

# The



# Roadrunner

Volume 19 (4)

EL PASO/TRANS-PECOS AUDUBON SOCIETY

September 1989

## GENERAL MEETING

El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society meets the third Monday of each month (Sept - May) at 7:30 PM in the Garden Center, 3105 Grant, in Memorial Park. Visitors are welcome.

MON., SEPT. 18  
7:30 PM



AN EXPERIENCE IN CONNECTICUT awaits us at our September meeting. When Kay Thurman won our chapter's 1988 Audubon Ecology Camp scholarship, she decided to use it to attend Audubon's field ecology workshop for educators in Connecticut. She was highly impressed, both with the workshop and the beautiful surroundings.

The classrooms were the very best: hemlock and deciduous forests, lush meadows, lakes, ponds and streams on Audubon's 485-acre nature sanctuary in Greenwich; and beach, intertidal and marine ecosystems on Long Island Sound. The instructors were innovative and enthusiastic. As a teacher at St. Clement's Episcopal School in El Paso, one of Kay's aims is "to teach the children to live lightly on the planet." Her Connecticut experience has helped her do just that, and she'll share it with us Sept. 18. Please join us, particularly if you're thinking about attending an Audubon Ecology Camp yourself.

## BOOK FAIR

The June 17 book fair at B DALTON BOOK-SELLER, Cielo Vista Mall, was a big success. I would like to express our appreciation to B DALTON and Manager Judy Coons for their generous support of our chapter's educational and environmental programs. A big vote of appreciation also to chapter members who manned the table and exhibits that day: Helen Barto, George Barnett, Jeannette Cole, Joyce Davis, Robert Doss, Jane Fowler, Bob Johnson, Ann Schultis, John Sproul and Norma Vargas. A popular addition to our display this year was the NAS's Video Guide to Birds of North America which we presented to shoppers throughout the day. This was possible because of the generosity of Radio Shack (Cielo Vista) and Manager Charles Wood who loaned us a VCR for that purpose. Many thanks to all for a most rewarding day.

/Larry Jordan, Ways & Means Chair/

## COWBOY BREAKFAST

What could be more fun than a lip-smackin' breakfast at Feather Lake Wildlife Sanctuary! Come out to a COWBOY BREAKFAST on Sept 16 at 7:30 AM and see for yourself. And are ya'll in luck. The chuck wagon cooks are none other than Anne Hussmann and Nancy Wilson! Remember, these are the gals who prepare gourmet meals on overnight field trips. They'll be whippin' up bacon'n eggs. Can't you almost smell the coffee perkin'? And certainly they'll have donuts for Sid's sweet tooth. Mark your calendar right now-- Sept 16, 7:30 AM at Feather Lake. We're hopin', of course, you'll bring work gloves and help out with some of the Sanctuary chores before you mosey on home. Be shore to call the cooks (584-4081 or 833-3907) and get yore name in the pot. Ya'll come now, ya hear.

# ON THE TRAIL

with  
BOB JOHNSON

## LOOKING FOR THE SORA

On Sat, Sept 9, meet at Furniture Country, 4801 Fred Wilson, at 7:30 AM. From there, the tour will go to Ft. Bliss Ponds where all should have an opportunity to observe at least 8 species of ducks and 8 of wading birds. Hopefully, we'll spot the elusive SORA and maybe a Red-necked Phalarope. We should finish about noon; snacks and liquids are recommended. Leader: Larry Jordan (833-5969)

## MIGRATING PASSERINES

We'll gather on Sept 17, 7:30 AM, at the Garden Center, 3105 Grant, in Memorial Park. A walk around the park could produce a few warblers and maybe a Solitary Vireo. We'll conclude the trip with a walk through Arroyo Park, just off New York. Leader: Norma Vargas (533-8848)

## HAWKS IN FLIGHT

Camping in the Manzano Mts. of NM during the weekend of Sept 23-24 will give all attending a chance to observe the annual hawk migration. On the peak day, it's possible to see 200 raptors soaring overhead. Species should include: Cooper's, Sharp-shinned, Red-tails, Swainson's and possibly Ferruginous, Osprey, Merlin, and maybe a Peregrine. As a bonus, in the campsite area, there could be Saw-whet Owls. Those who prefer a motel, try the Trail's End in Mountainair (about 17 mi. from camp) 1-505-847-2206. This reporter is unfamiliar with the motel. Leader: Jim Harvey (532-6001)

