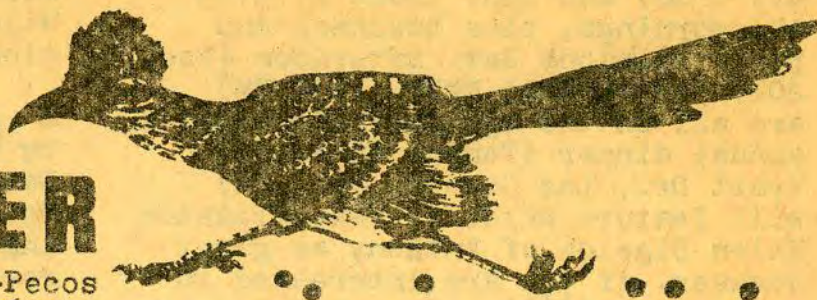


the ROADRUNNER

Newsletter of El Paso/Trans-Pecos
Audubon Society - P.O. Box 9655
El Paso, Texas 79986



Editors: Jane Fowler - Jo Nagel

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April 1985

GENERAL MEETING

MON., APRIL 15, 1985, 7:30 PM,
Garden Center, 3105 Grant St. in
Memorial Park. The program will be
"Where Rainbows Wait For Rain",
the 2nd film of the Chihuahuan
Desert Institute's Trilogy on
the Chihuahuan Desert. This is
considered by many to be the most
outstanding film of the three.
You all come.

FIELD TRIP CALENDAR

WHITE ROCK CANYON

SAT., APRIL 6. Meet at 7 AM in the
Wilderness Park Museum parking
lot. We will be looking for
spring migrating songbirds in
this canyon on the eastern slopes
of the Franklins. On a field
trip a few years back, a grey fox
was seen here. Leader: Tom Baker
(562-9461).

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK

FRI - SUN, APRIL 19-21. Meet at
7 AM in Feather Lake parking lot
on North Loop Dr. We will join
with our leader, Hal Flanders, in
Alpine, TX at lunch time, continue
on to the Basin campground for
camping Fri night and hiking Sat
AM. Saturday afternoon we will
move down to Rio Grande Village
to camp that night. Please call
Tom Baker (562-9461, 566-9461)
if you plan to join us at Feather
Lake here Fri, or either camp-
ground there later.

BIRDATHON

SAT., MAY 4, 1985

Read all about
it on flyer in
this issue.



UPPER VALLEY/RANDEL'S POOL

SUN., MAY 12. Meet 7 AM at the
crossroads ponding area across
the railroad tracks. We will bird
th country club area and then a-
cross the river to Randel's Pool.
Leader: Wanted. Call Tom Baker
(562-9461).

CHIRICAHUA MTS./CAVE CREEK, AZ

SAT-SUN, MAY 18-19. Our Arizona
trip will be to the Cave Creek
area this year. Those who can go
early may go down to Guadalupe
Canyon (extreme southeastern AZ)
for birding and camping Fri night.
Details next RR.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MON., APRIL 8, 1985, 7:30 PM. The
Board will meet at the home of
Virginia & Tom Baker, 2716 Louis-
ville, El Paso (562-9461). All
members are welcome.



NMOS TO MEET IN LAS CRUCES

If you aren't headed for Big Bend
with our chapter Apr 20-21, you
may want to head for Las Cruces.
The Mesilla Valley Audubon Soci-
ety will be host that weekend
for the annual meeting of the

New Mexico Ornithological Society.
Field trips both Sat. (meet at Burn L., 6 AM) and Sun. (Burn L., 5:45 AM) mornings, plus business and paper sessions Sat. afternoon (Room 201, Foster Hall, NMSU, 1:30 PM) are all on the agenda. Sat. night's annual dinner (Tandor Rest., 100 Wyatt Dr., Las Cruces, 6:30 PM) will feature wildlife rehabilitator Helen Bigelow of Anthony as guest speaker. If you are interested in the dinner (\$10), reservations are required by Apr 15. Reservations/details: Eleanor Wootten, P.O. Box 3574, Las Cruces, NM 88003; 505/522-8068.

FIELD TRIPS FOLLOW-UP

March 2 provided 16 participants with good weather for the trip to Hueco Tanks St. Park. The total species seen was 32. The number of Robins and White-throated Swifts was high. Pine Siskins were also noted.

On March 16-17 13 thrillseekers ventured out to the Clay Miller Ranch in the canyons of the Sierra Viejas. In the old government camp area where we stayed there were Western Bluebirds, Canyon Wrens, Tufted Titmice and Black-chinned Sparrows. As we drove in to the ranch we saw 1 Golden Eagle, on the way out there were 4. Fifty species were counted there, plus 20 more at Madden Lake and Ft. Hancock pond on Sun PM. Thanks to the Miller clan.

