

the ROADRUNNER



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

Editors: Jane Fowler - Jo Nagel

Volume 15 (2)

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February 1985

GENERAL MEETING

MON., FEBRUARY 18, 7:30 PM, Garden Center, 3105 Grant St. in Memorial Park. Ever since 5 active nests were removed from El Paso Country Club in July 1983 to prevent these birds from diving on golfers, MISSISSIPPI KITES have been a focus of attention for our organization. This month, we'll take a closer look at these elegant raptors, among the most beautiful of all birds. For the past 3 summers, DR. TONY GENNARO, Director of the Natural History Museum at Eastern New Mexico Univ. in Portales, has been studying the nesting population of Mississippi Kites at Clovis, NM. His research has involved both basic kite biology and interactions between kites and golfers, and he has experimented with some innovative approaches that can help the birds and golfers coexist. The applications to El Paso are obvious. On February 18, Dr. Gennaro will share his findings with us. You won't want to miss it.

Not all inaugurations take place in January. Our February meeting is also our Annual Meeting, at which we install our officers and elected directors for the coming year. Yes, the Wild Birder will be inaugurated as our new president. To repeat, you won't want to miss it.



FIELD TRIP CALENDAR

INDIAN HOT SPRINGS/LOWER VALLEY
SAT., FEB. 2. Meet at 7 AM at Feather Lake on North Loop. This is approximately a 90 mile drive down the river. Bring lunch, and prepare for good birds! Leader: Bob Johnson (757-1876 or 751-0125).

NORTHEAST OXIDATION PONDS
SUN., FEB. 24. Meet in K-Mart parking lot (9484 Dyer) at 7:10 AM. After touring Ashley's and the Oxidation Ponds, we'll visit the Newman Power Plant for lunch and further birding for ducks and wading birds. Leader: Bob Johnson (757-1876/ 751-0125).

HUECO TANKS
SAT., MAR. 2. Leader: Wanted! Call Tom Baker (562-9461). Meet at Bella Napoli's parking lot, Montana and Yarbrough intersection. Plan to hike through the park and drive out to some of the area livestock water tanks.

CLAY MILLER RANCH
SAT.-SUN., MAR. 16-17. Leader: Wanted! Call Tom Baker (562-9461). Keep your calendar open for this overnight trip to the Miller's ranch near Valentine, TX. Trip has been confirmed with Mrs. Jody Miller. Details in the March RR.

BIG BEND NATL. PARK
FRI.-SUN., April 19-21. Leader: Mr. Hal Flanders (Alpine, TX).

EL PASO
CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Due to the stormy weather on Dec. 15, the count was held on the 16th. Twenty-three observers counted 90 species with 23,516 individual birds. 3 more species were seen in the count area but not on the count day.

The uncommon species included Wood Duck, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Rough-legged Hawk, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and Brown-headed Cowbird. Birds seen in the count area but not on the count day were Cattle Egrets, Redhead and Long-eared Owl.

/Joyce Davis, Compiler/

HUECO TANKS CBC

Dec. 29 was good birding weather when you consider the weather (snow and icy roads) Dec. 14 and 15, prior to the El Paso Christmas count. For the Hueco Tanks count, we had sunny skies, with some clouds in the afternoon; the temperature was 44° to 58° with wind 4 to 12 m.p.h. Eighteen birders made up our 5 teams and reported a total of 49 species - 1811 individuals. Last year, 28 people counted 52 species with 1978 individual birds. This year, we had for our 1st count record Common Barn Owl and all-time highs for Brewer Blackbird (302) and European Starling (65). That alone should create quite a stir at AMERICAN BIRDS headquarters. All in all, we had a fine day. A special "Thank You" to Bettie Roberts from all the hungry people who trooped into her home for the post-count dinner. Bettie is a perfect hostess for she welcomed us as guests then made us feel right at home. And none of us will forget Muffin and the Col. Sanders' chicken story. Thanks are also due to the team leaders and counters, and to the Texas

General Land Office and Guido Pathak of the Spike "S" Ranch for allowing us to enter their lands for the count.

/Jane Fowler, Compiler/

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MON., FEB. 11, 1985, 7:30 PM.

The Board will meet at the home of John Sproul, 601 W. Yandell, #25, El Paso (545-5157 h, 541-6126 w). All members are welcome.



