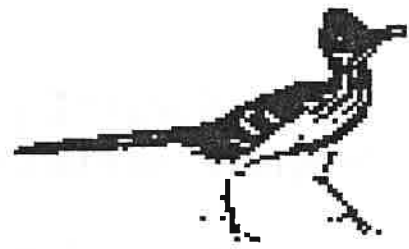


# The Roadrunner



Newsletter of the El Paso/Trans Pecos Audubon Society  
Volume 31 No. 3 June & July, 2001

## The Birdathon 2001 Update!

As of mid-March, approximately \$3500.00 has been raised by this year's bird counting fund raiser! Congratulations to our generous sponsors and our hardworking & observant counters! Our annual post-Birdathon potluck dinner & wrap-up event was once again filled with plenty of excellent food, great conversation & birding "adventure" stories!

The lucky winners of our Birdathon sponsor prizes, were as follows:

Lois Balin won a great pair of Tasco brand 8 x 40 binoculars, and an Audubon jacket and field stool!

Minnie Sipler won a pair of Minolta brand Activa 8 x 25 binoculars and a Birdathon baseball cap!

Beth Longnecker won a colorful and fact-filled coffee table book by National Audubon Society, titled "Speaking for Nature", and an environmentally friendly Birdathon tote bag!

As a special thank-you for sponsors who made donations of more than \$100, Bill and Jane Fowler generously donated a beautiful, framed owl print, that was won by Dr. Craig!

Our Birdathon counters were not forgotten, and all received prizes for their hard work and endurance! Nancy Wilson won a great Duncraft brand birdseed feeder. Marcy Scott and Jim Zabriskie also received a special thank you prize [graciously donated by Sally and Hugh Jameson] of a pair of decorative glass and brass binoculars!

Once again, I'd like to thank Jane Fowler for all her hard work in coordinating the financial aspects of Birdathon (dealing with pledge cards, checks and all the last minute preparations that make Birdathon tick); THANKS A LOT, JANE! Everyone involved in this annual fund raiser should be proud of their efforts to help provide funds for our chapter's numerous conservation and education endeavors.

THANKS AGAIN, EVERYONE!

John Kiseda, Birdathon Co-chair

## Chapter Web Site

Our chapter has a new web site located at:

<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](mailto:ElPasoBirdAlert@gbarnett.com)

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## **International Migratory Bird Day & International Plant Conservation Day**

Even though high winds viciously threatened this event & made life tough for some zoo staff, (THANKS, Facilities Staff, for setting-up the zoo's special event's tent more than once!) the event day itself turned out to be beautiful. IMBD was once again a great success, thanks to the interest and efforts of our visitors and the participating organizations!

Over 1500 people visited the zoo on IMBD & IPCD event day & were able to drink free shade grown coffee (sponsored by El Paso's Sun Harvest food store) and eat free biscotti (sponsored by the Zoo's concessionaire, Service Systems Associates) as they participated in interactive events such as "try to imitate how different types of birds pick-up or catch their food with their varied types of bird bills", the construction of pet rock birds and looking at and learning about nesting wild birds.

Over twenty different organizations from around the region answered questions on such diverse topics as native plant use, orchid propagation, endangered and threatened fish recovery actions, bird and birding information and what is going on at our local state parks.

Some of the favorite activities of the day included the famous Bob Johnson emceed bird-calling contests (with prizes for all, sponsored by our Audubon Chapter), the face painting efforts of the Southwest Environmental Center's Bob Grace (who would have guessed that the "ugly", beauty sturgeon could be so artistically and attractively rendered? Thanks Bob!) and children's completion of a fact-filled journey throughout the zoo at a number of "Passport Checkpoint Stations" that resulted in their receiving a beautiful, fact-filled IMBD poster [provided by the El Paso Zoological Society], in their choice of Spanish or English.

A special Thank You goes out to the chapter's participants, Bill and Jane Fowler, Bob Johnson, Kathy Whelen and of course my lovely and supportive wife Kathy, for making sure that this conservation education event was a fun-filled, fact-filled, "wild" event!

## **Mid-June at the El Paso Zoo:**

### **Neotropical Migratory Bird exhibit to open**

A Neotropical Migratory Bird exhibit will be open for viewing in the Zoo's South American Pavilion. The exhibit will display Painted Buntings and a few, "yet to be finalized" species. The exhibit will try to place some focus on the trials and tribulations that currently face many of "our" birds, that actually spend a large part of their lives in the New World tropics.



