



# The Roadrunner

Newsletter of the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society

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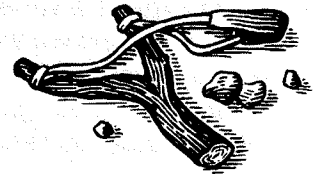


### General Meetings

**Monday, April 17, 2006 at 7:00 PM**  
**at UTEP Centennial Museum**  
**At the corner of Wiggins and University**

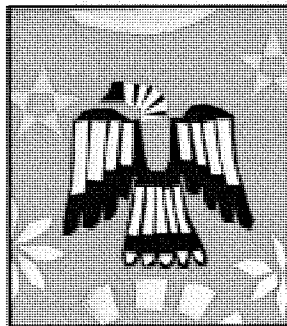
**Mesquite and Opuntia! Native plants important to the Indigenous people of the Chihuahuan Desert**  
**Dr. David Carmichael**

**Come and hear Dr. David Carmichael of UTEP Department of Anthropology reveal how the early people of the Northern Chihuahuan Desert relied on common native plants for their food and medicine, building materials, art and children's toys.**



Thank you Bob Johnson for the slide presentation of Alaskan wildlife give at the February Awards Dinner.

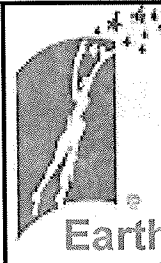
Thank you Alejandro Juarez-Reina for the presentation on the wild-life conservation efforts of Mexico.



**Monday, May 15, 2006 at 7:00 PM**  
**at UTEP Centennial Museum**  
**At the corner of Wiggins and University**

**Birds of Ecuador**  
**Lois Balin, Texas Parks & Wildlife**

**Lois will present a photographic slide show of a recent excursion to Ecuador. She has compiled over a hundred slides highlighting the birds of two different regions. This is will be the last general meeting until September and one you are not likely to want to miss. As always, refreshments and door prizes add to the enjoyment.**



**The Audubon Foundation of Texas** represents Texas Audubon chapters in the Earth Share of Texas payroll-deduction plan for charitable giving.

- Feather Lake: John Sproul, 545-5147
- Membership: Roxanne Schroeder, 533-0061
- Conservation: Gabe Valdes, 760-4074
- Programs: Ursula Sherrill, 526-7725
- Special Events:
- Projects: Carol Maxwell-Moreno, 593-0967

**El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society**

**Officers**

- President: Bob Garcia, 755-9119
- Vice President: Bob Johnson, 757-1876
- Secretary: Lucretia Chew, 587-9589
- Treasurer: Eddie Chew, 587-9589

**Committees**

- Education: Beth & Bob Garcia, 755-9119
- Ways & Means: Flora Pittard, 852-2353
- Field Trips: Bob Johnson, 757-1876
- Publicity: Kathy Kiseda, 533-4615
- Hospitality: Scott Cutler, 581-6071
- Newsletter Editor: Kathleen Whelen, 751-2408

**OUR ALBERTSONS COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

As many of you are aware, a few months ago our chapter was accepted to participate in the Albertsons Community Partners program. This allows our supporters, their friends, family and associates to donate a portion of their shopping expenses at all Albertsons stores to our chapters programs, without any additional cost to them, just by linking their Preferred Savings Card to our chapter. These funds will help us further develop and expand a variety our children's educational programs. To date we have received **\$472.90** from the partnership, and we would like to extend a big thank you to Albertsons and those of you who have already signed up and helped that happen. This is just the beginning! With a little bit of help from you we can really make that number grow. We would ask that if you haven't signed up, please do, and even if you have we would ask that you reach out to those around you and help us recruit participants for the program. It is so simple to do and will incur no expense.

- 1) We will have volunteers available at our meetings and field trips to gather the required info: **your name, phone number & Preferred Savings Card Number**, we will process it for you.  
**OR**
- 2) You can telephone Jane Fowler at 598-2448 and she will collect your information so we can then process it for you.  
**OR**
- 3) You can complete the short form at the bottom of this notice, cut it off (duplicate it for friends as necessary) and mail it to us for processing.

The information required is always the same, **NAME, PHONE NUMBER and ALBERTSONS PREFERRED SAVINGS CARD NUMBER**. Please help us add supporters by gathering this info.

