Heron, Black-crowned night	*Avocet, American	PIPIT, WATER
*Egret, Cattle	GULL, RING-BILLED	WAXWING, CEDAR
Swan, Whistling	DOVE, WHITE-WINGED	SHRIKE, LOGGERHEAD
Goose, Canada	DOVE, MOURNING	STARLING
GOOSE, SNOW	Dove, Inca	
*Goose, Ross	*Dove, Ground	*Warbler, Virginia's
*Goose, White-fronted	ROADRUNNER	Warbler, Yellow-rumped
MALLARD	Owl, Great horned	*Warbler, Black-throated gray
*Duck, Mexican	*Owl, Barn	*Yellow-throat
GADWALL	*Owl, Long-eared	HOUSE SPARROW
Pintail	*Owl, Ferruginous	MEADOWLARK, WESTERN
TEAL, GREEN-WINGED	*Swift, White-throated	Blackbird, Yellow-headed
Teal, Blue-winged	Hummingbird, Black-chinned	BLACKBIRD, RED-WINGED
Teal, Cinnamon	Hummingbird, Anna's	BLACKBIRD, BREWER'S
WIGEON	*Hummingbird, Broad-tailed	GRACKLE, GREAT-TAILED
SHOVELER	Hummingbird, Rufous	*Grackle, Common
Duck, Wood	Hummingbird, Allen's	COWBIRD, BROWN-HEADED
REDHEAD	KINGFISHER, BELTED	Pyrrhuloxia
*Duck, Ring-necked	FLICKER, COMMON	*Dickcissel
Canvasback	Sapsucker, Yellow-bellied	Finch, Cassin's
Scaup, Lesser	*Woodpecker, Downy	FINCH, HOUSE
Goldeneye, Common	WOODPECKER, LADDER-BACKED	Siskin, Pine
Bufflehead	Phoebe, Black	Goldfinch, American
*Merganser, Common	PHOEBE, SAY'S	GOLDFINCH, LESSER
Merganser, Red-breasted	*Flycatcher, Vermillion	*Crossbill, Red
Hawk, Sharp-shinned	*Lark, Horned	Towhee, Green-tailed
HAWK, COOPER'S	Jay, Steller's	TOWHEE, RUFOUS-SIDED
HAWK, RED-TAILED	Jay, Scrub	TOWHEE, BROWN
Hawk, Swainson's	Jay, Mexican	*Bunting, Lark
Hawk, Rough-legged	*Jay, Pinyon	Sparrow, Savannah
Hawk, Ferruginous	VERDIN	Sparrow, Baird's
Eagle, Golden	Nuthatch, Red-breasted	Sparrow, Vesper
Hawk, Marsh	Wren, House	Sparrow, Lark
*Falcon, Prairie	WREN, BEWICK'S	SPARROW, RUFOUS-CROWNED
*Falcon, Peregrine	WREN, CACTUS	SPARROW, BLACK-THROATED
KESTREL, AMERICAN	WREN, CANYON	JUNCO, DARK-EYED
QUAIL, SCALED	WREN, ROCK	JUNCO, GREY-HEADED
QUAIL, GAMBEL	MOCKINGBIRD	SPARROW, CHIPPING
*Crane, Sandhill	Thrasher, Curve-billed	Sparrow, Clay-colored
GALLINULE, COMMON	Thrasher, Crissal	Sparrow, Brewer's
COOT, AMERICAN	*Thrasher, Sage	
KILLDEER	ROBIN	Sparrow, Black-chinned
SNIFE, COMMON	*Thrush, Mermit	SPARROW, WHITE-CROWNED
Sandpiper, Spotted	Bluebird, Western	*Sparrow, White-throated
		Sparrow, Lincoln's
		SPARROW, SONG
		*Longspur, Chestnut-collared

CHRISTMAS COUNTS

On December 19 and January 2, our local Audubon chapter will be participating in the nation-wide Christmas counts which have been sponsored since 1900 by the National Audubon Society. The El Paso area count will be conducted on Sunday, December 17, and will include Ascarate Park, Phelps Dodge cooling ponds, residential areas throughout the city, Memorial Park, Tom Mays Park and Trans-Mountain, river levees and farm areas in the Upper Valley. Compiler for the El Paso count is Ruby Allen. The count itself will end at sunset, but participants will gather at the home of the Charlie Jensens, 5816 Vista Clara, to compile the data.

The Hueco Tanks count which was begun two years ago will take place on Sunday, January 2, and will include Hueco Tanks State Park, Horizon Lake, and areas between these two points. Compiler for the Hueco Tanks count will be Kevin Zimmer. At the conclusion of this count, participants will gather at a place to be announced.

Because several of our active members have recently left El Paso, new birders are particularly needed, and certainly there is no better way to enhance your birding knowledge than with an all-day count. Anyone interested in participating in either or both of these counts is urged to contact Kevin Zimmer, 751-0552, no later than December 15.

The rules by which the local society must abide include the following: Each count area is a circle with a diameter of 15 miles. All counts must be made during the official count period which has been set this year as December 18 through January 3 inclusive. Counts last from sunrise to sunset. Each participant pays \$1 per count which is used by AMERICAN BIRDS to help defray the cost of publishing the record of the counts. There is a compiler for each count whose job it is to make certain all sightings are accurately reported and detailed as necessary and to fill out all necessary papers and forward them before the due date.

Last year our local Christmas count was helped considerably by people who called in during the week preceding the count and also on count day to give us information about the birds in their areas. Since we never could quite squeeze out that one hundredth species last year, we'll be trying extra hard to break the one hundred mark this time.

Not all of us are able to be out actively counting on the big day, and those of us who are out can't possibly cover every part of the count circle during the daylight hours so your help will be particularly appreciated.

During the week preceding the count day, information on bird sightings may be telephoned to the Ed Whites: 566-2328; the Charlie Jensens: 584-7626; the Zimmers, 751-0552; or the Eddie Chews, 532-6410. On the count day, December 19, please telephone your reports AS EARLY IN THE DAY AS POSSIBLE to Mrs. Edna Mae Lyons at 533-1894.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

A nominating committee composed of Geth White, chairman; Berttye Barnhart, and Margaret McDaniel, has been appointed by President Charlie Jensen and is now at work. Officers which are to be elected at the January meeting are Vice-President/President-Elect, Secretary-Treasurer, and six directors.

Any suggestions should be made to the committee immediately by contacting Geth White at 566-2328. The committee will make its report to the club at the regular January meeting.

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FIRST CLASS