## UPPER VALLEY HOT SPOT

The Owen's/Durling's areas on Gardner Rd., west of Canutillo, is nearly always good for a rare one. Meet at the Crossroads (Doniphan & Country Club) 7:30 AM, Oct 1. A scan of the ponding area and Lombardy Ave. will precede the trip to Gardner Rd. We could see Orange-crowned and Townsend's warblers, and Red-breasted Nuthatches. The tour will be over by noon. Leader: Peggy Riede (833-4881)

## PAST SIGHTINGS

During the Memorial Day weekend, 21 people enjoyed the Cave Creek and Rustler Park areas in the Chiricahua Mts. Top birds were Lucifer and Costa's hummingbirds, Olive and Red-faced warblers, Yellow-eyed Junco, Evening Grosbeak, Flammulated Owl, and, of course, the Elegant Trogon. Eighty-seven species were noted.

On June 4, Joyce Davis led 9 others to the heron rookery in Vado. Seen were 21 species. Black-crowned Night-Herons, Cattle and Snowy egrets, Blue Grosbeak, Burrowing Owl and Yellow-breasted Chat were some.

The trip to Glenwood/Luna in the Gila Nat'l Forest, June 24-25, drew 13 birders who were delighted to see Lewis' Woodpecker, Am. Dipper feeding 4 young in a nest under the Catwalk, and a Black Hawk calling from a tree along the Gila River.



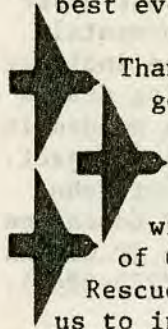
A short birdwatching trip into Hueco Tanks preceded the trash cleanup on July 8. A Crissal Thrasher, Lesser Goldfinches and a probable Prairie Falcon were sighted.

Although campers in Water Canyon in the Cibola Nat'l Forest got slightly damp during the weekend of July 22-23, good birding was enjoyed by all: Band-tailed Pigeons, Hepatic Tanager, 3 nuthatch species, turkeys, Western and Mountain bluebirds, and best of all, a Common Nighthawk sitting on a branch at close range.

(continued on p. 6)

## AUDUBON BIRDATHON

All Birdathon participants, give yourselves a LARGE pat on the back! Any way you look at it, this year's event was a huge success. Thanks to our 251 generous contributors, we raised \$5,085, our best ever!



Thank you, one and all! Your generosity has allowed us to make major donations to Audubon's Southwest Regional Office (\$2,517) and to the wildlife rehabilitation work of Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue (\$1,258). You've enabled us to increase the number of class-

rooms we sponsor in the Audubon Adventures youth education program. And you've kept our scholarship program healthy.

It was a great effort by all involved. The folks who did the birding were, of course, essential. We've recognized some of the best with suitable prizes:

Top bird finder - Barry Zimmer  
 Outstanding fundraiser - Mike Chintis  
 Most sponsors - George Barnett  
 Top new counter - Scott Cutler  
 Youngest birder - Mark Riede (Age: 6, species total: 60)

### 1989 BIRDATHON CONTRIBUTORS

Beata Abbs, Rosemary Aldridge, R.J. Armstrong, Cathryn Baker, James Baptist, Sue Barber, Eileen Barnett, George Barnett, Bertha Barnhart, Helen Barto, Tom Beard, Bill Bennett, Lois and Ken Beno, Hilda Bentley, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bleau, Donna Bloedorn, Lois Blount, Kathy Bowden, Betty Bowen, Anne Bowman, Mary Bradley, Ann Brand, Pat and Tom Brasfield, Dan Breitbart, Rosemary Breitbart, John Bridges, Janet Brockmoller, C. H. Brown, Pete Brown, Thomas L. Brown, Jon Buchynsky, Brett Burkhart, Gary Burleson;

Mary Caldwell, R. Calvert, Charles Capehart, Y. Carranza, Dick Cherry, Mike Chintis, Peter Chrapliwy, Jack Clark, Kim Cliett, Daryl Cole, Jeannette Cole, Maria Cooper, Jean Coyle, John Craig, Nancy Crider, Jean Marie Crockett, David Curl, Paul Cutler, Scott Cutler, Gail Darling, Steve Darling, Joyce Davis, Paul DeZenn, Sue DiCara, M. A. Dix, Sarah Jane Dodds, Mary Ann Dodson, Bill Doebele, Robert Doss, Wynell Dryden, Betty B. Duggan, Wayne Duke, Joan and Larry Duncan, Marguerite Dunnell, Diane Dutton, Dayle and Elaine Edwards, Helen Emery, Linda Farrall, DiAnne Fields, Ed Fisher, Bobbie Flowers, Larry Forsythe, Bill Fowler, Jane Fowler;

