

# the ROADRUNNER



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

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September 1983

## GENERAL MEETING

MON., SEPTEMBER 19, 1983 at 7:30 PM.  
Garden Center, 3105 Grant St. in  
Memorial Park. How many times have  
you been called by someone who knew  
you were an Audubon Society member  
and so asked you how to take care  
of a just found baby bird or an in-  
jured bird which wasn't one bit en-  
thusiastic about being helped?  
Rejoice! After Helen Bigelow, a li-  
censed raptor rehabilitator, pre-  
sents her program we can answer  
those phone calls with much more  
confidence. She is the remarkable  
woman who raised the nestling Mis-  
sissippi Kites which had to be re-  
moved from the El Paso Country Club  
golf course. Come hear a "real pro"  
tell how it's done and meet this  
special lady.

## FIELD TRIP CALENDAR

SITTING BULL FALLS, NM  
FRI. - SUN., SEPT. 9-11. This beau-  
tiful waterfall on the n. side of  
the Guadalupe Escarpment 150 miles  
from El Paso will be our final des-  
tination but hardly our only objec-  
tive. En route, we'll make the ob-  
ligatory stop at Rattlesnake  
Springs, where Steve West of Loving,  
NM will demonstrate the use of mist  
nets to capture and band birds.  
Visits to L. McMillan and Harroun  
L. are also in the offing. Those  
who can will leave Fri. and camp  
that night at Pine Springs Camp-  
ground in Guadalupe Mts. Natl. Park.  
Those leaving Sat. will meet the  
rest of the group at Rattlesnake  
Springs. On Sat. night, we'll car  
camp in the Guadalupe Mts. above  
Sitting Bull Falls. Leader: John

Sproul (545-5157 h, 541-6126 w).  
Reservations required; please call  
John for all details. He will be  
on vacation until Sept 7; prior  
to then, leave a message at 541-  
6126.

## FRANKLIN MOUNTAINS NATURE WALK WITH CLARK CHAMPIE

SAT., SEPT. 17. 'Nuf said! There  
could be no better leader to help  
us learn desert plant identifica-  
tion. A nice leisurely roam along  
the mountain ridges will do every-  
one's muscles a world of good and  
reinforce knowledge about flora and  
fauna of the Franklins. Meet at 7  
AM at Wilderness Park Museum, 2000  
Trans-Mountain Rd. More informati-  
call 566-2143.

## MEMORIAL PARK

SUN., SEPT. 25. There may be earl-  
migrants. Meet at 8 AM at Garden  
Center, 3105 Grant St., for a ple-  
ant morning. Leader: Jane Fowler  
(772-0296).

####

## TENTATIVE FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE FOR EP/TPAS

October 1983 - February 1984

- Sat.- Oct. 8 Sunset at Feather La
- Sat.- Sun. 22-23 Davis Mts. (2nd  
Chihuahuan Desert Symposium  
Oct. 20-21 see article p.2)
- Sat.- Oct. 29 Aguirre Springs
  
- Sat - Sun Nov. 5-6 (Open)
- Sun - Nov. 13 Lower Valley
- Sat - Nov. 19 Randel's Pool/Dur-  
ling's Farm
  
- Sun - Dec. 4 Beginners trip to  
Hueco Tanks
- Sat - Dec. 10 Preparation for bi-  
counts



- Sat - Dec. 17 El Paso Christmas Bird Count  
 Sat - Dec. 31 Hueco Tanks Christmas Bird Count  
 Sat - Sun Jan. 14-15 Bosque del Apache, NWR  
 Sat - Jan 21 Ft. Bliss Ponds  
 Sun - Jan 29 Rio Bosque  
 Sun - Feb. 5 Beginners trip to Tornillo Lake  
 Sat - Feb. 11 Old Refuge, Mesilla, NM  
 Sat - Feb. 18 Feather Lake  
 Sun - Feb. 26 Indian Hot Springs

If you have any suggestions call Joyce Davis (581-9470 h, 544-6772 w) or Art Arteaga (598-5723 h) ###

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MON., SEPT. 12, 7:30 PM. The Board will meet at the home of Jo Ellen Warolin, 932 Mesita, El Paso (532-4318). All members are welcome.



