

the ROADRUNNER

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



Editors: Jane Fowler - Jo Nagel

Volume 16 (3)

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March 1986

GENERAL MEETING

MON., MARCH 17,
1986, 7:30 PM,
Garden Center, 3105
Grant in Memorial Park.
There will be a film with
magnificent pictures of eagles
raising their young in Alaska and
the winter gathering on the Chilli-
cat River. The title is "Strong-
hold of Eagles". Come and bring
a friend.



S.E. NEW MEXICO/
L. PRAIRIE-CHICKENS
SAT-SUN, APR 12-13. Details next
issue. Leader: John Sproul (545-
5157).

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MON., MARCH 10, 1986, 7:30 PM. The
Board will meet at the home of
Gloria Basden 2821 N. Kansas #5,
El Paso (532-7348). All members
are welcome.

FIELD TRIP CALENDAR

NORTHEAST OXIDATION PONDS/NEWMAN ELECTRIC PLANT

SUN., MARCH 2. Beginners & Regu-
lars (see Feb. RR). Leader: Bob
Johnson (751-0125)



LOWER VALLEY/ TORNILLO

SAT., MARCH 15. Field trip down
the valley in search of a full
variety of birdlife. Meet at 7:30
AM at Feather Lake, 9500 North
Loop. We will drive to Rio Bosque
Park to start, then travel down
the river levee and farm roads as
far as the Tornillo ponds (4-5
hrs, 25 miles). Leader: Tom Baker
(562-9461).

WAYS AND MEANS

Once again we are asking you to
search your homes for household
goods, fixtures, appliances or
any saleable items which you can
donate to help raise money at
our annual rummage sale Apr 29
at the old Woolco parking lot
(Dyer St. near Fred Wilson).
Four of our members will gladly
store your donated items; please
contact them soon. West-Bart Ru-
maker, 4847 B Excalibur, 544-64-
32; East-Jane Fowler, 8212 Park-
land Dr., 772-0296; Northeast-
Bob Johnson, 5109 Paris, 751-
0125; West Central-Tom Baker,
2716 Louisville, 562-9461.

EAST COTTONWOOD SPRINGS

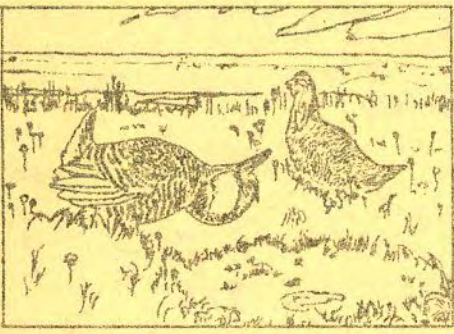
SAT., APRIL 5. Meet at Wilderness
Park Museum on Transmountain 7:30
AM. We will hike through Apache
Springs and then further into the
Franklins to the Cottonwood Sprgs.
Migrating Warblers and Flycatchers
should be seen along with the reg-
ulars. Proper shoes for hiking and
water will be necessary. Leader
still needed. Call Tom Baker (562-
9461).

*Flea
Market!*



CONSERVATION CAPSULES

TEXAS NONGAME STAMP: The 1986 Texas Nongame Stamp, featuring a pair of Attwater's Prairie-Chickens, is now available (see ad below). From each \$5 stamp we sell, \$4.50 goes to the Special Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Fund administered by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and 50¢ goes to EP/TPAS. You can also place orders now for the limited-edition art print of John Cowan's stamp design. Price is \$125, of which \$37 goes to the Nongame Fund. In El Paso, PRINTS CHARMING, Colony Cove Shopping Center, 7040 N. Mesa (584-3808) is again handling orders for the art print. The Nongame Decal? TPWD has chosen not to produce one in 1986.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept.		1986 Nongame Stamp \$5.00
YES, I want to help support the nongame wildlife and endangered species programs of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Please send me _____ 1986 Texas Nongame Stamp(s) at \$5 each. Amount enclosed: _____		
Name _____		
Address _____		
Zip _____		
Please make checks payable to: El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society P.O. Box 9655, El Paso, TX 79986		