Richard Gardner, Linda Gaunt, Al and Madeline Gavit, Carole George, Elsa Gilboe, Stan Glaskowski, Jimmy Goldman, Ruth Goodenough, Judith Gouch, Sarah Gowan, Donna Green, Harvette Green, Jack and Linda Green, John Green, Joseph Groff, Gene Groth, Frank and Julia Grubbs, Elizabeth and Joe Guinn, Frances Gutierrez, Jean Hagesfeld, Chris Hahn, Pamela J. Hahn, Pamela L. Hahn, Virginia Hair, Mike Hand, Joan Hardaway, Carrie Harper, Sallie R. Harrington, Diana Harris, Laura Harris, Malcolm Harris, Mary Harris, Sandra Harris, Jim Harvey, Dale Hawkins, Barbara Hegem, Nuala Heitzman, Pam Henderson, Victor Hermosillo, Lola R. Herrera, John Hetzel, Carol Hogg, Helen Holliday, Martha Hughes, Dennis Hulse, Dennis Hunt, Amy Hussmann, Anne Hussmann, Anne B. Hussmann, Harry Hussmann, Tom Hussmann, Barbara Hyland;

Sally and Hugh Jameson, Bob Johnson, Ken Johnson, Mack Jones, Larry Jordan, Ed Joyce, Jim Kelly, Lena Kelly, Viola Kerns, Helene Kneeland, Ken Korn, Kathie Kornmann-Lopez, Jim Koschmann, Lloyd LaBorde, Alan Laird, Rob Lassiter, Jody Lawrence, Joe Leach, Lena Leahey, Art Lopez, Bill and Norma Lorang, Virginia Lotspeich, Tom McCabe, K. McCandless, Paul D. McCoy, Mary Sue McNeal, Barbara and George Mader, Henry Martch, Charlotte Merritt, David Miller, Gail Miller, Tricia Tague Miller, Betty Morgan, Bud Morgan, Neal Morgan, Mary Morris, Aimee G. Mott, Mrs. H. C. Murrie, Jo Nagel, Carlisle Navidomskis, Howard Neighbor, James Nicholson;

Greg Odegard, Dolores Ortega, Carl Ostertag, Cornelia Owen, Teresa Palacio, Iola Pennington, Norma Peticolas, Helen and Ted Pierce, Jim Polk, Helen W. Ponder, Mathew Ponton, Pat Pool, David Powell, Mary Teen Pugh, Bill Quinn, Jean Ann Raleigh, Kathy Reynolds, Betty C. Richeson, Dan C. Richey, Mark Riede, Peggy Riede, Bettie Roberts, Glenda Roberts, Estella Rodarte, Gertrude Rose, Bart Rumaker, Patricia Russell, Cathy Sarrow, Jeanne Saunders, Ted Sawyer, Susie Schneider, Ida Schultis, Al Schwartz, Miki Scott, Thomas and Mary Ann Scully, Ted Seward, Earlene Shavers, June Shelby, Sid Shepperd, Annamarie Shields;

Beverly B. Smith, Lorraine Snelling, John Sr. and Marjorie Sproul, John Sproul, Jr., Michael Spurlock, David Stone, Eleanor Sullivan, Don Swick, Lucile Swick, Grace Thomas, Ken Thomas, Willene and Hoot Thomas, Pat Tofflemire, Tonya Turner, Osias Uribe, Madeline Vallari, Henry Van, David Vanzandt, Norma Vargas, Mary Ann Vernon, Penny Viescas, Dennis Wagner, Ray Waite, LuAnn Waynon, Dave Weinstein, Ed and Geth White, Frederick White, Rollin Wickenden, Dorothy Williams, Gary Williams, Joshua Wilson, Nancy Wilson, Anne Wise, Mike Wiseman, Tom Wright, George Yelderman, Mary Yelderman, Edna and Leo Young, Mary and Bernie Zimmer, Yvonne Zimmer.

The prestigious Bart Rumaker Prize, given to the finder of the most unusual bird, went this year to Barry Zimmer for the Black-bellied Whistling-Duck he saw at the Socorro Sewage Treatment Plant ponds.

Not only did we give out prizes for this year's Birdathon, we also received some. Again this year, our chapter was the second highest fund raiser in our size category in Audubon's Southwest Region. Nice going, everyone, and thanks again!

#### GRACIAS

Our organization gets help in ways large and small from folks throughout the community, and we appreciate every bit of it. Among our recent benefactors deserving hearty thanks:

- KCOS-Channel 13, for providing videotapes of 2 "World of Audubon" television specials for our video library;
- Robert Miles, for helping us acquire a video on a Peregrine Falcon release project; and
- the EL PASO TIMES and EL PASO HERALD-POST, for recent publicity given our activities.

