



The Roadrunner

Newsletter of the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society

El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society

Inside the Roadrunner

Chapter Info	2
Sanctuary News	3
Items of Interest	4 & 5
Calendar	6

The e-Roadrunner

The Roadrunner is now also available electronically as a PDF file. If you would like to receive our newsletter in this way via e-mail, just send a note to John Sproul at jsproul@utep.edu.

El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Website!

Updated information about upcoming field trips, calendar of upcoming events, and recent bird sightings.

www.trans-pecos-audubon.com



General Meetings

Centennial Museum at UTEP
500 W. University Ave
El Paso, Texas

October Meeting

Monday, October 21, 2019 7:00pm

Birds of Indio Mountains Research Station by Geoff Wiseman

Geoff Wiseman is a Park Ranger at Franklin Mountains State Park, El Paso, Texas. He will present some of the findings from the research he conducted as a graduate student in the Biology Department at UTEP. During the period 2012-2014 he conducted a comparative survey of the avian species of far west Texas. This survey was conducted in a Chihuahuan Desert scrub landscape on Indio Mountains Research Station (IMRS) in Hudspeth County, Texas. There had been no previous formal studies of the avifauna at IMRS. All prior species accounts or sightings had been from casual sightings. He will also revisit the observations made of one species, *Micrathene whitneyi* (Elf Owl), also observed during this period.



November Meeting

Monday, November 18, 2019 7:00pm

Island Adventures by Benny Pol

Benny Pol was fortunate to be employed as a defense contractor and have the opportunity to travel to some distant places, most of which have limited access to the public. During these trips, he tried to photograph as much of the local wildlife and natural beauty as possible. This presentation is entitled Island Adventures and includes images from some of the amazing places Benny has visited in the last few years. At home in El Paso, Benny and his wife Liz spend as much time as possible in the great outdoors with their cameras and their dog, Chief. They try to capture the beauty of our desert landscape to share with others through social media, presentations, excursions, and a variety of other volunteer opportunities. Visit their Facebook page with pictures from the Nature Walk Trail at the Franklin Mountains State Park at <https://www.facebook.com/Nature-Walk-Trail-568774656515379/>

El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society

Officers

President: Scott Cutler, 581- 6071
Vice President: Jane Fowler, 598-2448
Secretary/Treasurer: Eddie Chew, 587-9589

Committees

Conservation: Kevin Floyd, 613-6354
Education: Kathleen Whelen, 820-1895
Field Trips: vacant
Hospitality: vacant
Membership: Elizabeth Chase, 539-1191
Newsletter Editor: Kathleen Whelen, 820-1895
Programs: Susie Schneider, 542-3041
Publications: Jane Fowler, 598-2448
Publicity: Heather Rivera, 212-2825
Sanctuary: John Sproul, 545-5157
Website: vacant
Facebook: Kevin Floyd, 613-6354

**The Audubon
 Foundation of
 Texas**



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

CHIHUAHUAN DESERT CONFERENCE November 6th & 7th

The Chihuahuan Desert Conference at the El Paso Zoo is drawing near. It takes place **November 6-7**.

The conference will celebrate the opening of the new Chihuahuan Desert exhibit at the zoo, will facilitate collaboration in the Chihuahuan Desert, and will



share what we are learning from current and recent research projects, conservation initiatives and educational programs.

Conference organizers were able to schedule all 44 of the planned presentations for one day (Nov 7), so the conference schedule has been shortened by a day.

Registration fees are thus also reduced (now \$99 through Oct 1, \$120 after). The last day to register is **Oct 30**.

For more information or to register:
<https://greaterbigbend.wordpress.com/chihuahuan-desert-conference/>

Conservation Organizations

Chihuahuan Desert Education Coalition
www.chihuahuandesert.org

Second Chance Wildlife Rescue
www.secondchancewildliferescue.org
 Josie Karam (915) 920-7867

El Paso Zoo (915) 212-0966
www.elpasozoo.org

Stick House Sanctuary
<https://www.facebook.com/epwildliferescue>
 (915) 219-2365

Keystone Heritage Park 581-7920
www.keystoneheritagepark.com

Asombro Institute
 (Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park)
 (575) 524-3334 www.asombro.org