EPTPAS wishes to extend a warm welcome to new members Bob C. Ayotte, Jr., Elizabeth D. Kitchen, Woodyann Brooks, Marilyn Stevens, G. Cordero, Cristina Gonzalez, Marjorie P. Hicks, Charles Motsch, Lassiter Thompson, Wm.W. Crowe III, Gus Alby Pappas, Charles Strong and Barbara Berstrom who has transferred into our chapter.*****

FREE SLIDE PROGRAM

Our chapter's slide program, BIRDS OF EL PASO, will be shown by Gloria Basden at 12 noon, Feb. 7 in #216 in Quinn Hall on UTEP campus. All interested persons are urged to come.

A FEATHER LAKE FIRST

Feather Lake has a new attraction. A flock of Egrets have chosen the lake for their winter home.

Joe Borntregger reports that on some evenings more than a hundred of the Egrets come in for the night after feeding in the valley during the day. Sunday, Feb. 3, Feather Lake will be open 3:30 PM to dark, and it would be nice to see you all. Can't

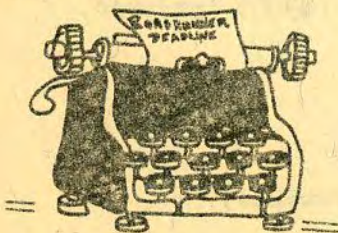
make it then? Come out on the remaining Saturdays from 8-11 AM.

FIELD TRIP FOLLOW-UP

For Feather Lake/Rio Bosque Park 4 members braved cold weather and blowing snow to count 25 species between the two places. Noteworthy were a Ferruginous Hawk and a Snipe.

At Bosque Del Apache 60 species were counted for the 2 days we were there. The 13 birders who went were able to see the thousands of Sandhill Cranes and Snow Geese, and in smaller numbers, but more important, both Whooping Cranes and Bald Eagles. The count on the board showed 10 Bald Eagles in the refuge. On Sunday AM 13 Eagles could be counted at one time (some may have been Golden). Many thanks to Tom Brasfield for bringing his new scope for us to use.

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" and mail to: RR Editor, P.O. Box 9655, El Paso, TX 79986. Send any changes or corrections in name, address or telephone # to this address. Please note: Bulk mail is not forwarded. Save us .25¢ in return postage by notifying us before you move.



The deadline for the March RR is Feb. 23.

February 1985

ON MARCH 21, THE "WORLD OF AUDUBON" BRINGS THE OUTDOORS IN

This Spring, Audubon Brings Your Television to Life Once Again. You'll be Immersed in Nature's Rare Beauty and Get Closer to our Most Vital Environmental Issues:

- Puffins
- Acid Rain
- Loggerhead Turtles
- Profile of Rachel Carson
- Robert Redford's Institute for Resource Management
- Clean-up of Cleveland's Cuyahoga River
- Interview with Walter Cronkite



CLIFF ROBERTSON IS THE COMPELLING HOST IN THIS SECOND OF THE SERIES "WORLD OF AUDUBON"

PRODUCED BY THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY AND SUPERSTATION WTBS.

MARCH 21, 8:05 PM Eastern
MARCH 24, 6:05 PM Eastern
MARCH 30, 4:05 PM Eastern
APRIL 1, 9:05 PM Pacific

Check cable listings for channel

Wanted! Castaways, Castoffs or any unwanted household articles.

Flea Market!



Spring is coming, and, coincidentally, the EPTPAS rummage sale. So says Ways and Means Chairman Bart Rumaker. The chapter depends on all of you out there, and again is asking your help for this important money making project. Call Bart (544-6432) or Jane Fowler (772-0296) for a place to store your generous gifts. Thank you.