\* \* \*

On Aug 1, Ann Schultis, one of our organization's hardest working members, began a new job: Reference/Administrative Services Librarian at Park College in Parkville, Missouri. Much as we might wish otherwise, Ann has had to cut back slightly on her activities for our chapter. And they've been many. In recent years, she's been our secretary (1987-88), our Birdathon chair (1988) and our newsletter editor (1989). We'll miss her. Thanks, Ann, for all your contributions, and good luck!

Obviously, Ann's departure creates a golden opportunity for anyone eager to apply their literary and graphic design talents to an erudite and influential publication. Yes, THE ROADRUNNER needs a new editor. If you wish to be considered, please contact Helen Barto (755-4744) or John Sproul (545-5157).

#### TEXAS TEXTBOOKS

The Audubon Council of Texas (ACT) and the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club have begun a valuable and far-sighted project: active participation in the process that leads to selection of textbooks used in Texas schools. Concentrating on science, health and social science texts, ACT and the Sierra Club are providing input to the State Board of Education on environmental subject matter that should be included in textbooks and are reviewing drafts of proposed new texts. Help is needed in all phases of this worthwhile project. Want to get involved? Contact John Sproul (915/545-5157) or ACT Education Committee Chair David Carson (P.O. Box 4856, McDade, TX 78650; 512/273-2840).

#### CHIHUAHUAN DESERT WILDLIFE RESCUE

Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue (CDWR), the new group supporting El Paso-area wildlife rehabilitators, is off and running. Since its inception just over a year ago, 4 new permit holders have begun doing rehabilitation work in the El Paso area. CDWR has used its funds, including those contributed by our chapter, to assist in building cages and flight pens and to buy food for raptors brought in for care.

CDWR has also produced a fancy new t-shirt to help promote its work and raise funds. The price is \$8 for CDWR members, \$10 for nonmembers. You can order one (or more!) from Anne Hussmann (584-4081, El Paso westside) or Jane Fowler (598-2448, eastside) or buy one at the next Audubon meeting.

CDWR's rehabilitators always need a variety of usual and unusual items to carry out their work. High on the current wish list: ● old towels, ● old quilts, ● heating pads (used OK), and ● rat and mouse farmers. (This last item may need explaining. Call Helen Bigelow, 882-2910, for details.)

If you have items to donate, CDWR will gladly pick them up. Call Anne Hussmann (584-4081) to schedule a pick-up.

## EP/TPAS HELPS FRANKLINS PARK

Our organization has made a couple of contributions to Franklin Mountains State Park in recent months. We have donated a slide projector for educational presentations on the Franklins and \$400 for repair of picnic shelters in the Tom Mays Area on the west side of the mountains.

Both contributions were funded through our Franklin Mountains Fund, established in 1986 to support educational and conservation projects benefiting the Franklins. Contributions to this fund are always gratefully accepted. Please send donations, payable to "El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society", to P.O. Box 9655, El Paso, TX 79986. Note on your check that it is for the Franklin Mountains Fund.

## SCOTT ABLE TIMBER PLAN APPEALED

As this issue goes to press, our chapter has joined the Mesilla Valley Audubon Society in appealing the U.S. Forest Service's (USFS's) timber-harvest plan for the 3,900-acre Scott Able Planning Area in the Sacramento Mountains. The appeal cites failure of the USFS to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act and National Forest Management Act, inconsistency with the Lincoln National Forest Plan, and questionable application of the interim guidelines for management of Mexican Spotted Owls on national forests in Arizona and New Mexico. It challenges a provision in the Spotted Owl guidelines that allows the Lincoln National Forest to protect smaller "core areas" for the owl than other national forests in the Southwest. The purpose of the appeal? To get the USFS to re-evaluate its plan for the Scott Able area and revise the plan to provide increased protection for Spotted Owls and other wildlife.