CALIFORNIA CONDOR I: On Feb 3, the Natl. Audubon Society won a preliminary injunction blocking the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from trapping all remaining wild condors (RR, Feb). The following

week, a compromise agreement was reached, providing for the capture of one and possibly 2 more birds. Meanwhile, intensive searches are underway in the Sierra Nevada foothills north and east of Bakersfield, CA for 2 condors that an experienced condor observer reported seeing on Jan 22. Four of the 5 known wild condors carry active radio transmitters and were located elsewhere on that date. Thus, at least one and possibly 2 previously unnoticed or missing condors may be alive in the wild.

CALIFORNIA CONDOR II: If you get cable-television station WTBS, don't miss "Condor", the one-hour documentary Natl. Audubon has produced on the life history of the California Condor and on efforts to save this species. Air dates are March 1, 12, 16 and 25. Robert Redford narrates. Public Broadcasting System will show this film in July.

SUPERFUND: At press time, the conference committee to resolve differences between the House and Senate versions of the Superfund reauthorization bill (RR, Jan) had yet to meet. Congressional preoccupation with the deficit-reduction question and deep divisions between the House and Senate over how to finance Superfund are the main reasons for this lack of activity. Meanwhile, existing funds for clean-up of abandoned hazardous-waste sites will be exhausted by Apr 1. The idea of a simple one-year extension of the Superfund law is getting serious consideration as a stop-gap measure that would keep Superfund alive while the conference committee does its work. Remember, Sen. Lloyd Bentsen (D-TX) is on the Superfund conference committee. Urge him (U.S. Senate, Wash., DC 20510) to support the strongest possible

EL PASO/TRANS-PECOS AUDUBON SOCIETY

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PROJECT WILD IS

- * An understanding of wildlife
- * Student enthusiasm
- * Thoughtful stewardship of our wild heritage
- * Learning by doing and experiencing

A Project WILD Teacher In-Service Workshop is scheduled for April 12, 1986, from 9:00 AM to 4:15 PM. It will be applicable toward 6 hours of teacher in-service credit, or 1 hour of credit at UTEP. The workshop will be led by Don MacCarter, Project WILD coordinator and biologist for the New Mexico Dept. of Game & Fish. He is the facilitator for the workshop. Gloria Basden, Education Chair for EP/TPAS. No registration fee is required for the workshop. For further information and meeting location call Joanne Foster, Head of Secondary Curriculum, El Paso ISD (779-4036) or Gloria Basden (532-7348).

TIME

What is TIME?
 Is it really some intrinsic part of the Universe
 Clipped dimly by an Einstein
 In search of a Unified Theory,
 A vital thread woven into the fabric of nature?
 Or is it just an illusion
 Peculiar to the thought processes of man,
 A song that life sings too fast
 When pleasure writes the score
 And too slowly
 When pain sets the metronome?
 Is it really Time that's measured
 By clocks and watches
 And by that crude invention the calendar
 That never quite divides Man's year
 Into equal parts?
 Or is Time a paradox
 That at every instant
 Penetrates the past
 Beyond all beginnings
 And extends into the future
 Further than all endings?
 Doomed by its infinite nature
 Never to be understood by the finite mind of Man?
 What is TIME?

-Clark Chespie
 May 1982

NEW MEMBERS

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members of NAS and the local chapter: Mrs. E.L. Absher, Dr. Jacqueline Casler, Jerry D. Frydendall, W. Russell, Elaine D. Shallenberger, Teresa Thompson, and to a new transfer, Cindy Keith.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- 6 April - Work day at Feather Lake
- 27 April - Rummage Sale
- 3 May - BIRDATHON
- 14 June - Book Fair at B. Dalton Bookseller.