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**TO PARTICIPATE PLEASE COMPLETE THIS SHORT FORM AND MAIL IT**

To: EPTP Audubon Society, c/o Kathy Kiseda 404 Kenyon Joyce Lane, El Paso, TX 79902

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

ALBERTSONS PREFERRED SAVINGS CARD NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

## AT FEATHER LAKE

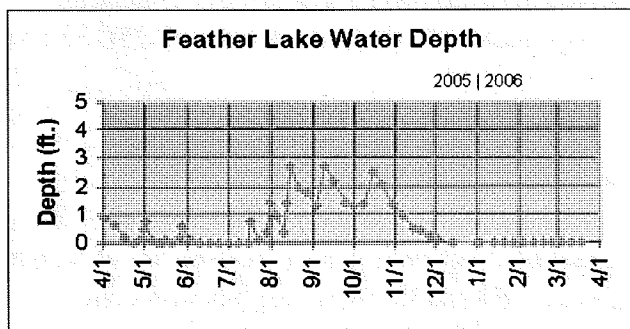
Feather Lake has now been dry for over 3 months. Expect that trend to continue. In years with full allotments of river water for irrigation, some irrigation water finds its way to the lake intermittently during spring and summer. This year, with the allotment expected to be well below full, that is not likely. We're dependent on rain, and there hasn't been much lately.

On a brighter note, Feather Lake Wildlife Sanctuary was established February 6, 1976, when the El Paso City Council approved the original lease agreement with El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon. That 5-year lease was renewed 5 times, with the most recent renewal term ending this February 6, the sanctuary's 30th birthday!

Rather than an additional renewal of the original Feather Lake lease, the City has prepared a new, updated lease. By the time you read this, we hope it will have received City Council's blessing, and we'll be continuing this very productive partnership with the City.

The dry conditions at Feather Lake do make the basin very accessible for clean-up activities and vegetation management. So, when is the next workday, you ask? It's **Sat., June 3**. Join us any time after **8 a.m.** to help with habitat management at our sanctuary. And pray for rain.

Feather Lake is located at 9500 North Loop at Bordeaux, 0.3 miles west of Americas Ave.



## RIO BOSQUE WETLANDS PARK



The Friends of the Rio Bosque will sponsor **Bosque in Bloom**, a celebration of the spring wildflower displays at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park, on **Sunday, April 23**

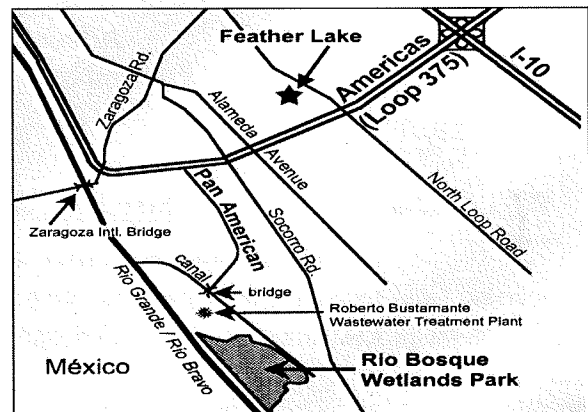
from **1 p.m. to 5 p.m.** Enjoy free hot dogs and hamburgers from the grill while they last. There will be bird, butterfly, wildflower and wildlife-tracking tours for the whole family.

### Also on the calendar at Rio Bosque:

- 8 a.m. Sat., Apr. 8 (Bird tour)
- 8 a.m. Sat., Apr. 15 (Workday)
- 8 a.m. Sat., Apr 22 (Faunal monitoring)

- 8 a.m. Sun., May 7 (Bird tour)
- 8 a.m. Sat., May 20 (Workday)
- 8 a.m. Sat., May 27 (Faunal monitoring)
- 9 a.m. Sat., May 27 (Introductory tour)

The meeting place for these activities is a bridge crossing Riverside Canal. To get there from I-10, take Americas Ave. (Loop 375) to Pan American Drive, turn left onto Pan American and travel 1.5 miles. For "Bosque in Bloom", cross the bridge, turn left, and continue on the canal levee road to the Park. Information: 747-8663. Web: riobosque.org



### Audubon Chapter T-Shirts

The long awaited, highly anticipated, and truly beautiful 'new' chapter T-shirt is now available for purchase. The shirt displays a grouping of some local birds, not found in most other places.

