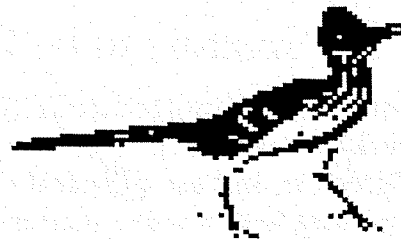


The Roadrunner

Newsletter of the El Paso/Trans Pecos Audubon Society
Volume 31 No. 7 December 2001 & January 2002



General Meetings

Monday, December 10, 2001
Memorial Park Garden Center
3105 Grant Street 7:30pm

Oscar S. Mestas
Regional Urban Forester, Texas Forest Service
Developing Urban Forestry Programs West Texas

Oscar Mestas is a "homegrown" Las Cruces NM native who lived in El Paso on and off since 1964. He graduated from Parkland High School in North East El Paso and began his college education at UTEP majoring in biology. He transferred to Stephen F. Austin State University where he received a BS in Forestry with emphasis in Recreation Management. Oscar returned to the El Paso/Las Cruces area working for the Texas Forest Service in 1991.

Oscar Mesta is the founder of the West Texas Urban Forestry Council and is an active board member of Keep El Paso Beautiful, Rio Grande COG Solid Waste Advisory Committee, Water Conservation Advisory Committee, Texas Cooperative Extension Horticultural and Natural Resources Committee, Keystone Natural Resources Advisory Committee, Rio Bosque Community Advisory Committee.

Monday, January 21, 2002
Memorial Park Garden Center
3105 Grant Street 7:30pm

Dr. Sandra Perez, PhD
Biology Professor, University of Texas at El Paso

We look forward to a wonderful presentation to be given by Dr. Sandra Perez. It should prove to be an exciting program on a topic of great interest to chapter members. Come a little early to the meeting and take advantage of the Trans-Pecos/El Paso Audubon Library now located at the Garden Center.

Chapter Web Site

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

El Paso Audubon Online, features updated graphics and more information for chapter members and visitors to El Paso.

El Paso Audubon Online supplements The Roadrunner and includes information about upcoming field trips, a calendar of events, recent bird sightings and an updated list of birding links to the Internet. make bird sighting reports at

ElPasoBirdAlert@gbarnett.com

Thank you

Barry Zimmer
and
Michael Robinson
for giving presentations in the October and November General Meetings

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Ballot insert- please return by Dec. 10	

Board of Directors to be Elected in January

The Nominating Committee (John Kiseda, Jane Fowler, and Betty Fisbeck) are not only accepting nominations for the 2002 Board of Directors, but are diligently seeking persons who would be willing to serve in a leadership capacity. Please let a member of the nominating committee know if you would be willing to accept a nomination or if you know of someone who would like to serve. Elections will be at the January meeting.

Birdathon 2001

In 2001, more than 1 million dollars was raised by The National Audubon Society via its annual Birdathon fund raiser! Thanks to the efforts of everyone involved in this past spring's Birdathon event, our chapter received "Honorable Mention" status in the NAS's nationwide fundraising event. Our chapter was also recognized for having had the "2nd best, Ask Letter".

PLEASE VOLUNTEER TO HELP WITH BIRDATHON 2002!

This annual event for our chapter, needs some "new blood" and "fresh faces" to aid us in next year's effort. We think that the involvement of some new people, would enable us to look at the project with a new perspective and help us to not only increase local awareness of Birdathon, but also aid us in raising more funds that will eventually be used for our conservation and education projects. Contact John K.