3-The Roadrunner

EL PASO/TRANS-PECOS AUDUBON SOCIETY BUDGET

INCOME	1984 Proposed	1984 Actual a	1985 Proposed
Dues	1700.	2180.	2120.
Contributions	300.	1325.80 b	320.
Sales	150.	257.33	550. c
Rummage sales	250.	558.25	420.
Newsletter subs.	50.	48.	50.
Book fair	375.	491.66	420.
Birdathon	700.	707.06	800.
Interest	125.	397.77	400.
Caretaker	400.	407.80	420.
	<u>4050.</u>	<u>6373.77</u>	<u>5500.</u>
EXPENSES			
Membership	-	20.	50.
Program	125.	75.	150.
Conservation	500.	790.34 d	650.
Field trips	-	-	25.
Hospitality	25.	-	30.
Publicity	-	-	40.
Education	100.	140.78	230.
Publications	695.	732.	800.
Ways and Means	-	7.	75. e
Sanctuary (Fund)	1750.	1873.51 (911.77)	1720. f (220) g
Audubon Council of Texas	150.	100.	230.
Library	100.	85.	100.
Birdathon	-	110.	150.
Awards and gifts	90.	1210. h	740.
General Administration			
Hall rental	135.	135.	135.
Office supplies	50.	183.52	125.
Insurance	220.	100.	140.
Other	110.	59.50	100.
	<u>4050.</u>	<u>5621.65</u>	<u>5500.</u>

- NOTES: a. Actual expenses estimated for Dec '84 to arrive at total.
- b. Includes Sanctuary grant(\$500)and matching Birdathon gift to TPWD(\$500).
- c. Estimated cost recovery from bumper stickers (\$300) included.
- d. Cost of bumper stickers (\$450) included.
- e. Includes state sales tax (\$30).
- f. Utilities \$900 (\$420 to be reimbursed by caretaker)
\$600 (Seeding and irrigation)
\$220 (To be transferred to Sanctuary fund)
- g. Transferred from previous line, Sanctuary expenses, not added in total.
- h. TPWD \$1000.

FRANKLINS FUNDING BILL MOVING

The 69th Session of the Texas Legislature began on Jan. 8, and State Sen. Tati Santiesteban wasted little time reintroducing his bill to remove the current prohibition against the Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. (TPWD) spending state funds for operation and maintenance of Franklin Mts. St. Park (RR, Dec 1984). The bill (SB 54) was reported favorably by the Senate Natural Resources Committee on Jan. 23 and should pass the full Senate easily.

The real battle will be in the House of Representatives, where Arves Jones has introduced identical companion legislation (HB 107). In 1983, Sen. Santiesteban's bill to remove the funding prohibition cleared the Senate but died without a hearing in the House Environmental Affairs Committee. Its demise was due to opposition from the chairman of that committee, Fred Agnich of Dallas. Agnich is the man who put the funding prohibition into Ron Coleman's 1979 bill creating the Park, and he wants it to stay.

This year, the bill to remove the prohibition (in the form of either SB 54 or HB 107) will again have to go through the Environmental Affairs Committee. Can Rep. Agnich's intransigence be overcome? The first step is to get a hearing on the bill. You can help by asking your representative (see box) to urge Rep. Agnich to schedule prompt hearings and give the bill full and fair consideration. Also, thank Sen. Santiesteban and Rep. Jones for introducing SB 54 and HB 107.

These bills deserve your backing. They would not require that TPWD spend money on the Park but would give the agency the ability to do so where needed. And there is a need. The current prohibition prevents TPWD from assigning rangers to the Park, from preparing the Park master plan, from maintaining existing facilities and from providing appropriate signs, fences, and protective barriers. As long as the funding prohibition remains, we won't have a full-fledged state park in the Franklin Mts.

/John Sproul/

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LEGISLATIVE MINIGUIDE

The Texas Legislature is now in session and will be through May 28. Your elected representatives need to hear your views on SB 54 and other environment-related legislation. Whom should you contact and how? Here's a directory (with Austin phone numbers) of Trans-Pecos legislators.

Texas Senate

(Mailing address for all:

P.O. Box 12068, Austin, TX 78711)

Dist.

- | | | |
|----|---|--------------|
| 25 | Bill Sims | 512/475-3494 |
| | (n.e. El Paso County,
rest of Trans-Pecos) | |
| 29 | Tati Santiesteban | 475-3641 |
| | (most of El Paso County) | |

Texas House

(Mailing address for all:

P.O. Box 2910, Austin, TX 78769)

Dist.

- | | | |
|----|---|--------------|
| 68 | Dudley Harrison | 512/475-2763 |
| | (Brewster, Pecos, Presidio,
Terrell, Val Verde counties) | |
| 69 | Larry Don Shaw | 475-2617 |
| | (Culberson, Hudspeth, Jeff
Davis, Reeves counties) | |
| 70 | Jack Vowell | 475-6289 |
| | (El Paso County) | |
| 71 | Arves Jones | 475-6279 |
| | (El Paso County) | |
| 72 | Paul Moreno | 475-2241 |
| | (El Paso County) | |
| 73 | Nancy McDonald | 475-3885 |
| | (El Paso County) | |
| 74 | Nick Perez | 475-6269 |
| | (El Paso County) | |

To learn the current status of any bill before the legislature, call:

1-800-252-9693.