A great T-shirt makes a wonderful, yet moderately priced, gift. Wearing it, advertises the chapter and your concerns for wild things.

Proceeds from the sales of the shirts will help to offset the costs of various chapter initiatives, such as our education and conservation projects, & is thus a gift to wildlife as well as to yourself or a loved one.

For more information, call Flora Pittard at 852-2353



El Paso Audubon Online supplements the Roadrunner and includes information about upcoming field trips, a calendar of upcoming events, recent bird sightings and an updated list of birding links to the Internet. Make bird sighting reports at: [ElPasoBirdAlert@gbarnett.com](mailto:ElPasoBirdAlert@gbarnett.com)

### EL PASO NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY THE CENTENNIAL MUSEUM on the UTEP CAMPUS THURSDAY, APRIL 13<sup>TH</sup> AT 7:00 PM

#### "A PREVIEW OF THE UTEP NATIVE PLANT SALE"

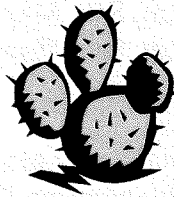
Wynn Anderson, Botanical Curator of UTEP's Centennial Museum, will present an informative slide presentation of rare native plants to be available at the 14<sup>th</sup> annual FloraFest Plant Sale.



This year UTEP has scheduled it's FloraFest for **APRIL 28-30**. The plant sale, which is a part of the festivities (on the 29<sup>th</sup> + 30<sup>th</sup>), provides El Pasoans with their best opportunity to purchase a wide variety of drought tolerant native plants and trees. Our preview will provide an excellent opportunity to see the plants as they flower and grow to maturity, answering the questions that will help you better plan your garden and prepare your shopping list.

**Admission is free, and non-members are always welcome.**

**For more information, call: 588-1562 or 533-6072**



### EL PASO NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY FIELD TRIP: THE BLOOMING HYBRID CACTI OF OROGRANDE, NEW MEXICO SATURDAY, APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup> AT 8:30 AM

We'll drive about one hour before starting our hike to see the unique and blooming hybrid claret cup cacti, which can only be found at this site. The variety of colors will surprise and amaze you. The moderate to strenuous hike, over rocky terrain, will last about 2 hours. Participants will meet at the Wal-Mart on the corner of Highway 54 and Transmountain, in the northeast for carpooling in 4 wheel drive and high clearance vehicles. Bring water and a snack, and wear sturdy shoes.

**Admission is free and non-members are always welcome.**

**For more info contact trip leader; PETER BESTE at (915)755-3558**

<http://www.gbarnett.com/eptpas/eptpashome.html>

# OBSERVATIONS

**January 16, 2006 to March 15, 2006**

Listing of birds is determined using the checklist "Birds of El Paso County, Texas and Adjacent Areas" 8th Edition May 2003. The area is defined as the western one-half of Hudspeth County (west of longitude 105 30, and the southern one-third of Dona Ana County (south of latitude 32 10) the line will be approximately thru Mesquite. Sights to Bob "Wildbirder" Johnson, E-mail [bobwildbirderj@cs.com](mailto:bobwildbirderj@cs.com), phone (915) 757-1876. Uncommon - no highlights; **Rare - bold highlights; Casual - bold & shaded**

**Observers:** Dan Allen; Lois Balin; Helen Bigalow; Cliff Eidson; Paul Fushille; Al Gavitt; Tom Gill; Herman Green; Jeff Groff; Kathy Kiseda; Jim Paton; John Sproul; Barry Zimmer.  
All-Seen often entire period; -y in their yard.

**Locations:** Ant-Anthony; Atl-Atlas; BHi-Border Highway; BSc-Boy Scout; Brd-Broadmore; CCB-Country Club Bridge; XRd-Crossroads Ponding; FBP-Fort Bliss Ponds; FtH-Fort Hancock; Hor-Horizon City; KnJ-Kenyon Joyce; LaU-LaUnion; LsN-Los Nogales McN-McNary; MHI-Mesa Hills; MsV-Mesa Verde; RBq-Rio Bosque Park; Ton-Tonto.