Friends of Rio Bosque 747-8663
www.riobosque.org

Southwest Environmental Center
 (575) 522-5552
www.wildmesquite.org

Franklin Mt. Wilderness Coalition
www.franklinmountains.org/

Celebration of Our Mountains
www.celebmtns.org

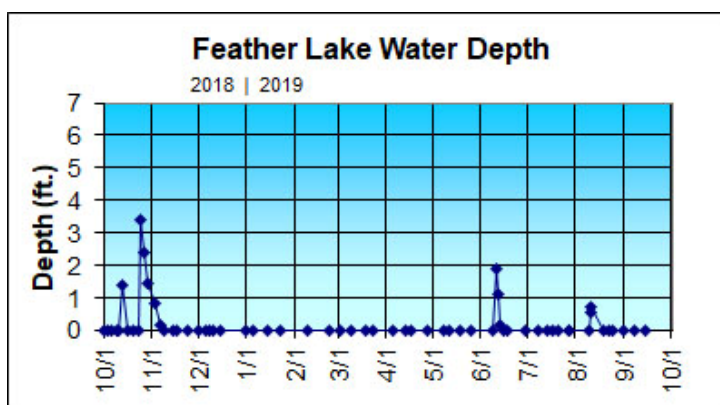
AT FEATHER LAKE

So far during this dry year, there have been only two storms, one in June and one in August, that have produced enough runoff to put water in the Feather Lake basin. In both cases, only part of the basin was flooded and the water quickly soaked in. Small areas at the inlet and outlet also flooded intermittently during the summer from discharges of irrigation water. We still have a few months for things to change, but the trend right now is for 2019 to be our driest year yet.



Our next workday will be **Sat., October 5**, starting at **8 a.m.** If the basin is dry at the inlet, we'll tackle the trash that washed in with the June and August storms.

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



El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society
<http://www.trans-pecos-audubon.com>

Audubon at

Rio Bosque Wetlands Park



Visit Rio Bosque Wetlands Park **Saturday, Nov 23** from **10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** for the **Big Bosque Bird Bash!**

The Friends of the Rio Bosque are sponsoring this special community event to showcase Rio Bosque at a time when cooler temperatures, widespread water, arriving migratory birds and the first signs of fall color make it a great place for a walk in the park. Tours, exhibits, talks, kids' activities and, we hope, lots of birds and water will highlight the day.

Visit www.riobosque.org for more on this event and for up-to-date information on the park's birds and water conditions. Also on the calendar at Rio Bosque in October and November:

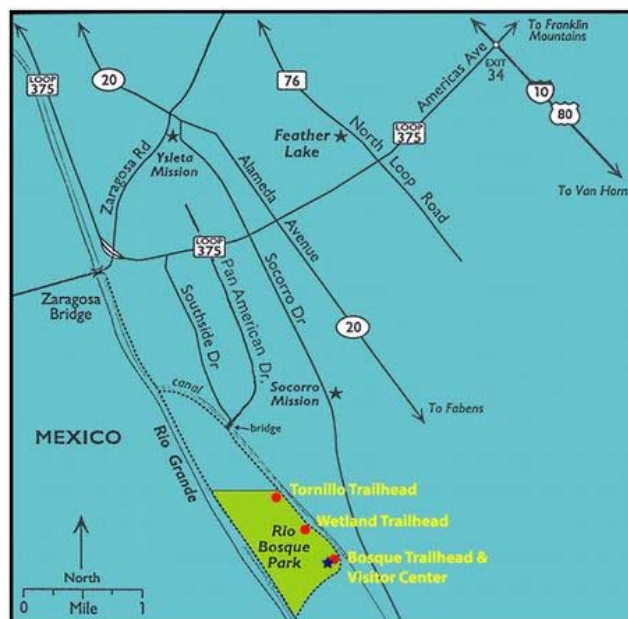
4 p.m., Sun., October 20 (Birding tour)

8 a.m., Sat., October 26 (Introductory tour)

9 a.m., Sat., November 9 (Introductory tour)

3 p.m., Sun., November 24 (Birding tour)

The meeting place is a bridge crossing the 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. Information: 747-8663.



Conservation

El Paso Audubon, along with several other local environmental groups, is working with Insights Science Center on the Student-led Environmental Stewardship Initiative (SESI), an EPA environmental education grant. We are working at two high schools, Horizon High School and Cathedral High School. All of the environmental groups are helping to provide in-class workshops and field trips to the environmental science students. These field trips are where we need your help!

Each school will visit Rio Bosque twice and Keystone Wetlands once during the 2019-2020 academic year. During the field trips, the students will do bird and plant surveys. There are around 30-50 students coming on each field trip, and we would like to have them work in small groups of five students each. We are looking for several volunteers to help with either bird or plant surveys. We will provide details on what you would specifically need to do with the students. By the time you are reading this in early October, we will have had one of the schools out to Rio Bosque for the first time. Here are the dates and times for the remaining field trips:

October 17, 2019 (tentative), 8:45 - 10:30a. Rio Bosque with Cathedral
January 28, 2020, 10:00a - noon. Keystone with Horizon
January 29, 2020, 8:30 - 10:30a. Keystone with Cathedral
February 5, 2020, 9:45 - noon. Rio Bosque with Horizon
February 7, 2020, 8:45 - 10:30a. Rio Bosque with Cathedral

You are welcome to help on one field trip, or on all of them! Please email us at elpasoaudubon@gmail.com as soon as possible if you are interested in helping. Let us know what dates you are available, or if you have any questions. And look for a progress report from the first field trips in the next newsletter!