#### A SPECIAL DAY!

On Friday, November 4, 1983, at 6:30 in the evening at Gillespie's Restaurant, the Audubon Awards dinner will be held. Mark this date on your calendar! ###

#### STARS IN YOUR EYES

Our program for October is going to be given by Mary Dutchover, the supervisor at the Visitor Center at McDonald Observatory near Fort Davis, Texas. The program will be given on the Monday immediately preceding the Chihuahua Desert Research Institute symposium on Thursday and Friday, October 20-21. A field trip to the Davis Mts. is planned for Sat. and Sun., October 22-23. Mrs. Dutchover offered to conduct a guided tour of the Observatory at a time we specify. So, put on your planning caps, consult your calendars, and then let

your program chair hear your preferences. Call S.J. Dodds at either 533-7990 or 533-4150. ###

#### SECOND CHIHUAHUAN DESERT SYMPOSIUM

The natural and cultural resources of the Chihuahuan Desert Region will be the focus of attention when scholars and desert enthusiasts from throughout the nation gather in Alpine Oct. 20-21 for the 2nd Chihuahuan Desert Symposium. For registration and program details, contact: Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute, P.O. Box 1334, Alpine, TX 79831 (915/837-8370) or John Sproul (545-5157 h, 541-6126 w). Note that EP/TPAS tentatively plans a field trip to the Davis Mts. in conjunction with this symposium. ###

#### WHAT HAPPENED?

More flowers than birds showed up for the 15 people who came to the Sunday breakfast June 5. #

The 14 participants on the June 11-12 foray to s.e. New Mexico covered a lot of ground but were well rewarded for their efforts, with 57 bird species seen. An active Bell's Vireo nest topped off the usual avian cornucopia at Rattlesnake Springs, Carlsbad Caverns had its Cave Swallow and a fortunate few briefly glimpsed a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher near Carlsbad. The real highlight though, came from the Loving area. One was the impressive heronry of town, with its 100s of Black-crowned Night-Herons and Snowy Egrets, plus 2 Little Blue Herons. The other was Steve West, our enthusiastic, informative and entertaining guide, who led us fearlessly into the Lindsey L. brine and generally made the trip a success. Thank you, Steve! #

Betty Pagel, Gloria Basden, Bart Rumaker, Jeff Donaldson and Bob Johnson made the trip to Red Rock and Burro Mts. s.w. NM. Among th



83 species seen or heard were these good sightings - Black Hawk, Zone-tailed Hawks and Abert's Towhee. #

July 9 saw 6 early risers venture to Rio Bosque Park. They found 26 bird species, including Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Mourning Dove, Yellow-breasted Chat, Mourning Dove, Blue Grosbeak and Mourning Dove. Two singing male Painted Buntings helped solidify Rio Bosque's reputation as the place to find this species within El Paso's city limits. #

Fields of wildflowers, backyards full of Evening Grosbeaks and a bobbing Dipper were some of the sights that greeted the 10 people who ventured up to the Sacramento Mts. July 22-23. The afternoon showers did not dampen the spirits of those who watched the hummingbirds fighting around the Gilboe's cabin. A total of 50 bird species were sighted including 3 warblers, Band-tailed Pigeons and Mountain Bluebirds.

Many thanks go to Ed and Elza Gilboe for the use of their cabin. #

Seven people met Tony Worth at Hueco Tanks, August 12, for a picnic supper. A recent shower had left the Tanks damp and cool. The Cassin's Sparrows were singing. While searching for owls the group was interrupted by another shower. It was still partly cloudy when the group arrived at the Perseid meteor viewing stop. It was clear enough to see several good meteors. #

#### NEW ADDITIONS FOR:

Bob Johnson ( the "wild birder"?) has added Mississippi Kite, Abert's Towhee and Zone-tailed Hawk to his life list.

Art Arteaga increases his "extensive" life list with the Carolina Chickadee, Eastern Kingbird, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, and a Dipper.

Let the Field Trip Chair know when you see new birds and where. Art#

The deadline for the October Roadrunner is September 21.