RECYCLING OPPORTUNITIES NUMEROUS

On Feb 3, the City of El Paso introduced the latest incarnation of its recycling program: Dumpsters in which you can place old newspapers are now located at all El Paso fire stations. The City is no longer collecting aluminum or bi-metal cans for recycling. Other groups and businesses are, though, and many take newspapers as well.

As promised last month, here is a list of places where you can take your recyclable materials. The list is incomplete and unverified. Please check with a location to learn the details of its recycling program before you bring it your recyclables. If you know of other recycling opportunities, let John Sproul (545-5157) know, and we'll publicize them in a future ROADRUNNER.

(Location code: C - central, D - downtown, E - eastside, NE - northeast, W - westside, UV - upper valley.)

Newspapers. A number of schools, scout groups, churches, senior-citizen centers and other groups collect newspapers for recycling. Examples include:

Child Crisis Ctr. of EP (NE)	751-9531
Holy Trinity Church School (NE)	751-2566
Johnson School (W)	581-3361
Memorial Park Sr. Cit. Ctr. (C)	562-4268
St. Patrick's School (D)	532-4142
W. Hills Meth. Day School (W)	584-6642
Western Hills School (W)	584-1189
Westside Nutrition Center (W)	581-8326
Zack White School (UV)	584-1141

The Sierra Club collects newspapers at its monthly meetings (last Wed. of each month, 7:30 PM, St. Paul's Meth. Church, 7000 Edgemere). The Child Crisis Center also takes magazines. To find out which scout groups are collecting newspapers, try the Boy Scout (544-5544) or Girl Scout (566-9433) local offices. Most of the above groups sell the newspapers they collect to El Paso Waste Materials (D) (900 Canal St., 533-9432). This firm will also buy your newspapers if you bring them in.

Non-aluminum Metal Cans. Newell Recycling (E) (6800 Market, 772-2728) will

take your metal cans. They are currently paying \$1.60 per 100 lbs. Metal Recycling Co. (D) (2505 Texas, 544-9890) also takes metal cans but has a 300-lb. minimum.

Aluminum Cans. Many groups take aluminum cans. One we recommend highly is El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon. Bring your aluminum cans to our general meetings or field trips or have Bob Johnson (757-1876/751-0125) pick them up, and we'll recycle them into dollars to support our chapter's programs.
/John Sproul/

AUDUBON ECOLOGY CAMPS AND WORKSHOPS FOR '86

For 50 years the Audubon Society has conducted its Ecology Camps and Workshop Summer Program, long recognized as one of its most rewarding educational efforts. One-week and two-week adult sessions are filled with activities that meet the learning and recreational needs of teachers, beginning and advanced naturalists, chapter activists, students, and others with an interest in the environment. Conducted at beautiful sites located in Maine, Connecticut, Wisconsin and Wyoming these programs are also available for University credit.

In addition to the traditional adult education programs, special sessions are held for children in Maine and for families in Wisconsin. The goal of Audubon Youth Ecology Camps is to establish a warm atmosphere in which young people ages 10 through 15 learn more about themselves, their environment, and how they relate to it. Children develop outdoor skills and learn ecological concepts that can be applied at home and in school for the rest of their lives. The Family Ecology Camp Session in Wisconsin is designed to allow parents and their children to share in this warm learning experience. Special sessions are also scheduled for individuals wishing to pursue a particular subject. In Wyoming and Wisconsin you are offered the opportunity of joining in Nature Photography Workshops led by superbly qualified photographers and

in Maine you may join in sessions on Field Ornithology designed for both beginning and advanced birders. New this season is the opportunity to participate in an extensive, ongoing research effort by Audubon biologists while backpacking in Wyoming's spectacular Wind River Mountains.