## WILDERNESS ACT SILVER ANNIVERSARY

On Thursday through Sunday, Sept 28-Oct 1, there's going to be a celebration on the Gila National Forest. The event? The 25th anniversary of a remarkable law, the Wilderness Act of 1964. The festivities begin Thursday afternoon at W. New Mexico Univ. in Silver City, with a reception, a tribute to Edward Abbey and a premiere showing of "The Wilderness Idea", first in a 4-part series of documentary films exploring the evolution of American ideas about wilderness. Friday, a conference will look at the history of wilderness in the Southwest and current Southwest wilderness issues. Saturday, a region-wide celebration, featuring singer Michael Martin Murphey, takes place at the confluence of Terry Canyon and Sapillo Creek. Sunday, there will be small group hikes into the Gila Wilderness and other nearby designated and proposed wilderness areas. Conference registration is \$10 (\$5 for students and senior citizens). A Friday night banquet is \$25. The celebration Saturday is \$10/car (up to 6 people; \$2 for each additional person). Event sponsors are the Friends of the Gila Forest, The Wilderness Society, W. New Mexico Univ. and the U.S. Forest Service. For registration and other information, contact Jim Owen (598-9332) or John Sproul (545-5157).

## TEXAS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The Texas Ornithological Society (TOS) is an organization "dedicated to the observation, study and conservation of birds in Texas." If you're interested in Texas birds, TOS is well worth joining and supporting. It publishes a biannual journal and a quarterly newsletter. Its biannual meetings, held at sites throughout the state, are famous for good birding, informative workshops and great fellowship. Membership rates are: \$6/Student, \$12/Active, \$17/Family, \$24/Sustaining, \$250/Life, \$325/Life (w/ spouse). The rates go up on April 1, so if you're interested in joining, why not do so now? For an application, contact John Sproul (545-5157) or get one at the next EP/TPAS meeting.

(Past Sightings continued)

On Aug 6, six members walked some of the roads of the EP Country Club area and Randel's Pool. It was worth it to watch a Mississippi Kite bring food to the nest for a young one. Forty-six other species were seen; 2 Red-crowned Parrots, many Western Tanagers and a Lazuli Bunting were tops./BJ/

#### LOOKING AHEAD

SUN, OCT. 1 Owen's/Durling's farms  
 SAT, OCT. 14 Trash cleanup at Hueco Tanks  
 SAT/SUN, McKittrick Canyon with  
 OCT. 21-22 camping at Pine Springs  
 SAT, OCT. 28 East side of Franklins  
 SUN, NOV. 5 Ft. Hancock reservoir  
 SAT, NOV. 18 Hueco Tanks, birding only  
 SAT/SUN, Bosque del Apache NWR  
 DEC. 2-3  
 SAT, DEC. 16 Christmas Bird Count  
 SAT, DEC. 30 Christmas Bird Count

/Bob Johnson, Field Trips Chair/

#### RUMMAGE SALE

The chapter's annual rummage sale is scheduled for Sunday, Nov 12. Contact either Bob Johnson (751-0125, 757-1876) or Larry Jordan (833-5969) if you have anything to donate for the sale. After Dec, Bob's storage shed will no longer be available to store rummage. If you know of an alternative storage site, please contact Bob or Larry.

#### PRAIRIE CHICKEN IN TROUBLE

The population of the endangered Attwater Prairie Chicken has been cut roughly in half during the past year by deluges and drought in Texas, and the birds may become extinct in about 12 years, said Dr. Nova Silvy, a Texas A&M Univ. researcher and head of a prairie chicken recovery team. According to a report in The Houston Post, Silvy said a record annual loss of more than 500 prairie chickens has left only 432 of the birds in 8 Texas counties. "Of the 8 counties, 5 have gone below 10 male birds, and we've never been able to bring back a county with that few males," Silvy said. The decline in the birds had been averaging about 90 a year since 1972.

In Colorado County, home to the state's second-largest population of the birds, heavy rains during hatching season last year virtually drowned all the baby chicks. On the other hand, in Refugio County, which has the state's largest population of prairie chickens, drought has taken "away the young green vegetation they feed on and robbed them of cover where they could hide from preying hawks migrating through the area," Silvy noted.

Silvy added, however, that the fundamental threat to the birds is the loss of the prairie habitat to urban sprawl, conversion to rice and other crops, and incursions of brushy growth that displaces the birds. Shrinking prairie acreage has also concentrated the hawks and Great Horned Owls that prey on the chickens.

The remaining 90 birds in Colorado County are on the Attwater Prairie Chicken Nat'l Wildlife Refuge. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service had hoped to establish a second prairie chicken refuge on 5,600 acres of ranchland near Victoria County, Silvy said, but the option ran out before purchase money became available.