## CONSERVATION CAPSULES

### BOUNDARY PRESERVATION PROJECT:

Will the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) be building the Rio Grande Boundary Preservation Project with the environmental-protection measures originally planned (RR, Mar)? The courts will decide. On July 20, the Natl. Audubon Society, Natl. Wildlife Federation, Sportsmen's Clubs of Texas and El Paso/Trans Pecos Audubon Society filed suit in Austin to force the IBWC to do just that. The environmental assessment for work done on the project to date (RR, June) confirmed what these groups had suspected, that the IBWC has only limited intention of fulfilling its original commitments. With the project in our chapter's geographic territory, the EP/TPAS Board of Directors decided our formal participation in the lawsuit was desirable. The IBWC must respond to our complaint by mid-September.

**RIVERPARK:** El Paso County should learn soon the fate of its bid for \$1 million in federal funds to launch the Omar N. Bradley Memorial Riverpark. In June, the county submitted an application to the Economic Development Administration for an Emergency Jobs Act grant that would enable development of the riverpark between Midway and Yarbrough drive. It would be the first stage in a park eventually intended to stretch from the Chamizal Memorial to Rio Bosque.

**WHOOPIING CRANES:** Bosque del Apache Natl. Wildlife Refuge near Socorro, NM, may have more Whooping Cranes than ever this winter. The project to establish a 2nd wild flock of this endangered species by putting whooper eggs in nests of Sandhill Crane foster parents near Grays L., Idaho, has had a very good year. Of 28 eggs 26 hatched, an all-time high. We all will live to reach their foster parents' central NM wintering



grounds, but the 14 whoopers that still survive from earlier foster-chick hatchings are sure to have some company.

**MISSISSIPPI KITES:** Mississippi Kites found El Paso Country Club (EPCC) unusually attractive this summer, with 5 pairs nesting on the golf course, but the feeling was not mutual. As is their habit, the kites were very protective of their nests and would dive on golfers that went near the nest trees. The EPCC management felt this behavior presented an intolerable hazard, and, in early July, they had U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. personnel remove the nests. Each nest had 1 or 2 young, 8 in all. Their nests gone, the adult kites stopped swooping on golfers. Given that golf courses elsewhere are able to coexist with nesting kites, EP/TPAS expressed to EPCC our disappointment at the nest removal. We also offered to help develop an educational program, to be implemented next spring, that would teach golfers about the birds and how best to avoid surprise swoops. To date EPCC has shown no enthusiasm for this offer. And the young kites? One died almost immediately, but wildlife rehabilitator Helen Bigelow (see p.1) successfully raised the remaining 7 and released them near EPCC in mid-August.

**1080:** The recent shakeup at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) casts a whole new light on the possible re-emption of Compound 1080 use for predator control. Last October, an administrative law judge recommended that use of this highly poisonous compound be allowed in predator-control programs under limited conditions (RR, Dec 1982). Then-EPA Administrator Anne Burford was expected to accept this recommendation, but the multiple controversies surrounding EPA forced her to turn her attention elsewhere. Ulti-

mately, she resigned under fire, to be replaced by William D. Ruckelshaus. The fact that Ruckelshaus was EPA administrator back in 1972 when the original 1080 ban was instituted does not bode well for a relaxation of that ban.

**TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION:** Gov. Mark White's recent appointments to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission got a muted reception from conservationists. In late July, White appointed 5 new people to the 9-member body (the last legislature expanded it by 3) that sets state policy on park and wildlife matters. Conservationists had hoped he would make good his words about putting more environmentally sensitive people on the commission but the main criteria for appointment seem to have been political connections and size of campaign contributions. White, for his part, says the new members--Houston developer George Bolin, Amarillo developer William Graham, Houston lawyer Richard Morrison, Midland oilman Perkins Sams and Lubbock doctor Ray Santos---should be given a chance to show their environmental sensitivity. Conservationists, for their part, are working to establish a mechanism for more direct input to the commission.

**CALKIN NAMED NATURAL RESOURCES SECRETARY:** In New Mexico, meanwhile, Gov. Toney Anaya earned kudos for appointing Brant Calkin secretary of the state Natural Resources Dept. on Aug. 10. Calkin, who had been deputy secretary of the department, moved up when Shirley Hill Witt resigned. He is a former national president of the Sierra Club and was that organization's southwest representative for 5 years until joining the Anaya administration last year. Among the items on his agenda for New Mexico: more management attention for nongame wildlife.