The cost of participation in these Workshops ranges from \$395 for one-week sessions (Connecticut & Wisconsin), to \$550 for the Youth Ecology Camp 10-day sessions, to \$650 for the two-week sessions (Maine & Wyoming). The photography workshop fees are \$650 in Wyoming and \$500 in Wisconsin. For a fully-detailed color brochure on the programs write to Audubon Camps and Workshops, 613-B Riversville Road, Greenwich, CT 06831. Space is limited in these programs so please plan on enrolling early.

SEASONAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AT AUDUBON CAMPS AND WORKSHOPS

Summer openings in a variety of categories are available at Audubon Camps this year:

AUDUBON ECOLOGY WORKSHOP IN CONNECTICUT

- Physical Environment Instructor
- Head Chef
- Assistant Chef
- Student Assistants-Kitchen
- Student Assistant-Lodgekeeper

AUDUBON CAMP IN WISCONSIN

- Botany Instructor
- Animal Life Instructor
- Bird Life Instructor
- Student Assistants-Kitchen

The Student Assistant Program is a work-study opportunity for young people of college age. Their role facilitates Workshop operations and they enjoy the chance to participate in all of the programs as well as conduct a staff-guided independent research project. Room, board, and a modest stipend is included. For application form and detailed job description contact: The National Environmental Education Center, National Audubon Society, 613 Riversville Rd., Greenwich, CT 06831 (203) 869-2017.

OBSERVATIONS

January 21 - February 20

Slow birding continued during this period with few reports turned in and rarities rare indeed.

LOONS - FALCONS

Great Blue Herons were seen in good numbers in the lower valley 2/9 (TB, et al.) and 1 was at Feather Lake 2/15 (JS). A Black-crowned Night-Heron at Feather Lake 2/15 (JS) was the only 1 reported. A Snow Goose was at Ascarate Lake 1/23 (JN). A male Wood Duck there that day was quite possibly the same individual reported on count day (JN). Redheads were at The Willows and a female Common Golden-eye at the Crossroads Pond 2/16 (JoD). A Golden Eagle was observed soaring over the Castner Range 2/9 (LD).

QUAIL - WOODPECKERS

On 2/16, a Great Horned Owl was observed at Hueco Tanks (JS, JF). Two to 4 White-throated Swifts there that day were the first reported for awhile (JS, JF). The Anna's Hummingbird at Thunderbird Heights remained until 1/25 (FB).

FLYCATCHERS - VIREOS

A pair of Vermilion Flycatchers was observed at Indian Hot Springs 2/9 (TB, et al.). An Am. Robin in the El Paso Country Club (EPCC) area 2/16 (JoD) was the only 1 reported. Cedar Waxwings were in Mt. Park 1/23 (JB) and at least 50 in e. central El Paso 2/3 (fide JN). A Phainopepla was at EPCC 2/16 (JoD) and a pair at Hueco Tanks 2/17 (JS, JF).

WARBLERS - WEAVER FINCHES

Several meadowlarks were noted in the Hueco Tanks area with 2-3 Eastern observed along the road into Montana Ave. 2/17 (JS, JF).

CONTRIBUTORS: Tom Baker, Flora Bittick, Janet Brockmoller, Joyce Davis, Les Davis, Jane Fowler, Jo Nagel, John Sproul.

/Bettis Roberts, Observations Editor/
(591-0421)

THE WESTERN BIRD WATCHER

(Ed. note: Kevin Zimmer's latest book, THE WESTERN BIRD WATCHER, was published last fall by Prentice-Hall. Since so many of you know Kevin, we had a hard time finding an unbiased observer to review this book. It was a long search, but we finally got the right person. Here is his review.)

Writing a critique of the work of one's own brother is to say the least difficult. On one hand, there is a tendency to be too critical (desiring and expecting perfection from one's sibling); and on the other hand, to be too lenient (brushing aside minor flaws because of one's bias). Despite these obvious difficulties and hardships, however, I will dive headfirst into this book review of The Western Birdwatcher - written by none other than my own brother Kevin Zimmer.