### **The El Paso Native Plant Society**

**meets on the third Thursday  
of the month at 7PM at the  
UTEP's Centennial  
Museum.**

**A late summer trip is being  
planned for the Chiricahua  
Mts. In SE Arizona.**

**For information, contact Wynn  
Anderson; 533-6072, evenings,  
or 747-5113 in the office, or  
Sarah Wood 581-3178,  
evenings, or 747-7249, in the  
office.**

## Ceremonial "Grand Opening" Zoo's Birds of Prey Enclosures

The Zoo's Birds of Prey enclosures have recently been completed! The three enclosures are currently being occupied by three species of predators found in the El Paso area; Harris's Hawks, Barn Owls and a Swainson's Hawk! The new residents have been settling in quite nicely and the Harris' Hawks have already laid some eggs!

Raptors are birds of prey such as hawks, owls, eagles & falcons. Raptors chase, catch, kill & eat other animals. Raptors have powerful feet with curved talons that are sharp. Raptors also have very keen eyesight and hooked upper bills to aid them in lifestyle. Raptors are quite vulnerable to toxins found in nature, they are an important barometer of the health of the environment. Chemicals/toxins are used by man to control a target pest species and these animals are, in turn, often eaten by other animals. As animals consume prey species, they also ingest the toxins that are in the bodies of their prey, and over time these chemical levels build up to dangerous levels that can significantly impact species and cause drastic population declines. In the recent past here in the lower 48 states, Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons came perilously close to disappearing, because their eggs became soft-shelled due to the pesticide levels of DDT in their bodies. As DDT was phased out of use and chemical levels slowly subsided in many areas and animals, heroic efforts took place to captively reproduce and release birds into the wild. Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons have only recently been removed from the US Fish & Wildlife Service's Endangered Species list.

Birds of Prey are not evil because they kill and eat other animals, they are just fulfilling their roles in the wild and their own biological needs, as nature intended [they can't become vegetarians!].

Be sure to come by the zoo to enjoy these newest additions to the zoo and learn more about them and their role in nature!

**Feather Lake Workday**  
**July 28, 2001**  
**8:00am**

## 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

### About the Roadrunner:

Roadrunner is your newsletter. We welcome your contributions. Contact Bob Johnson 757-1876 or Kathy Whelen 751-2408 email: [whelenk@aol.com](mailto:whelenk@aol.com)

## RIO BOSQUE WETLANDS PARK

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

### Coming up:

- \* 9 a.m. Sun., June 10 (Intro to Rio Bosque)
- \* 8 a.m. Sat., June 16 (Workday)
- \* 8 a.m. Sat., June 23 (Rio Bosque Birds)
- \* 8 a.m. Sat., July 14 (Introduction)
- \* 7 a.m. Sun., July 15 (Birds)
- \* 8 a.m. Sat., July 21 (Workday)

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.

## At Feather Lake

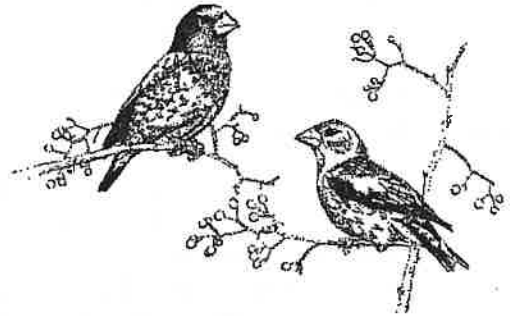
As the habitats at Feather Lake Wildlife Sanctuary continue to develop and mature, the bird list for the lake continues to grow. It now stands at 191 species, with Prairie Falcon, Eastern Phoebe, Mountain Chickadee, Blue Grosbeak (long overdue) and American Goldfinch added over the past year. Visit our web site to view the full list.

Here's another very important list, the folks who helped keep Feather Lake open for visitors in 2000-2001: George Barnett, Lupe Barrera, Craig Braginton, Barbara Buck, Betty Fisbeck, Jane Fowler, Bob and Beth Garcia, Al Gavit, Vince Giordano, Hugh Jameson, Bob Johnson, John Kiseda, Flora Pittard, Roxanne Schroeder, Charles Simpson and John Sproul. Many, many thanks to all, especially our esteemed visitor-program coordinator, Charles Simpson.

Our organization lost a great and valued friend with the passing of Anne Hussmann in April. Two desert willows, donated by Nancy Wilson and Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue, have been planted at Feather Lake in her memory. CDWR members also made donations in memory of Anne for our new visitor center. To all, we extend our sincere and heartfelt thanks.