John Sproul



## OBSERVATIONS - May 15 to August 20

Although not as "exciting" when compared to the same period last year, the data compiled this summer has its own special interest. No new species were recorded, but 5 of accidental or casual status appear.

## LOONS - FALCONS

Three adult and 1 imm. Double-crested Cormorants were seen at Fort Bliss Sewage Ponds (FBSP) 5/15 (BJ), 1 there 6/9 (BJ,HA), and 2 on 7/6 (BJ,KB,SP). One was noted at the McNary ponding area 7/16 (JS,TW), and 1 adult, 1 sub-adult in the Santa Teresa Country Club area 8/6 (JD). A Great Blue Heron was in the Randel's Pool area 6/12 (JD). Single Great Egrets were in the upper valley the first week in July (NH, fide JD) and the McNary ponding area 7/16 (JS,TW). Twelve Cattle Egrets were near Anthony 6/26 (MS, fide JS), 2 at FBSP 6/14 (BJ), and 7 near Canelillo in June & July (TC). Green-backed herons may have nested in the upper valley. Two adults with 3 young following and begging for food were seen near Randel's Pool 6/12 (JD). Only 1 adult was seen in the lower valley 6/7, but a pair had been noted there 5/13 displaying and behaving in a territorial way (JD, et al). Of note was a single adult YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON observed in the Tornillo area 6/7 (JD,BJ). White-faced Ibis were again seen in large numbers at FBSP 6/23 (JB,BJ). Also seen at the ponds were a male WOOD DUCK 6/3, a pair of Northern Pintail 6/23, Blue-winged Teal 7/6, 6 very late Gadwall 6/3, an American Wigeon 6/23, and Redhead (normally absent during the summer) as late as 7/6 (JB,BJ). An Osprey was noted in the Randel's Pool area 5/18 (JD). Five pairs of Mississippi Kites nested at the El Paso Country Club golf course but fared badly. For details refer to the Conservation Capsules. An Adult Harris' Hawk in the Rio Bosque Park 7/4 was the only 1 reported (JS,JN,JF). Golden Eagles were noted on several occasions during the period (JD, BJ,JS, et al), and Prairie Falcons at Hueco Tanks 5/31, 7/30 and 7/31 (JD).

## QUAIL - WOODPECKERS



On 6/5, it was reported that a hybrid (Scaled/Gambel's) quail had been seen in McKelligan Canyon Park on that same day (TS, fide JD). A Sora was heard and a rail (sp.) seen in the Tornillo area 6/7 (JD,BJ). A mystery bird of the family Rallidae was at the Cielo Vista golf course 8/7, 8/11 & 12. The plumage, leg color, and behavior suggested a moorhen but the bill and head pattern gave cause to wonder. Photos were taken 8/13 and will be studied. It certainly emphasized that all is not in the field guides. Black-necked Stilts apparently nested again at Feather Lake. Three adults with 1 definitely incubating were noted 6/7 (JD,BJ), and 3 half-grown young were seen 7/9 (JS, mob). Greater Yellowlegs were at FBSP 5/27 & 7/9 (BJ, et al) and in the upper valley 8/7 (JoD). Spotted Sandpipers were seen at the Cielo Vista golf course 5/19 (EG), FBSP 6/3 & 6/9 (JB,BJ, et al), and the upper valley 8/6 & 8/7 (JD). Late Franklin's Gulls were noted at FBSP 6/3 & 6/23 (JD,BJ) and at Feather Lake 6/16 (AA,DA). Yellow-billed Cuckoos were seen or heard on several occasions at FBSP, Rio Bosque Park, and in the upper valley (JD, JS, BJ, et al). Barn Owls were noted at FBSP 6/9 & 6/23, at Hueco Tanks 7/3, and a family of 5 in the e. Franklin's 8/19 (JD, et al). A Common Nighthawk was observed in the upper valley 8/7 (JD). A male Calliope Hummingbird was at an e. El Paso feeder 8/7 (AA,DA), the first fall Broad-tailed Hummingbird was seen at Hueco Tanks 7/31 (JD), and single imm. male, adult male Rufous Hummingbirds that arrived at a northeast El Paso feeder 7/12 were very early (JD).