Source: ECOLOGY USA (July 17, 1989)

#### National Audubon...Looking Ahead...

The September issue of AUDUBON magazine will feature the Alaska oil spill. ¶A new season of Audubon Television Specials will debut in October 1989 on SuperStation TBS. The first special to be aired will be "Ancient Forests: Rage Over Trees," narrated by Paul Newman. ¶Don't forget Audubon's Biennial Convention in Tucson, Arizona, September 12-16, 1989. For a convention brochure, write: Audubon Convention Office, 4150 Darley, #5, Boulder, Colo. 80303 or call (303) 499-3622. ¶Audubon's international youth camp will be held in Virginia, August 17-26. For information or an application, write: Audubon Ecology Camps and Workshops, National Audubon Society, 613 Riversville Rd., Greenwich, Conn. 06831. ¶The AUDUBON WILDLIFE REPORT 1989/1990, featuring the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, will be out in August. Copies of the book can be ordered through Academic Press, Inc., which copublishes the book with Audubon. To order, call: 1-800-321-5068 (in Missouri, Alaska, and Hawaii: 1-314-528-8110).

## OBSERVATIONS

(uncommon, rare &amp; casual sightings)

May 6 - August 11

- CP - Crossroads Pond
- DP - Doniphan Pool
- EPCC - El Paso Country Club
- FB - Ft. Bliss Ponds
- FH - Ft. Hancock reservoir
- FL - Feather Lake
- FQ - Ft. Quitman vicinity
- H - Horizon City
- HT - Hueco Tanks
- LA - Lombardy Ave.
- ML - Madden Lake
- MP - Memorial Park
- OC - Oak Canyon
- RIO - Rio Grande in Neely Canyon
- RP - Randel's Pool
- T - Tornillo reservoir
- TR - Tornillo rest stop
- V - Vado

Sightings by a field trip member are noted by "+" after the leader's initials. Sightings in an observer's yard are indicated by an "\*" before his/her initials.

## LOONS - FALCONS

Double-crested Cormorants were seen at CR and DP 7/16 (JD). Both Double-crested and Olivaceous cormorants were at FH 5/12, 13 (JS). A Great Egret was spotted at FQ 4/29 (JS). Snown Egrets were found at DP, FB, FL, FH, T 5/7-6/24 (JD, JS). Cattle Egrets were seen at V 6/4 (JD+) and RIO 7/23 (JS). A Tricolored Heron was spotted at RIO 6/3 (JS). Green-backed Herons and Black-crowned Night-Herons were seen at various locations May thru July (JD, DJ, JS). Red-heads, a Ring-necked Duck and a Lesser Scaup were still around FH 5/12, 13 (JS). An Osprey was seen at FH 5/12 (JS). Adult and young Mississippi Kites were seen near LA 6/3 (BJ+). A N. Harrier was spotted at FB 7/4 (BJ). Harris' Hawks were found at FH, FQ 5/12, 5/29, 6/3 (JS). A Golden Eagle was seen soaring overhead in OC 4/30 (JS) and along I-10 in e. El Paso 6/12, 13, 29 and 7/24 (JS). A Prairie Falcon was found at HT 7/8 (JD).



## QUAIL - WOODPECKERS

A Virginia Rail was found at FL 5/21 (JS). A Snowy Plover was seen at ML 5/13 (JS). Black-necked Stilts nested at DP 5/9 - 7/30 (JD). Am. Avocets and Black-necked Stilts were seen at FB, T, FH, ML 5/11-13 (JS). A Solitary Sandpiper was found at FB 5/11 (JS). A female Red-necked Phalarope was spotted at T 5/12 and a Willet was there 5/13 (JS). A Franklin's Gull was found at FB 5/13 (JS). A Least Tern was seen at FL 5/28 (JS). A Forster's Tern was spotted at T 5/12 and FH 5/13 (JS). On 5/13, a Barn Owl was found at FB and a Great Horned Owl was at HT that same day (JS). Common Nighthawks were found at FQ 6/24 and 7/23 (JS). A Magnificent Hummingbird was photographed at a home west of HT in July (details later). Calliope Hummingbirds were seen in July, 8/8, 12 (\*TB, \*PR, \*DT). Broad-tailed Hummingbirds showed up in several yards (\*TB, \*BR, \*JS) 7/24, 26 & 8/12.