Once again, our thanks goes out to all those folks that participated as sponsors, counters, and organizers! Our state and local projects would not be as successful as they are, without the funds that you help to generate. **THANK YOU!**

El Paso/Trans Pecos Audubon Society

Board of Directors:

President	Betty Fisbeck	581-0174
V-President	John Kiseda	533-4615
Secretary	Roxanne Schroeder	534-7019
Treasurer	Hugh Jameson	751-7952

Committee Chairs:

Conservation	John Kiseda	533-4615
Education	Elizabeth Chase	591-5119
Field Trips	Bob Johnson	757-1876
Hospitality		
Membership	Jane Fowler	598-2448
Programs	Nancy Wilson	877-4600
Publications	Kathleen Whelen	751-2408
Publicity	Barbara Buck	
Sanctuary	John Sproul	545-5157
Ways and Means		

Roadrunner is your newsletter. We welcome your contributions.
Contact Kathy Whelen 751-2408 email: whelenk@aol.com

From the President's Aerie

by, Betty Fisbeck

The success of our El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society depends on the dedication and commitment of all of us. We must be willing to support our organization by not only paying our dues and receiving the excellent Audubon magazine, but by contributing some of our time and talents. The needs are many! We need volunteers every Saturday morning and Sunday afternoon from October through April to host our visitors to Feather Lake. We need leaders for the many school groups who come to Feather Lake for field trips. We need volunteers to come to our work days.

Nancy Wilson has been planning excellent programs for us; we need to support our speakers by coming to the meetings.

Bob Johnson needs field trip leaders. We need people to serve on the Board of Directors.

Some dedicated people are doing two jobs on the Board because we have been unable to fill some of the positions. I have been absolutely awed by the time a few committed people have given for so many years. Please consider helping. Many people doing just a little makes a big difference!

Early Alert
for
Audubon's Awards Dinner
February 16, 2002
time and place
to be announced

At Feather Lake

Many thanks to the volunteers who took part in our 6 workdays at Feather Lake in 2001: Karl Carroll, Lynn Carroll, Tom Dowell, Betty Fisbeck, Jane Fowler, Kyle Jeglum, Bob Johnson, Ruth Martinez and John Sproul. We greatly appreciate the contributions these hardworking folks made to sanctuary maintenance and habitat management. Our next workday will be Saturday, January 26, beginning at 2:00 p.m. Come on down!

Feather Lake is open to the public every Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to noon, and every Sunday, 2:00 p.m. to dusk. Remember, we need your help to keep the sanctuary staffed during these hours. Want to spend a relaxed, enjoyable morning or afternoon helping at the lake in this way? We still have a few dates available. Please contact John Sproul at 545-5157.

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

RIO BOSQUE WETLANDS PARK

UTEP's Center for Environmental Resource Management offers free walking tours twice each month and also holds monthly (except December) community workdays at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park in El Paso's Mission Valley.

Coming up:

- * 9 a.m. Sat., Dec. 1 (Rio Bosque Birds)
- * 3 p.m. Sun., Dec. 9 (Introduction to Rio Bosque)
- * 9 a.m. Sat., Jan. 12 (Introduction)
- * 9 a.m. Sat., Jan. 19 (Workday)
- * 3 p.m. Sun., Jan. 20 (Birds)

For all of these activities, the meeting place is a bridge crossing Riverside Canal. To get there from I-10, take Americas Ave. (Loop 375) to Pan American Dr., turn left onto Pan American and travel 1.5 miles to the bridge. Please be prompt.

Information: (915) 747-8663

Conservation

Your chapter and the El Paso Zoo have been working on a Chihuahuan Desert conservation project together, but they need your help. A wildlife biologist in Chihuahua City has been working on a birding/bird site guidebook for the Chihuahua City region and has asked us to provide him with quality slides of ~ 120 species of birds, to include in that guidebook.

If you have a great slide of a Chihuahuan Desert bird, contact John K. to see if it is of better quality than what has already been located (even if the species isn't listed below).

We also need slides of certain species that John Kiseda has not been able to find in either the chapter's collection, or his own. If you can provide us with slides of any of the following species, it would be greatly appreciated. If you need more information, contact John K.