## GEESE AND DUCKS

Gr. White-frntd Goose	2/9	DA	LaU
Snow Goose	1/16-2/23	JS	RBq
Wood Duck	1/20	JS	RBq
<b>EURASIAN WIGEON</b>	<b>1/25-2/16</b>	<b>JS</b>	<b>RBq</b>
<b>Blue-winged Teal</b>	<b>1/25</b>	<b>JS</b>	<b>RBq</b>
Cinnamon Teal	1/16	JS	RBq
Lesser Scaup	2/12	JP	RBq
<b>Hooded Merganser</b>	<b>1/17</b>	<b>DA</b>	<b>XRd</b>
	<b>1/23</b>	<b>JS</b>	<b>RBq</b>
<b>Red-breast Merganser</b>	<b>3/14</b>	<b>JP</b>	<b>McN</b>

## GREBE THRU FALCONS

Eared Grebe	3/14	JP	McN
American White Pelican	3/14	JP	FtH
White-faced Ibis (1600)	3/5	JS	RBq
Turkey Vulture	2/15	DA	CCB
	3/10	BZ	BdH
<b>White-tailed Kite</b>	<b>2/26</b>	<b>CE</b>	<b>FBP</b>
Swainson's Hawk	3/13	LB	RBq
<b>Merlin</b>	<b>1/16</b>	<b>JS</b>	<b>RBq</b>
Prairie Falcon	3/15	JS	RBq

## STILT THRU DOVES

Black-necked Stilt	All	JS	RBq
<b>Lesser Yellowlegs</b>	<b>1/20</b>	<b>JS</b>	<b>RBq</b>
<b>Long-billed Curlew</b>	<b>3/14</b>	<b>JP</b>	<b>FtH</b>
Long-billed Dowitcher	2/12	JP	RBq
<b>Bonapart's Gull</b>	<b>3/14</b>	<b>JP</b>	<b>FtH</b>
Eurasian Collard-Dove	1/20	JS	RBq

## NIGHTJARS THRU FLYCATCHERS

Common Poorwill	3/12	BZ	MsV
<b>Anna's Hummer</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>JK</b>	<b>KnJ</b>
	<b>1/27</b>	<b>BZ-y</b>	<b>Ton</b>
Broad-tailed Hummer	3/8	BZ-y	Ton
Belted Kingfisher	3/15	MM	Pul
<b>Vermillion Flycatchr</b>	<b>1/16-2/17</b>	<b>JS</b>	<b>RBq</b>
Ash-throat Flycatch	2/3-3/15	JG	Atl

## VIREOS THRU CATBIRD

Plumbeous Vireo	2/22	JP-y	BSc
<b>Hutton's Vireo</b>	<b>2/27</b>	<b>PF</b>	<b>Brd</b>
Cliff Swallow	2/25	TG	MsH
Cave Swallow	All	JS	RBq
<b>Bushtit</b>	<b>1/27</b>	<b>AG</b>	<b>Hor</b>
Hermit Thrush	2/26	CE	FBP
<b>Gray Catbird</b>	<b>1/23</b>	<b>HG</b>	<b>LsN</b>
	2/19-3/15	HB	Ant

## THRASHERS TO GRACKLE

Sage Thrasher	3/5	JS	RBq
	3/11	CE	FBP
<b>Brown Thrasher</b>	<b>3/14</b>	<b>HB</b>	<b>Ant</b>
Cedar Waxwing	1/30	KK	KnJ
Lark Sparrow	All	DA	LaU
Lincoln's Sparrow	2/23	KK	KnJ
<b>White-throated Sparrow</b>	<b>3/7</b>	<b>HB</b>	<b>Ant</b>
<b>Northern Cardinal</b>	<b>3/2</b>	<b>BZ-y</b>	<b>Ton</b>
<b>Common Grackle</b>	<b>1/16</b>	<b>DA</b>	<b>Lov</b>

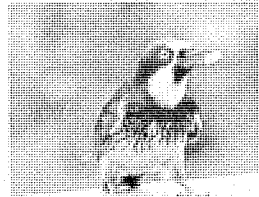
# BIRD WATCHING

## ACORN WOODPECKERS & PAINTED REDSTARTS

Southeast Arizona is one of the best birding locations in the country. Its deserts and mountains create a birding wonderland and combined with the closeness of subtropical Mexico allow for a diversity of birds found nowhere else in the USA.