New Study Finds U.S. and Canada Have Lost More Than One in Four Birds in the Past 50 Years

*September 19, 2019 - A study published today in the journal **Science** reveals that since 1970, bird populations in the United States and Canada have declined by 29 percent, or almost 3 billion birds, signaling a widespread ecological crisis. The results show tremendous losses across diverse groups of birds and habitats—from iconic songsters such as meadowlarks to long-distance migrants such as swallows and backyard birds including sparrows.*

"Multiple, independent lines of evidence show a massive reduction in the abundance of birds," said Ken Rosenberg, the study's lead author and a senior scientist at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and American Bird Conservancy. "We expected to see continuing declines of threatened species. But for the first time, the results also showed pervasive losses among common birds across all habitats, including backyard birds."

The study notes that birds are indicators of environmental health, signaling that natural systems across the U.S. and Canada are now being so severely impacted by human activities that they no longer support the same robust wildlife populations.

The findings show that of nearly 3 billion birds lost, 90 percent belong to 12 bird families, including sparrows, warblers, finches, and swallows—common, widespread species that play influential roles in food webs and ecosystem functioning, from seed dispersal to pest control.

Access the complete article here: <https://science.sciencemag.org/cgi/doi/10.1126/science.aaw1313>

For more info: www.birds.cornell.edu/home/bring-birds-back

Join us on Facebook!

There is now an El Paso Audubon Society group on Facebook. Our aim is to provide a space for people around El Paso to share pictures, sightings, and other information about birds and conservation.



All levels of pictures are welcome. If you are looking for help with identification, please include the location and date of the picture, as both are important with narrowing the possibilities.

www.facebook.com/EIPasoAudubon/

Hueco Tanks State Park & Historic Site's

25th Annual Interpretive Fair

Saturday, October 19th & Sunday, October 20th, 2019 from 10 am to 4 pm. For the past 25 years Hueco Tanks has opened its gates to thousands of visitors during this event with hopes of inspiring an appreciation for our region through recreational and educational tours, presentations, and performances.

Interested in Birding the Mountains of Colombia, South America?

Colombia is a land of incredible bird diversity with over 1,900 species, many found nowhere else on earth. By some accounts, it has the most bird species of any place on earth.

The El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society will be offering a 10-day trip to Colombia from February 29th to March 9th, 2020. The excursion will visit mid- and high-elevation sites in the eastern and central mountain ranges of the Andes mountains. With an expert guide, we will have the opportunity to see stunning examples of the avifauna of the region and have ample opportunities to watch and photograph them.



You can read more about this trip (itinerary, pricing, sign up, etc.) at the Holbrook Travel site below. Additionally, \$200 of your trip fee will be donated to the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society to support their conservation and education activities. A \$200 deposit will reserve your spot. Final payment is due by November 26th, 2019.

<https://www.holbrooktravel.com/where-we-travel/americas/colombia/colombia-birding-elpaso-transpecos-audubon-society>

If you have any questions about this trip, please call Scott Cutler at 915-494-2193.

Celebration of Our Mountains, a non-profit/501c3 organization, is currently running a **gofundme** campaign.

Please check out www.gofundme.com/donate-to-celebration-of-our-mountains.

For 25 years now COM has led educational and recreational field trips into our mountains, desert and wetlands. For more information, please see www.celebmtns.org.

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

Return service request

Nonprofit Organization
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 El Paso, Texas
 Permit #2440

**National Audubon Society
 Chapter Membership Application.**

Yes, I'd like to join. Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Chapter.

Send AUDUBON magazine and my membership card to address below.

Check for \$20.00 enclosed payable to National Audubon Society

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State ____ Zip _____

**National Audubon Society
 Chapter Membership Data Center
 PO Box 97194
 Washington, DC 20090-7194**

Local Chapter Code C1ZW100Z

Dates to Remember

October

Sat 5: **Feather Lake Workday**
 Mon 14: **Board Meeting**
 Mon 21: **General Meeting**
 20 & 26: **Rio Bosque**
 19 & 20: **Hueco Tanks Fair**



November

6 & 7: **Chihuahuan Desert Conference**
 Mon 11: **Board Meeting**
 Mon 18: **General Meeting**
 Sat 23: **Big Bosque Bird Bash!**
 9 & 24: **Rio Bosque**

December

Mon 2: **Board Meeting**
 Mon 9: **Holiday Meeting**



www.trans-pecos-audubon.com

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