We either don't have any slides of these species of birds, or have very poor ones:

WESTERN GREBE	MEXICAN DUCK
WHITE-TAILED KITE	ROCK DOVE
COMMON POORWILL	DUSKY FLYCATCHER
CASSIN'S KINGBIRD	VERDIN SWALLOW
CANYON WREN	SAGE THRASHER
CASSIN'S SPARROW	VESPER SPARROW
PAINTED BUNTING	ELF OWL
EASTERN MEADOWLARK	HOUSE SPARROW
BLACK-CHINNED SPARROW	
GRASSHOPPER SPARROW	
BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD	
BLACK-TAILED GNATCATCHER	

We have slides of these species of birds, but could readily use one of better quality:

GREAT EGRET	CINNAMON TEAL
CANVASBACK	REDHEAD
LESSER SCAUP	BUFFLEHEAD
MERLIN	GREATER YELLOWLEGS
OLIVE SPARROW	LARK BUNTING
WESTERN KINGBIRD	CHIHUAHUAN RAVEN
COMMON RAVEN	VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW
BARN SWALLOW	CRISSAL THRASHER
SCOTT'S ORIOLE	GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE
LADDER-BACKED WOODPECKER	
BLACK-THROATED SPARROW	
RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	
NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD	

THE FUTURE EL PASO CITY/COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER: A POSSIBLE VENUE FOR WILDLIFE REHABILITATION?

by, John Kiseda

Subject: Consideration of the concept of the future Animal Shelter building/property to have the staff and the facilities to care for and maintain injured native wildlife and exotic wildlife. Please contact your local government representatives and let them know how you feel about this issue!

The El Paso City/ County Animal Shelter and the El Paso City/ County Animal Shelter Advisory Committee are at an important juncture in determining how future feral and unwanted cats and dogs will be cared for and dealt with.

It is hoped that the planned for new and improved animal shelter facility (along with increased staffing and operations budgets) will enable our community's Animal Control section to become a more effective agency that will provide better housing and care for the dogs and cats in their charge, and better customer service to our citizenry.

But, the city and county's native wildlife is also slowly coming to an important turning point in how orphaned and injured individuals are being dealt with, and it unfortunately looks as if their future is beginning to appear more bleak.

Over the past few decades, the orphaned and injured wildlife of our area have been very fortunate to have the dedicated volunteers of the organization known as C.D.W.R. (Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue) to aid them. CDWR volunteers have hand-reared thousands of nestlings, have captured and transported all manner of wildlife from eagles to skunks, and have worked with local veterinarians to bring sick and injured wildlife "back from the edge", and to be able to release them back into the wild.

Unfortunately, this scenario will probably not continue into the future. CDWR is becoming a less effective organization because active, wildlife rehabilitators are moving away and others are becoming "burned out" and inactive due to the constant physical and mental stress. The organization is not being able to recruit enough "new" wildlife rehabilitators, to replace "lost" ones. I propose that the city and county become involved in these native wildlife issues (and exotics) to a much larger degree.

The volunteers of CDWR work with thousands of wild animals each year and almost all of these animals were referred to them by concerned members of our community. These same volunteers have also provided information and answered wildlife related questions, for tens of thousands of concerned citizens. These valuable services provided to our area's wildlife and the members of our community, have also been of immense value to the city and county governments.

Over the years, the zoo and animal control departments have referred thousands of citizens to CDWR, because there are many wildlife situations that we can't help them with (due to limited staffing, resources, etc.), but that CDWR can help them with. We have been in a very fortunate position to work with CDWR, to aid concerned citizens solve their dilemmas and to also aid in the survival of native wildlife.

If CDWR becomes a less effective or even a non-functioning organization in the future, the citizenry will expect the zoo and animal control departments to aid them with their wildlife related problems, which may not be possible.

Neither department has the facilities, resources or staffing to aid most people solve their wildlife problems.

Unless we attempt to plan for the future, now, and determine that the city and county will need to have increased resources and capabilities to aid native wildlife and the concerned citizenry, "we" (local government) will almost certainly run into many native and exotic wildlife related problems in the future.