As the jacket clearly states, this book is "an introduction to birding in the American West". For this purpose, the American West is defined as everything west of the Mississippi River, including Alaska and western Canada. The book is divided into six chapters - (1) Birding the West; (2) Techniques of Birdfinding; (3) Finding the Western Specialties; (4) Techniques of Identifying Birds; (5) Difficult Identifications: Beyond the Field Guides; (6) Keeping Field Notes - each of which will attract varying amounts of interest depending upon the birding level of the reader.

Chapter One is an introduction to birding the west tackled from a habitat approach. From the dense subtropical brush of the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas to the alpine tundra of the Rockies and Sierras, the reader is led through each habitat and given a general idea of what is to be expected there.

Chapter Two deals with techniques of birdfinding. Habitat recognition (elevation, plant species, nest site availability), time of day, and time of year are all thoroughly discussed. Also included is a very helpful and complete list of rare bird alert telephone numbers - a definite must for the birding enthusiast.

Chapter Three is devoted to telling where, when, and in what habitat one can expect to find each of more than 230 species deemed "western specialties". This section would be clearly helpful to the birder planning a western vacation and hoping to maximize his bird productivity.

Chapters Four and Five deal with the challenges of bird identification. Chapter Four is somewhat general, covering structure, flight characteristics, trophic structures, plumage variation, molt sequence, vocalizations, behavior and "gestalt" birding. All families of birds found in the west are covered.

Chapter Five, my own personal favorite, goes beyond the field guides in providing excellent identification tips for the most difficult (and therefore, often the most hated) groups of birds. Examples include Horned vs. Eared Grebes, immature night herons, Greater vs. Lesser Scaup, dowitchers, peeps, gulls, empids, etc. Literally dozens of the toughest, most frustrating ID problems are tackled with the most up-to-date information. The reader is also greatly aided by the numerous excellent photographs (often side-by-side comparisons of museum skins) and the pen-and-ink drawings and diagrams.

Finally, Chapter Six covers the techniques and importance of keeping and maintaining a journal and good field notes - one area in which all birders could use improvement.

All in all, I found this to be an excellent book - aimed primarily at beginning and intermediate birders, but very useful as well to the "experts" (particularly Ch. 5). Biased opinion or not, The Western Birdwatcher should have a place in every birder's collection.

/Barry Zimmer/

* * *

THE WESTERN BIRD WATCHER is available from El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon. Prices are \$10.95 + 0.56 tax paperback and \$17.95 + 0.92 tax hardbound. (cont. p 8)

You can order a copy by writing EP/TPAS (P.O. Box 9655, El Paso, TX 79986) or calling John Sproul (545-5157). Please make checks payable to "El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society". Non-El Paso residents, please add \$1 for postage and handling.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S EYRIE

This past year was a very good year for EP/TPAS. We had 30 field trips and 9 interesting, informative general meetings. We promoted the Audubon cause by presenting our chapter display (twice) at Cielo Vista Mall and by assisting at B. Dalton's Book Fair. The Book Fair along with the Birdathon and rummage sales were successful fund raisers for us. Although we have not removed the vegetation at Feather Lake, we haven't given up. We had "open house" at Feather Lake on 10 occasions and made needed improvements on sanctuary work days. We presented chapter slide shows at public schools, UTEP, Hueco Tanks State Park and garden clubs. We held field trips for Scout groups and introduced the Audubon Adventures program to 5 classrooms in various schools in the city. This year's Awards Dinner to honor 2 local wildlife rehabilitators and 2 industrious chapter members was well attended.

By my calculations, our members donated 1000 hours of effort to the chapter this past year. This does not include time that committee chairs donated in their respective areas.

For 1986, if every member would donate 2 hours more than they did last year, we could accomplish 50% more. How about it! Happy birding and hope to see you at the next meeting. /Bob Johnson/



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