Feather Lake is now closed until October. What's that? You can't wait that long? Then join us Sat., July 28 for a special mid-summer visit. Gates open at 8 a.m. Come anytime during the morning to enjoy summer at the lake and work a few hours on sanctuary projects.

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



### SUPPORT LOCAL WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS

#### **Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue**

Meets: 4th Tuesday of;  
Jan., Feb., Apr., June, Aug. and Oct.  
Where: Room 45,  
El Paso Community College  
Northwest Campus  
6701 South Desert Blvd.  
Website: [www.whc.net/cdwr](http://www.whc.net/cdwr)

#### **El Paso Zoo**

Website: [www.elpasozoo.org](http://www.elpasozoo.org)

#### **Keystone Heritage Park**

Meets: 3rd Wednesday of each month  
Where: El Paso Police Dept.  
Westside Regional Command Center  
4801 Osborne  
Websites: (currently being redesigned)  
[www.keystonepark.com](http://www.keystonepark.com) or  
[www.keystonepark.org](http://www.keystonepark.org)

# On The Trail

## HERON ROOKERY

We will head west on Country Club Road to Mcnutt, then north to NM Route 28, all the while enjoying the birds along the way. One stop will be at Durling's Farm, then ending up at the *Egret/Heron Rookery* located north of Gadsden High School. If you have not taken this trip before, you will be amazed at over 200 nests of *Cattle* and *Snowy Egrets*, and some *Black-crowned Night Herons*.

**DATE:** Saturday, June 9th  
**TIME:** **7:02 AM**  
**PLACE:** **Crossroads Ponding Area**  
(Doniphan and Mesa)  
Leader: Bob "Wildbirder" Johnson  
757-1876

## GILA CLIFF DWELLINGS

The beautiful mountain country in the vicinity of Silver City, New Mexico will be the destination of this overnight trip during the weekend of **June 23 & 24**. We'll be visitings the Cliff Dwellings, the Gila Wilderness, and Lake Roberts. A Large *Great Blue Heron* Rookery has been nearby and wild animals are usually visible, a few years ago we saw a Beaver Lodge and the *Beaver* swimming in the pool. Also had a *White-breasted Nuthatch* take food out of Sid's hand. We had a little *Grace's Warbler* feeding a **baby** (over twice as big as the Warbler) *Brown-headed Cowbird*. *Black-headed Grosbeaks, Hepatic Tanagers* coming within 50 feet of the campsite.

Great camping along the Gila River, but if you would like more comfort call Doc Campbells Trading Post (505-536-9551) or the Sapillo Crossing Lodge (505-536-3206). If you are interested we will have a campground picnic Sat evening.

For details call Bob (757-1876).

These morning times may seem early. but the sun will rise before **6:20 AM**.

## DOUBLE SUNSET

This will be a **SUNSET** (8:10 PM) tour along **SUNSET** Dr. Many young birds are now fledged and out learning how to survive. A number of *Mississippi Kites* have nests within the area and the young have not fledged yet. We always see some great birds in the thickets along the Nemexas Drain at the west end of Sunset.

**DATE:** Sunday, July 8  
**TIME:** **5:27 PM**  
**PLACE:** **Crossroads Ponding Area**  
Leader: Mary Lou Alcorn (584-8768)

## WATER CANYON

Trip will take us from the Rio Grande River Valley to the fir forests. We first Stop at the Bosque Del Apache NWR for *summer wading birds*, then up into the Cibola Nat. Forest hoping to find *Red-faced and other Warblers*. A side trip into the Magdalena area for *Western Bluebirds* and maybe *Pinyon Jays*. Camping in the Canyon or Motels in Socorro. Call Bob "Wildbirder" for details (757-1876).

## SHOREBIRD MIGRATION

The southerly migration of shorebirds usually starts the last week in July so we could catch some good ones at the Fort Bliss Ponds. Will surely be able to see at least 6 species of swimming and 6 species of wading birds. If the *Wilson's Phalaropes* are in maybe a *Red-necked* could be among them.

**DATE:** Saturday, August 4  
**TIME:** **7:22 AM**  
**PLACE:** Walmart, 4530 Woodrow Bean/  
Trans.Mt. Road. North end of  
parking lot.  
Leader: Call 757-1876 to find out.

## On The Trail *continued*

### PLAN AHEAD

Remember we are still planning additional weekend trips this summer. Let us know what you think about location and dates.