The Mar 24 outing to Aguirre Spring featured clear, calm skies; displaying Broad-tailed Hummingbirds; temperatures in the 60's and 70's; surprising numbers of Townsend's Solitaires; snow at higher elevations; a White-breasted Nuthatch mercilessly pounding its next invertebrate meal into submission; lots of running water; raucous bands of Acorn Woodpeckers; and Jane Fowler's pineapple cupcakes. Twelve enjoyed the trip.

April 1985

WILD READING

Some recent Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. (TPWD) publications you may find of interest:

- A Checklist of Texas Birds by Kelly Bryan, Tony Gallucci & David Riskind. Technical Series No. 32. 36 pp. A complete listing of Texas birds; plenty of room for keeping various "lists" or for recording observations in diary fashion.
- The Furbearers of Texas by David J. Schmidly. Bulletin No. 111. 54 pp. Black-and-white photos, range maps and background information on all the state's furbearing animals.
- TPWD's Six Year Plan. Identifies future needs in the fields of wildlife, fisheries, parks, law enforcement, resource protection and administrative services; intended to guide TPWD in managing and preserving the state's natural resources for the next 6 years.

All 3 publications are available free from: TPWD, 4200 Smith School Rd., Austin, TX 78744.

THE ROADRUNNER is sent to all members of the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society. Nonmembers can subscribe for \$4 per yr. Make checks payable to "El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society" and mail to: RR Editor, P. O. Box 9655, El Paso, TX 79986. Send any changes or corrections in name, address or telephone # to this address. Please note: Bulk mail is not forwarded. Save us 22¢ in return postage by notifying us before you move.

The deadline for the May RR is April 23.

FRANKLINS FUNDING PROHIBITION:
ACTION MOVES TO HOUSE

S.B. 54, Sen. Tati Santiesteban's bill to remove the existing prohibition against spending state funds for operation and maintenance of the 25,000-acre Franklin Mts. St. Park, received a hearing before the House Environmental Affairs Committee on Mar 19. Rep. Arves Jones introduced the bill to the committee and argued effectively for it. The Wilderness Park Coalition, to which El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon belongs, also testified. S.B. 54 was considered rather than Rep. Jones' similar H.B. 107 because S.B. 54 has already cleared the Senate. Among the key developments at the hearing:

- Rep. Al Granoff (D-Dallas) asked that the bill be amended to remove the funding prohibition for Trinity R. St. Park in Dallas also. This 1480-acre park was authorized by the legislature in 1983, but the TPWD has not yet acquired the land for it. The law authorizing this park contains the same funding prohibition found in the Franklin Mts. St. Park law.

- Charles Travis, Executive Director of TPWD, told the committee that preparation of a master plan for Franklin Mts. St. Park will begin as soon as Park land acquisition is complete. The TPWD does not interpret the funding prohibition as preventing work on a master plan.

- Committee Chairman Fred Agnich (R-Dallas) referred the bill to a subcommittee consisting of Mike Millsap (D-Ft.Worth), Ed Kuempel (R-Seguin) and Frank Collazo (D-Pt. Arthur) for further consideration.

Although Rep. Agnich opposes removing the funding prohibition, there is reason to believe he may find S.B. 54 acceptable if it is amended to include Trinity R. St. Park and to give TPWD increased freedom to spend funds for Gateway St. Park, a 503-acre park in Ft.Worth. The subcommittee may go this route. Then again, referral to subcommittee is also a time-honored way to kill a bill. Stay tuned.

Meanwhile, recognizing that S.B. 54 might not clear the House Environmental Affairs Committee, Sen. Santiesteban also has an alternate strategy. Under the Texas Sunset Law, TPWD goes out of existence this year unless the legislature reauthorizes the agency. Sen. Santiesteban convinced Sen. Ted Lyon (D-Rockwall), sponsor of the TPWD reauthorization bill (S.B. 464), to include removal of the funding prohibition in that bill. S.B. 464 passed the full Senate unanimously Mar 11. In the House, it has been referred to the Government Organization Committee, chaired by Charles Evans (D-Hurst). Who is carrying the bill in the House? Charles Evans. His feelings on the funding prohibition? Removing it is OK by him. At press time, the committee hearing for this bill was not yet scheduled.

/John Sproul/

FEATHER LAKE NEWS

WORK DAY - Bring your work gloves and elbow grease out to Feather Lake Sunday, April 28, around 8:30 AM. Bring snacks and water.

BART'S CORNER: Said Bart, after a full morning of digging ditches at our recent Feather L. workday, "Where are those Northern Shovelers when we need 'em?"

CONSERVATION CAPSULES

EL PASO CITY ELECTIONS APR 6: Vote!