We will concentrate on trying to find **Broad-billed, Violet-crowned, Magnificent, and White-eared HUMMINGBIRDS**. Also **Spotted Owl, Sulpher-bellied and Buff-breasted Flycatchers, Tropical, Thick-billed** and **Couch's Kingbird**.

Most of these species are found only in this Sky Island area of Southeastern Arizona. In addition we could see **Gray Hawk, Elegant Trogon, Bridled Titmouse, Bell's Vireo, and Abert's Towhee**. We will find the **Mexican Jay, Acorn and Gila Woodpecker, Cassin's Kingbird and Painted Redstart**. These birds are located in Fort Huachuca's Garden Canyon, The Nature Conservancy's Ramsey Canyon Preserve, Miller Canyon and Beaties Guest Ranch a Hummingbird Sanctuary, San Pedro River Riparian NCA, Patagonia-Sonita Creek Nature Conservancy Preserve, the and Kino Springs Golf Course.



This trip is going to take place on **Memorial Day weekend, May 26, 27, 28, and 29**. Camping in the area is difficult (although some private RV parks are nearby) so most of us will stay at one of the many Motels in Sierra Vista. If you think you might like to take this trip contact, **Bob "Wildbirder" Johnson (915) 757-1876, Email-bobwildbirderj@cs.com** for itinerary, map and other details.

### DESERT BIRDS / BIRDS OF PREY

A chance to see some of the birds that inhabit the desert scrub, Cactus Wren, Pyrrhuloxia, Scaled Quail and Curve-billed thrasher to name a few. Then out along Hawk Alley for Red-tailed Hawk, Swainson's Hawk, American Kestrel, and Turkey Vulture. Sometimes there could be a Prairie Falcon on the poles.

Date: Saturday April 22

Time: 7:37 AM

Meet: El Paso Museum of Archeology  
(formerly Wilderness Park Museum)  
4301 Trans-Mountain Road.

### ANNUAL BIRDATHON

Sat./Sun. May 6 and 7

See special insert to this newsletter

### MEMORIAL & ARROYO PARKS

*Warbler* migration should be near its peak and **Memorial Park** is always one of the better places to see them. Also a stop at **Arroyo Park** could produce a few rare ones. In addition to *Warblers, Orioles and Vireos*, possibly a *Tanager* could be spotted. The meeting time will be **7:37 AM, Sat. May. 13**, the place is **The Garden Center in Memorial Park, 3500 Grant Street**.

### HUECO TANKS

**Admission:** Hueco Tanks Historical Park - **\$4.**  
**\$2** for Seniors 65, Children under 12 - **FREE.**

#### Bird Identification Tours

Sunday	April 16	8:08 AM
Sunday	May 21	7:07 AM
Sunday	June 18	7:07 AM

Check in at the Headquarters and call Info 857-1135. Leader Bob "Wildbirder" 757-1876.

**Saturday June 10<sup>th</sup> Heron Rookery. Details In the June/July Roadrunner.**

# CASTNER RANGE

## A Vital Addition to Franklin Mountains State Park

Franklin Mountains State Park and adjacent Bureau of Land Management lands in New Mexico cover most of the Franklin Mountains but not the entire range. On the east side of the mountains, a particularly significant parcel belongs to the U.S. Army. It's the Castner Range, an old artillery range no longer in use.

West of the Patriot Freeway, Castner Range covers some 11 square miles, extending almost to the mountain ridge line. It is land of surpassing beauty and biological richness. Castner Range has a combination of unique plant and animal habitats, complex geology, spectacular scenery and rich cultural features unequaled anywhere else in the Franklins.

This former artillery range remains open space today thanks to the stewardship of the Army and the presence of unexploded ordnance. The Army has identified Castner Range as surplus to its needs and, as funds permit, has been searching the surface for old artillery rounds since 1995. Once this search is complete, the land could be put to other open-space uses, such as a park or wildlife refuge. The Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition has long recommended that Castner Range remain wild and be added to Franklin Mountains State Park.

### Why is Castner Range so important?

**Water.** The greatest concentration of springs in the Franklins is on Castner Range. They are the hidden jewels of these desert mountains, supporting pockets of unexpectedly lush vegetation and providing invaluable wildlife habitat.