If "we" do nothing and CDWR ceases to be an effective organization, the citizenry will expect "us" to resolve their problems. If "we" are unable to help the public with their problems, at the very least, we will have public relations problems. We will also almost certainly have many animals dumped on our doorsteps that we are unable to effectively help. We will also certainly be unable to provide the necessary aid to our citizens or our local, native wildlife. None of these end results are attractive or beneficial to anyone.

I propose that the future animal shelter be capable of housing injured native wildlife and exotics and that this capability be developed and expanded over time, to enable private individuals to aid injured wildlife and exotics there at the shelter, while also providing training experiences for veterinary interns and externs.

I hope that you will consider this proposal, because it is offered in what I consider to be in the best interest of our citizens, our local governments and our native wildlife.

Feather Lake Workday
Saturday, January 6, 2002
2:00pm

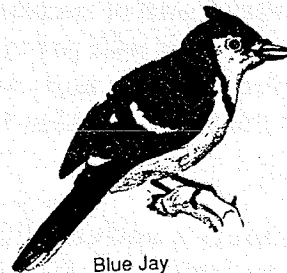
EARLY ALERT -- ANNUAL DINNER

When - - - February 16, 2002

Where- - - To be decided, announcement at meetings and in the February Roadrunner.

Program: **THE GREAT TEXAS COASTAL BIRDING TRAIL**
by Bob "Wildbirder" Johnson

The trail is jointly sponsored by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Department of Transportation. It is divided into three sections. We will visit the **Upper Texas Coast**, which consists of 125 distinct birding sites. This goes from Orange on the Louisiana Border southwest to Sargent, located a little past Lake Jackson. Bob has visited about 25 of the sites including Village Creek State Park, TOS's Sabine Woods, High Island, and San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge.



Blue Jay

CHAPTER SALES STORE

New stock of Field Guides are in, just in time to buy your Christmas gifts. Prices listed include State Sales Tax.

National Audubon Society -
The Sibley Guide to Birds - - - - - \$27.
National Geographic Society -
Field Guide to Birds of North America - \$20.
Kenn Kaufman -
Birds of North America - - - - - \$19.

ON THE TRAIL

DONA ANA COUNTY

We will traverse the west side of the river using Country Club, McNutt and some side roads also. Hope to see some of the birds that winter in the area, maybe a Ferruginous Hawk and possibly a rare visitor.

Date: Saturday, December 1
Time: 7:37 AM
Place: Crossroads Ponding Area
(Doniphan & Mesa/Country club)

NORTHLOOP

We are going to have a **party** at Feather Lake. It will be **FUN!** We could see the Shingle-crested Ridgebird, the Flashing-edged Creeper and maybe the Bob-roof Nailer. Coffee (plus cocoa or tea) and pastry will be present.

Date: Saturday, December 8
Time: 9:02 AM
Place: Feather Lake Sanctuary

HUECO TANKS CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Lets see if we can get over 65 species this year, a number that has been achieved only a couple of times since 1970. To accomplished this I will need at least 10-12 counters. Please call and volunteer.

Date: Sunday, December 16
Time: **6:30 AM**, Flying Saucer Building
(Junction US 62/180 & FM 2775)
7:45 AM, Entrance Gate to the
State Park (on FM 2775)
Leader: Bob "Wildbirder" Johnson 757-1876

EL PASO CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

We will have a new compiler this year. Jimmy Zabriskie and Marcy Scott. Lets get our volunteer mode in high gear, we would like to get back up to the 30 or so that we used to get. Over the last 7 years the numbers kept dropping off down to below 12 and last year only 3 reported.

Date: To be decided, but sometime between the 1st and 5th of January.
Call: to help with the count.
Jimmy (915-877-2100) or Bob (915-757-1876)

OTHER AREA COUNTS

McNary Dec 16 Barry Zimmer 915-757-8682
Caballo Dec 30 Barry Zimmer 915-757-8682

BOSQUE DEL APACHE NWR

One of the more popular National Wildlife Refuges in the country (there are over 500) is located about 180 miles north of El Paso off of Interstate 25. How about 20,000 Snow Geese 12,000 Sandhill Cranes, thousands of ducks and MANY Bald Eagles.