## FLYCATCHERS - VIREOS

A Gray Flycatcher was seen at Hueco Tanks 5/15 (AG,MG), a Western Flycatcher at W. Cottonwood Springs 6/5 (JD,BJ), and the first fall empidonax (sp.) in northeast El Paso 8/20 (JD). Black Phoebes were noted on 2 occasions in the upper valley (JoD), and a possible Brown-crested Flycatcher (Wied's) was at Hueco Tanks 5/15 (AG,MG). Violet-green Swallows were seen at W. Cottonwood Springs 6/5 (JD,BJ) and at whis-



pering Springs 6/8 (JD). A single Bank Swallow was in the upper valley 8/7 (JD). Very late House Wrens were noted there 5/16 & 5/18 (JD). An American Robin, probably a pair, was in the Tigua area in June (DT). Bell's Vireos were singing in the Tornillo area 6/7 (JD, BJ), a Solitary Vireo (first fall) was at Randal's Pool 8/7 (JD), and Warbling Vireos noted in the upper valley 5/16 & 5/18 (JD, CC). A possible Red-eyed Vireo was at Hueco Tanks 5/15 (AG, MG).

#### WARBLERS - WEAVER FINCHES

Single Black-throated Gray and Townsend's Warblers were at Hueco Tanks 5/15 (AG, MG), and a Northern Waterthrush was seen near Durling's Farm 5/18 (JD, CC). A male HEPATIC Tanager was observed at Memorial Park 5/18 (JS, JN, JF). Summer Tanagers were singing in the Tornillo area 6/7 (JD, BJ). Of interest was a female seen carrying nesting material at the rest stop area near Tornillo 5/13 (JD, JS, BJ, JF). Interesting also were a male and female western Tanager at Memorial Park 7/12 (TB, fide JD). A male Northern Cardinal in the Arroyo Park area 5/22 was the only one reported (JE, fide ELG). Single male ROSE-BREASTED GROSBILLS were at W. Cottonwood Springs 5/31 (BJ) and in Mountain Park 6/9 (JB). A possible male was heard singing in the upper valley 6/12 (JD). Male Indigo Buntings were singing at W. Cottonwood Springs 5/31 to 6/29 (BJ, JD), at Whispering Springs 6/8 (JD), and at FBSP 6/14 & 6/23 (BJ, JD). No females were positively identified. Painted Buntings were observed and heard singing at Rio Bosque Park 7/3, 4 & 9 (JS, et al). Cassin's Sparrows were singing and seen in large numbers at Hueco Tanks 7/31 (JD), and late white-crowned Sparrows were noted in the upper valley 5/18 (JD, CC). Yellow-headed Blackbirds were seen at FBSP on several occasions 5/27 - 7/9 with 3 juveniles noted 6/9 (BJ, et al). BRONZED COWBIRDS were increasing in the area since first recorded last summer with 2 returning to the Mountain Park area (JB), a male in the Cielo Vista area 5/20 (EG), 1 male and 2 females at the Tornillo turnoff rest stop 6/7 (JD, BJ), and 1 male and 2 females at Durling's Farm 6/16 (BJ, HA). A pair of ORCHARD ORIOLES were in the Tornillo area 6/7 (JD, BJ). Very unusual were

3 to 4 Pine Siskins at Hueco Tanks 6/15 (JD).

CONTRIBUTORS: Art & Donna Arteaga, Harry Assad, Tom Baker, Ken Beno, Helen Bigelow, Janet Brockmoller, Tess Cardenas, Charles Clark, Joyce Davis (JoD), Jeff Donaldson, Steve Edwards, Jane Fowler, Al & Madeline Gavit, Ed & Elza Gilboe (ELG), Nvala Heitzman, Bob Johnson, Jo Nagel, Shawn Pierce, Terence Schiefer (from Pa.), John Sproul, Mike Spurlock, Dennis Taylor, Tony Worth, Sunny Wratte/Bettie Roberts/

Our heartfelt thanks to Bettie for her usual SUPERB JOB as observations compiler for the summer. please resume calling Barry Zimmer(545-5184) to report your bird sightings.