## FLYCATCHERS - VIREOS

Dusky Flycatchers were seen at HT 5/13, 14 (JS) and at H (\*A&MG) 8/8. A Gray Flycatcher was found at FQ 4/29 (JS). A Western Flycatcher was spotted at HT 5/13 (JS). Black Phoebes were seen at T 5/13 (JS) and RP 8/6 (JD). Vermilion Flycatchers were spotted at FQ 5/29, 6/3 (JS). A Brown-crested Flycatcher was found at RP 8/6 (\*JD). Cassin's Kingbirds were seen at FQ 4/29 (JS) and HT 7/8 (JD). Of the swallows, Tree were at FQ 4/29, RIO 7/23, RP 8/6 (JS). Violet-green were seen at OC 4/30 and HT 5/11, 14 (JS). Bank Swallows were found at various locations 4/29-7/23 (JS). Cave Swallows were spotted at ML 4/29, I-10 5/12 (JS). Bewick's Wrens showed up at FQ 4/29, OC 4/30 and RIO 7/23 (JS). A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was spotted at FQ 4/29 (JS). Black-tailed Gnatcatchers were seen at FQ and RIO 4/29-7/23 (JS). Phainopeplas were found at TR 5/12 (JS), RP 7/30 (JD), LA 8/6 (JS). Bell's Vireos showed up at TR 5/12, FQ 5/29, RIO 6/3 and 7/23 (JS). Warbling Vireos were at RP 7/30, 8/6 (JD) and MP 5/13 and HT 5/14 (JS).

(Observations continued)

WARBLERS - WEAVER FINCHES

Virginia's Warblers were spotted at RIO 7/23 (JS) and RP 7/30, 8/6 (JD). Lucy's Warblers were seen several times at RIO (JS) and RP (JD). A N. Waterthrush came to e. El Paso (\*BR) 5/11. Summer Tanagers were found at ML 5/12, FQ 5/29, RIO 6/3 and 7/23 (JS). Western Tanagers showed up in Anthony, NM (\*HB) 5/17 and e. El Paso (\*BR) 8/10. Black-headed Grosbeaks were seen at (\*BR) 5/11 and H (\*A&MG) 8/2. Single Lazuli Buntings were at RP 8/6 (BJ+) and DP 8/12 (JD). An Indigo Bunting was seen at Esperanza 5/13 (JS). Painted Buntings were found at several locations in the Lower Valley 5/12-7/23 (JS) and RP 7/30 (JD). A Green-tailed Towhee was seen at FB 5/13 (JS). Cassin's Sparrows were singing at HT 7/8 (JD) and RIO 7/23 (JS). Vesper Sparrows came by an Upper Valley yard (\*TB) 8/12. Lark Sparrows were seen at ML, FQ and RIO 4/29-7/23 (JS) and EPCC 8/6 (BJ+). Flocks of Lark Buntings were seen at various locations 4/29-8/6 (JS). A Bronzed Cowbird was spotted ML 5/12 (JS). Orchard Orioles were found TR 5/12, FQ 5/29, 6/3 (JS). Lesser Goldfinches were reported at FQ and HT 5/11-7/23 (JD,JS).

EXOTIC BIRDS

Two Red-crowned Parrots were seen on LA (BJ+).

OBSERVERS: Tom Baker, Helen Bigelow, Joyce Davis, Jane Fowler, Al & Madeline Gavit, Bob Johnson, Debbie Johnson, Peggy Riede, Bettie Roberts, John Sproul and Dennis Taylor.

/Joyce Davis, Observations Editor/  
(H 581-9470, W 544-6772)

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

An El Paso gentleman, Elmer Bowman, repairs and/or cleans binoculars. He was recommended to us by a satisfied EPTPAS member. He handles simple repairs, but if parts he doesn't have on hand are needed, the binoculars will have to be sent to the factory for repair. If your binoculars need repair, Mr. Bowman has very kindly said he will check them free of charge to advise you if they need parts. For more information, call 779-7719.

FEATHER LAKE NEWS

And the good news is...

There was water in the basin all summer at Feather Lake Wildlife Sanctuary; this hasn't always been the case during our hot, dry summers.

MORE good news...

The Sanctuary is about to experience some important and long-awaited improvements. Board members have been gathering information and making plans to install a restroom and maintenance shed at Feather Lake. To keep costs to a minimum, we hope to have volunteers do part of the work, but we will certainly need the advice and help of a skilled plumber with the restroom. Anyone out there within the sound of this typewriter who could assist with this vital part of a "necessary facility" for FL, please contact the Sanctuary Chair at 598-2448.

Special thanks go to the following good people for doing the perpetual cleanup chores at FL during the summer: Jeannette Cole, Scott Cutler, Joyce Davis, Robert Doss, Anne Hussmann, Bob Johnson, Jo Nagel, Ann Schultis, John Sproul and Nancy Wilson.

Feather Lake will again be open to the public as of Oct 7. The schedule will be the same as last year: 8 to 11 AM on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month, and 3:30 PM to dusk every Sunday. (The Sanctuary will be closed on holiday weekends.) This schedule will continue through April. If you can be a volunteer to greet our visitors, please call Jeannette Cole (565-1957) who is again co-ordinating the volunteers for visiting hours. (Thanks, Jeannette!) It would be very helpful on field trip weekends if members not going on the trip would call Jeannette and volunteer for duty at FL. She will certainly appreciate your thoughtfulness.