August 11/12	Ruidoso
September 8/9	Fort davis
October 6/7	Hawk Watch

### FRIENDS OF HUECO TANKS

Admission to Hueco Tanks State Historical Park - \$4.00.  
\$2.00 for Seniors 65 and older. Children under 12 - FREE.

### BIRD IDENTIFICATION TOURS.

Sunday, June 17	7:10 AM
Sunday, July 15	7:10 AM
Sunday August 19	7:10 AM

I am sure you have heard the saying the early bird gets the worm. Well for us it's *The early birder sees the best birds.*

On all our field trips we bird around the meeting place for about 10 or so minutes, to allow for oversleepers. Then we mount up and head out.



*Young American Kestrels hunting socially after nest departure.*

**Feather Lake  
Breakfast with the Birds  
then work on sanctuary projects  
Saturday, June 2, 2001  
8:30am**

# The Birds of El Paso's Birdathon 2001!

Well, almost all the observation reports are "in" from our Birdathon weekend, and here is some of the information of interest.....

The total number of species observed during the "official" count days is now at 146 species, with approximately twenty counters in the field [Jim Zabriskie & Marcy Scott found 141 hard earned species of birds during their marathon bird search, but their count, which included a good number of species not otherwise seen, took place just prior to Birdathon weekend]. Saturday birders found the going fairly tough going, due to persistent & oftentimes very high winds.

## Birds seen during Birdathon count week, but prior to Birdathon weekend:

Indian Hot Springs- Fabens- Rio Bosque- Stan Roberts Drive- Ft. Bliss Ponds- Whispering Springs- Kilkenny St- Near Xrd's Pond- Pearsons' Tree Farm- Afton Rd marsh-	Black Vulture, Elf Owl, Baltimore Oriole, Common Nighthawk Eurasian Collared Doves Osprey Prairie Falcon Baird's Sandpiper Flammulated Owl, Hermit Thrush Red Crossbills Nashville & Blackpoll Warbler, N. Parula, Red-eyed Vireo Cassin's Finch Sora Rail
--	---

## Birds seen during Birdathon weekend, but by non-counters or not during people's count time:

Cohen Stadium- Memorial Park- Kenyon Joyce-	Lesser Nighthawks Black-headed Grosbeak, Blackpoll Warbler Anna's Hummingbird
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## "Cool" birds seen during Birdathon weekend:

Near Hueco Tanks- Hueco Tanks S. P.- Ft. Bliss Ponds- Stan Roberts Drive- Feather Lake- Bos Dairy- Rio Bosque- Ft. Hancock- McNary Reservoir- Old Madden Lake- Ascarte Pk- Memorial Pk- Mtn Pk- Keystone Marsh- Emory- Riverview Estates-	Worm-eating Warbler Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Spotted Towhee Virginia Rail, American Pipit Loggerhead Shrike Bank Swallow Snow Geese, Belted Kingfisher, Yellow-headed Blackbird Cassin's Sparrow Franklin's Gulls, White-rumped Sandpiper, Forster's Tern Snowy Plover, Ring-necked Duck Summer Tanager, Yellow-breasted Chat, Painted Bunting Wood Thrush, Ross' Geese, Greater White-fronted Goose Western Tanager, Black & White Warbler N. Cardinal, Pine Siskin Pectoral Sandpiper Painted Bunting, Western Tanager, American & Lesser Goldfinch Hooded Oriole
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**El Paso/Trans-Pecos  
AUDUBON WEB SITE**

[http://www.gbarnett.com/ep  
tpas/eptpashome.html](http://www.gbarnett.com/ep<br/>tpas/eptpashome.html)

Find out information, make  
reservations at Feather Lake,  
bird reports, submit articles  
to the Roadrunner; e-mail  
us through the web site.

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

June

Sat. 2 - Feather Lake Workday  
Sat. 9 - Heron Rookery  
Sun. 17 - Bird ID Tour  
Sat. & Sun. 23 & 24, Gila Cliff Dwellings

July

Sun. 8 - Double Sunset  
Sun. 15 - Bird ID Tour  
Sat. 28 - Feather Lake Workday

WATER CANYON TRIP - call Bob for details

August

Sat. 4 - Shorebird Migration  
Sat. & Sun., 11 & 12, Riodoso (call for details)  
Sun. 19 - Bird ID Tour

Sept. 8 & 9 - Fort Davis      October 6 & 7 - Hawk Watch

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

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SOCIETY

W10

Local Chapter Code

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