#### ACHTUNG!

Freitag, den 4. November 1983 um 18:30 Uhr findet bei Gillespies's Gasthaus das Audubon Festessen mit Preisverteilung statt. Bitte merken Sie diesen Termin vor!

#### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Yes, I want to join the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Chapter of the National Audubon Society.

Name .....

Address .....

City .....State.....

Zip .....Phone.....

Membership Category desired:

— Individual/\$25 — Family/\$32

— Sr. Citizen, Individual/\$17

— Sr. Citizen, Family/\$19

— Student/\$15

This is a  new  renewal membership  
Please make checks payable to National Audubon Society. Mail to Bob Johnson, 5109 Paris, El Paso, TX 79924.

THE ROADRUNNER is sent to all members of the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society. Nonmembers can subscribe for \$4 per year. Make checks payable to "El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society". Mail to: RR Editor PO Box 9655 El Paso TX 79986.

6-The Roadrunner



## ATENCIÓN!

El viernes, el cuatro de noviembre a las seis y media en la noche a restaurante Gillespie's, ofrecera una cena para presentar premios de la Sociedad Audubon. Marque su calendaria ahorita!

## FOR SALE

NAS sew-on patches, 4" - \$1.50, 2" - \$1.00  
NAS decals, 50¢  
Blue waterproof nylon daypacks with NAS insignia, \$19.95

Call Jo Warolin at 532-4318 or look for all items at our general meetings.

## NAME THAT BIRD

What bird is a baseball outfielder?  
What bird is an astute chicken?

Give up? See page 8.

## El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society - Directory

President *	Joyce Davis	h581-9470 w544-6772
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Clean Air Act Acoordinator	Joyce Davis	581-9470
ROADRUNNER Editors	Jo Nagel	566-2143
	Jane Fowler	772-0296

\*- Board of Directors

## FUERTES EXHIBIT TO BE IN DALLAS

Going to be in Dallas next spring between Mar 31 and May 27? Then plan to spend time at the Dallas Museum of Natural History. You'll feast your eyes on "A Celebration of Birds -- Louis Agassiz Fuertes and His Art," a traveling exhibit of over 100 watercolors, oils and preliminary sketches by the man widely regarded as America's greatest bird artist. The exhibition was assembled by the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences and has been touring the country since last October under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service.



## HUMMINGBIRD CAKE \*

Sift together 3 cups flour, 1 tsp each cinnamon, salt, soda. Add 3 eggs, 2 cups sugar, 3 med bananas (ripe) cut into bite sized pieces, 1 cup chopped pecans or walnuts, 1 cup Wesson oil, 1 or 2 tsps butter flavoring, 1 small can crushed pineapple (drained), 1 cup chopped dates (optional), 1 cup coconut. Mix together by hand. Bake in geased Bundt pan 1 hour, 5 minutes at 325 - 350 .

When done do not feed it to the hummingbirds. Eat it yourself!

\* A Sarah Jane Dodds recipe.



Answers: a flycatcher  
a sage hen

## SUPPORT TEXAS WILDLIFE!

Wear the Audubon Council of Texas T-shirt! It's 100% cotton and features a soaring white Whooping Crane with the legend "Support Texas Wildlife." Proceeds go to EP/TPAS and to ACT's campaign to support nongame and endangered species programs in Texas. Price: \$7 (Non-El Paso residents, please add \$1 for postage and handling). Circle preferences:

Color: Lt Blue Tan Yellow  
Size: S M L XL  
(No child's sizes right now)



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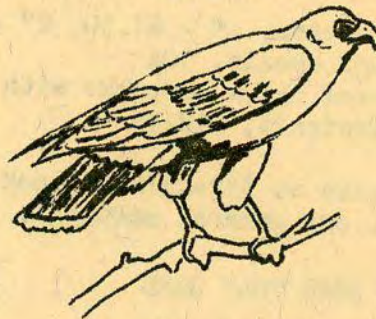
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### ATTENTION!

Vendredi le 4. Novembre 1983 à 18:30 a restaurant Gillespie's, les nous presentons le soiree de Audubon avec les prix d'honneurs. Marquez cette date en votre calendrier!

El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society  
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