The next scheduled work day is Sept 16, preceded by a "cowboy breakfast" at 7:30 AM. (See p.1 for details.) There are a variety of tasks to choose from. Hope to see you there.

/Jane Fowler, Sanctuary Chair/



## ATTENTION TAXONOMY/NOMENCLATURE FANS!

In the July 1989 issue of its journal THE AUK, the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) published the 37th supplement to its Check-List of North American Birds. The supplement presents changes to the checklist adopted by the AOU's Committee on Classification and Nomenclature as of March 1, 1989. Several changes involve Trans-Pecos birds. So get out your field guides, make the needed revisions, and start getting used to these new names:

**YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON.** The scientific name is now Nyctanassa violacea (changed from Nycticorax violaceus).

**BARN OWL.** The common name is again Barn Owl (changed from Common Barn-Owl).

**CORDILLERAN FLYCATCHER.** The Western Flycatcher is split into 2 species: the Pacific-slope Flycatcher (Empidonax difficilis), which breeds generally west of the Cascades and Sierra Nevada, and the Cordilleran Flycatcher (Empidonax occidentalis), which breeds generally east of those ranges. The Cordilleran is the species to be expected in the Trans-Pecos.

**BLACK-TAILED GNATCATCHER.** This bird is also split into interior and coastal species: the Black-tailed Gnatcatcher (Polioptila melanura), which is found in our region and over most of the Southwest, and the California Gnatcatcher (Polioptila californica), which is found in southwestern California and northwestern Baja California.



**AMERICAN PIPIT.** The Water Pipit (Anthus spinoletta) is now known as the American Pipit (Anthus rubescens).

**CANYON TOWHEE.** The final split affecting our region involves the Brown Towhee. It's now the Canyon Towhee (Pipilo fuscus) in the interior Southwest south through central Mexico and the California Towhee (Pipilo crissalis) west of the Sierra Nevada.

## Arctic Update

## Audubon Toughens Stand Against Drilling in Arctic Refuge

In the wake of the catastrophic Valdez oil spill, at its June meeting the board of directors of the National Audubon Society developed a stricter policy on the controversy about opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling. Last year, Audubon opposed drilling until and unless careful research could show that wildlife and the environment would not be harmed. After examining the evidence of the last two years, the Society has concluded that this criteria cannot be met, and therefore *unconditionally opposes any form of oil extraction in the refuge and urges that it be designated wilderness.*

The oil industry sees the refuge as its highest priority onshore drilling site, and President Bush continues to publicly support oil exploration there. Legislation that would open the refuge to drilling has stalled in Congress, largely in response to the spill; however, proponents of the legislation still plan to forge ahead.

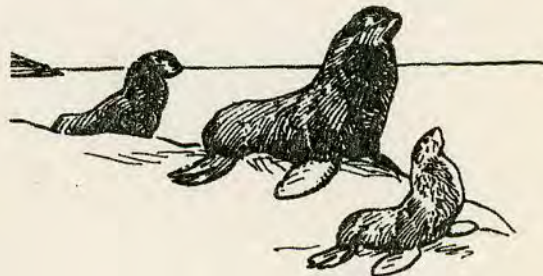
At the Audubon board meeting, board member Scott Reed summed up the need for the protection of the refuge as wilderness: "The whole proposition to drill in the Arctic, to construct the trans-Alaska pipeline, and to ship the oil by tankers across the seas was promoted and sold to the public upon the representation that no serious harm would ever happen to natural creatures...."

"Big Oil lied about the risks and the remedies. Big Oil cheated by evading the double hull commitment with the full concurrence of the United States Coast Guard. Big Oil and the state and federal governments were grossly negligent by failing to stock and man the response boats and equipment. Investigation and public disclosure to date has yet to find an area of protection in which something was done right...."

"Our position must be 'nevermore.' Arctic National Wildlife Refuge must be just what the name describes, a wildlife refuge.... The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is off limits."

To prevent a recurrence of the Valdez disaster, Audubon is also moving on other fronts. The Society joined with other environmental organizations in several lawsuits against Exxon; staff in Washington, D.C., and Alaska are pressing Audubon's six-point strategy, which includes updated and stringent oil spill contingency plans and a protection plan for Alaska's marine environment; and Audubon's experts renewed their call for development of alternative energy sources and energy-saving regulations.

Concerned Auduboners should take this opportunity to write their legislators, requesting full wilderness protection for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.



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