Start off your 2002 bird list with some great entrys. Last year 74 species were recorded on our trip, these included 15 waterfowl species, 8 Raptor and 3 grebe, also a number of passerines. The Refuge reported 92 Bald Eagles, and we saw over 25 at one time in one water cell.

Many good motels in Socorro NM, located about 12 miles to the north.

Date: Sat/Sun, January 12/13
Time: 11 AM
Place: Parking lot of the Visitors Center.
Leader: Lois Balin (915-821-5098)
(Call for itinerary & map)

COUNTRY CLUB AREA

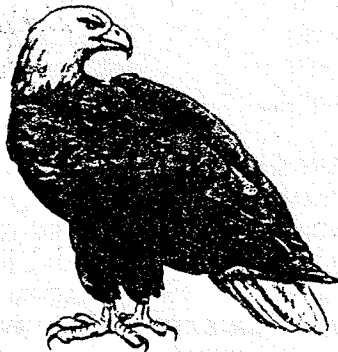
An afternoon trip will allow those of you who like to sleep in the mornings a chance to get out and enjoy some of our winter visitors. Maybe we will get some Red-breasted Nuthatches, Snow Geese and Redhead ducks. Usually Accipiters are around and some Yellow-rumped Warblers.

Date: Sunday, January 27
Time: 3:21 PM
Place: Crossroads Ponding Area
(Doniphan & Mesa/Country Club)

HAWK ALLEY/FORT BLISS PONDS

One of the best locations to find birds in the northeast part of town is the Fort Bliss Ponds. Good winter water birds and many raptors, then a ride along Hawk Alley, a very good chance to see a Golden Eagle.

Date: Saturday, February 9
Time: 7:49 AM
Place: Walmart, 4530 Woodrow Bean/
Transmountain Road.
(north end of parking lot)
Leader: Bob "Wildbirder" (757-1876)



Bald Eagle

GBBC

What does this stand for? When will it happen?

Where will it take place? Who will do it? Come and find out. It will be discussed at the December and January meetings. You will also be able to read about it in the February Roadrunner.

FRIENDS of HUECO TANKS

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

Bird Identification Tours

Sunday	December 16	8 AM
Sunday	January 20	8 AM
Sunday	February 17	8 AM

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

CHAPTER LIBRARY

Our library is now located in the Garden Center. Come early to the meetings and browse, you can also look after the meeting, and sign a book out.

We have various guide books, some technical books, and some novels. All are associated with birds in some way.

Also a number of bird related videos are in the library.

SUPPORT LOCAL WILDLIFE
CONSERVATION
ORGANIZATIONS

Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue

Meets: 4th Tuesday of; Jan., Feb.,
Apr., June, Aug. & Oct.
El Paso Community College
Northwest Campus, Room 45,
6701 South Desert Blvd.
www.whc.net/cdwr

El Paso Zoo
www.elpasozoo.org

Keystone Heritage Park
Meets 3rd Wednesday of each
month at El Paso Police Dept.
Westside Regional Command
Center, 4801 Osborne
keystonepark.com or
keystonepark.org

Dates to Remember
Call Bob Johnson for details 757-1876

December

Sat. 8 Feather Lake Party (roofing)
Mon. 10 General Meeting
Sun. 16 Hueco Tanks X-mas
Bird Count

January

Sat/Sun 12 & 13 Bosque Del Apache
Mon. 14 Board Meeting
Mon. 21 General Meeting
Sun. 27 Country Club Area

February

Sat. 9 Hawk Alley
Sat. 16 Awards Dinner

Rock Art Tours

Every Sat & Sun 9:00am & 11:00am

Birding Activities at Hueco Tanks

Bird Identification Tours & Slide Show Presentations

**National Audubon
Society**

Chapter Membership Application
Yes, I'd like to join.

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

My check for \$20 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
SOCIETY**

W10
Local Chapter Code

7XCHA

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