**Alluvial Fans.** Eroded material carried by water from a mountain canyon and de-positated at the canyon mouth creates a broad, sloping land-form termed an alluvial fan. In the Franklins, most of the fans have been built on or excluded from the State Park to accommodate future development. Only on Castner Range are good examples of alluvial fans, particularly the one emerging from Fusselman Canyon, still being protected.

**Scenic Beauty.** Castner Range includes some of the most geologically complex, and visually striking, parts of the Franklins. It is the only place where El Paso can still preserve a beautiful unobstructed view, from freeway to ridge line, of all three mountain zones (steep slopes, foothills, alluvial fan).

**A Museum in the Open.** Structurally, the Franklin Mountains are a north-south trending fault block that has been tilted westward. Thus, it is on the east side that we see the early geologic history of our region most fully exposed. In the Castner Range foothills, you can find the oldest rocks in the El Paso area. They are part of the Castner Formation, deposited as alternating layers of lime and clay mud in a shallow sea 1.3 billion years ago.

**Military History.** For many military families, especially those with links to the time when Castner Range was an active training site, the land and its poppy fields are an important memorial to those who have served our country.

**Rare Plants.** The lower elevations of Castner Range on either side of Trans Mountain Road support a unique floral assemblage that is an important Texas resource. Unique soils and a far west Texas location combine to make this the only known location in Texas for several plants. The most outstanding member of this floral assemblage is the showy Mexican Gold Poppy, found in Texas mainly on the lower slopes of Castner Range.

**Cultural Resources.** Castner Range is dotted with archaeological sites, including the Fusselman Canyon Petroglyph Site and the White Rock Shelter.

**Recreational Opportunity.** Though off-limits today due to unexploded ordnance, the range has outstanding recreational potential. The management plan for Franklin Mountains State Park envisions a network of trails in the mountain canyons and the lower elevations of Castner Range should the range ever be added to the Park.

**You Can Help:** Castner Range, in many ways, is the heart and soul of the Franklin Mountains. It must remain wild, from its poppy fields to its rugged mountain canyons. It is a legacy we can't let slip away. Momentum is growing for a decision about the future of Castner Range. You can help shape that decision. Support the work of the **Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition** to protect Castner Range. Sign up to receive Coalition e-mail alerts to stay informed. The Coalition consists of 16 organizations, Audubon Society being one of them, and numerous individuals dedicated to preserving the scenic beauty and wilderness character of the Franklin Mountains in Texas and New Mexico. **For more information:**

Scott Cutler, Interim President, 581-6071  
[www.iloveparks.com/fmwc/](http://www.iloveparks.com/fmwc/)

El Paso/Trans-Pecos  
 Audubon Society  
 P.O. Box 972441  
 El Paso, Texas 79997

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Return service request

**National Audubon Society**  
 Chapter Membership Application

**Yes, I'd like to join.**

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and my local chapter. Please send AUDUBON magazine and my membership card to the address below.

My check for \$20.00 is enclosed

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make all checks payable to the  
 National Audubon Society*

National Audubon Society  
 Chapter Membership Data Center  
 P.O. Box 51001  
 Boulder, Colorado 80322-1001  
 El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon

W10  
 Local Chapter Code  
**7XCHA**

**Dates to Remember Call Bob Johnson for details 757-1876**

<u>April</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>June</u>
8, 15 22: <b>Rio Bosque</b>	6 & 7: <b>Birdathon</b>	
7 & 8: <b>Prairie Chicken Fest.</b>	7, 20, 27: <b>Rio Bosque</b>	Sat 3: <b>Feather Lake</b>
Mon 10: <b>Board Meeting</b>	Sat. 13: <b>Memorial Park</b>	Sat 10: <b>Heron Rookery</b>
Sat 15: <b>Cacti of Orogrande</b>	Mon 15: <b>General Meeting</b>	
Sun 16: <b>Hueco Tanks</b>	21: <b>Hueco Tanks</b>	
Mon 17: <b>General Meeting</b>	28-30: <b>Native Plants</b>	
Sat 22: <b>Desert Birds</b>	26-29: <b>Sierra Vista, AZ</b>	
<b>Sun 23: Bosque in Bloom</b>		

**El Paso/Trans-Pecos Local Chapter Only Membership** Your \$15.00 will help support chapter activities & you'll receive

*The Roadrunner* delivered to your mailbox.

Make checks payable to the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to: EPTP Audubon P.O. Box 972441 El Paso, Texas 79997**

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