NONGAME STAMP: Although 88% of Texas wildlife species are not hunted or taken commercially, only 3% of the current budget for the Wildlife Division of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. (TPWD) goes to nongame programs. On the other hand, although nonconsumptive users of wildlife outnumber consumptive users 3 to 1 in Texas, the hunting and fishing public, through license fees and taxes on equipment and ammunition, has to pay virtually all of TPWD's wildlife-related bills. When the Texas Legislature authorized the Texas Nongame Stamp program in 1983, it took the first step towards righting these wildlife funding imbalances. The 2nd -- and most important -- step is up to us. Buy a Nongame Stamp or Decal! You'll be contributing directly to TPWD's nongame and endangered species programs. You'll be doing your share to support Texas wildlife.

MASKED BOBWHITE GETS A HOME: Interior Secretary Donald Hodel announced Feb 20 that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will buy the 118,694-acre Buenos Aires Ranch near Tucson, Ariz., to create a national wildlife refuge for the Masked Bobwhite. This endangered subspecies of quail is currently restricted in the wild to a small population in Sonora, Mexico. Historically, the Masked Bobwhite ranged into extreme southern Ariz., but it disappeared from the U.S. over 80 years ago, its native tallgrass habitat destroyed by a combination of overgrazing and drought (AUDUBON, Nov 1983). Today, Buenos Aires Ranch provides perhaps the only suitable habitat in the U.S. The USFWS hopes it can expand that habitat through proper management and successfully reestablish a self-sustaining wild population of Masked Bobwhite from brood stock it is now raising in captivity.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT: Speaking of endangered species, congressional consideration of extending the Endangered Species Act (ESA) began in earnest Mar 14 with hearings before the House Subcommittee on Fisheries and Wildlife

Conservation and the Environment. The subject was H.R. 1027, a reauthorization bill introduced by Reps. John Breaux (D-La.) and Don Young (R-Alaska). One concern of conservationists right now is that western water-development interests might seek an amendment to get their dams and other water projects exempted from requirements of the ESA. The water developers contend the ESA delays and threatens to stop their projects. Conservationists rebut that no western water project has ever been prevented because of the ESA. Whenever conflicts have arisen, project modifications or other measures have served to allow a project to proceed without jeopardizing endangered species. In short, the ESA works and shouldn't be weakened.

RECYCLING: Don't forget! In El Paso, Fridays are recycling days.

TEXAS WATER: Comprehensive legislation concerning Texas water resources is back before the state legislature. This year, in contrast to 1983 (RR, June 1983), it may even reach the governor's desk for his signature. Once again, the House and Senate have passed significantly different versions of this legislation. And once again, the Senate version is far stronger environmentally, particularly in the areas of agricultural water conservation, groundwater management, protection of bays and estuaries, mitigation of adverse impacts to fish and wildlife, flood control and water project financing. As this issue goes to press, a conference committee of 5 senators and 5 representatives is working to iron out differences between the 2 versions. Among the conferees: El Paso Sen. Tati Santiesteban (Texas Senate, P.O. Box 12068, Austin, TX 78711). Urge him to hang tough for the Senate version of the water legislation.

/John Sproul/



Masked Bobwhite.

CHAPTER PREVIEW OF COMING ATTRACTIONS

FEATHER LAKE NOTES

April 12 & 13 "Chapter Display"
Cielo Vista Mall, upper level near
Sears, opposite Wicks N Sticks. Call
Bob Johnson (751-0125) or Jane Fowler
(772-0296) if you can volunteer some
time to talk with shoppers about our
chapter's activities.

April 28 "Rummage Sale"
Dyer Street flea market at the old
Woolco parking lot. Call Bart Rumaker
(544-6432), Virginia Baker (562-9461) or
Jane Fowler (772-0296) if you have items
to donate.

May 4 "Birdathon" (see flier)

May 11 "Book Fair"
B Dalton Bookseller, Cielo Vista Mall.
Conveniently occurring before Mother's
Day, Father's Day, Grandparents' Day and
Christmas! Make your gift lists now and
plan to buy those books on the 11th.

Easter Sunday, April 7, you will find
Feather Lake open for visitors from
3 PM until sundown. Sunset at the
sanctuary would be a beautiful way to
end a special day. Joyce Davis will
be on duty. The lake will be open on
schedule through the month of April.
Thanks to all the volunteers who have
gone out to greet our visitors.

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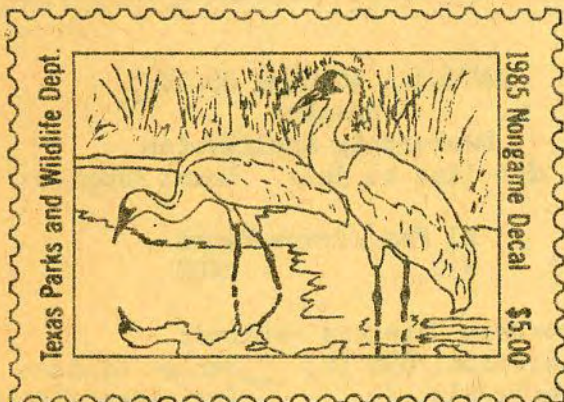
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