CONSERVATION CAPSULES

RAPTOR PROTECTION: That eye-catching green thing? The one that fell out when you opened this month's newsletter? It's our new raptor-protection bumper sticker, and we hope you'll use it. Dave Ellis, since moved to Florida, did the artwork; Jane Fowler did the lettering and final paste-up. Nice job, no? If you want more, we have them on sale at general meetings for 50¢ each. Also, we are making them available at cost to other Audubon chapters and interested organizations. For an order form, contact John Sproul (601 W. Yandell #25, El Paso, TX 79902; 915/545-5157). Raptor protection is a continuing concern of our organization; please use your bumper sticker to promote it in a highly visible way.

NONGAME STAMP: The new Texas Nongame Stamp and Decal are selling well. Thank you, everyone who has bought them. Many of you aren't quite sure, though, just what to do with the decal. Our hope is you'll stick it in a conspicuous place where thousands of people can see it. Like on your car window or bumper (next to the raptor-protection sticker). Or on your lunch pail. Or briefcase. Or spotting scope. Let people know that Texas has a new nongame wildlife program and that they can contribute to it. If you want to save your decal as a collector's item, there is a simple solution. Buy 2! You can, of course, order both the decal and the nongame stamp from El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon (P.O. Box 9655, El Paso, TX 79986). Price: \$5 each. Please indicate whether you want the stamp, the decal or both.

AMERICAN CANAL EXTENSION: The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) proposal to extend the American Canal 13 miles from downtown El Paso to near Rio Bosque Park (RR, Apr 1984) appears, for now, dead. El Paso County Water Improvement District No. 1, the main project beneficiary, was to have paid a large share of project costs, but the District has decided it is unable at this time to do so. As a result, USBR has suspended indefinitely all work on the project. The agency has produced a draft environmental assessment (EA), but, for now,

will proceed no further with its environmental review. El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon consulted extensively with USBR during preparation of the EA, particularly on the subject of project mitigation. To obtain a copy of the EA, contact USBR at 541-7740.

RECYCLING: If you live in El Paso, don't forget that Fridays are recycling days. Depending on what part of the City you live in, you can put your recyclables -- newspapers, cans, corrugated cardboard -- at curbside for pickup on either the 1st and 3rd or 2nd and 4th Fridays each month. Check with the Sanitation Dept. (594-8625) to learn what recycling zone you are in. An alternate destination for your aluminum beverage cans is EP/TPAS. Bring 'em to our next general meeting, and we'll convert them into \$\$ for our chapter treasury.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT: The federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) will be up for reauthorization in 1985. Current thinking in Washington is that a reauthorization bill should pass easily with no substantive changes from the last ESA reauthorization in 1982.
/John Sproul/

OBSERVATIONS

December 25 to January 23

Normally a slow observation period, this one was no exception with most reports falling in the "to be expected" category.

LOONS - FALCONS

A Great Blue Heron seen in the river area of the upper valley 1/19 was the only 1 reported (PR). Several Cattle Egrets were among the 50 egrets noted at Feather Lake 1/6 (NK). On 12/30, a Black-crowned Night-Heron was in the El Paso Country Club area (EPCC) (JoD) and on 1/5, it was reported that from 9-15 had roosted in trees on Love Rd. between Thanksgiving and Christmas. This is the second year in a row that this has occurred (BM). Two female Common Goldeneyes were again seen at the Crossroads Pond 12/30 (JoD) and 1/1 (BJ,RW). A Golden Eagle was observed soaring in the Hueco Tanks area

12/29 (JS,JF,JeC,JoC), and a Prairie Falcon noted east of the Huecos that same day (JF,JeC).

QUAIL - WOODPECKERS

A Common Barn Owl was seen and 3 different Great Horned Owls heard at Hueco Tanks 12/29 (JS). Several White-throated Swifts were in the river area of the upper valley 1/1 (BJ,RW). As on 1/23, at least 2 hummingbirds (sp.) were still coming to feeders at Mountain Park (JB). Of note was a juvenile Yellow-bellied Sapsucker of the varius race (which is rare to our area) observed on Rosedale in the lower valley 1/3 (BJ)**(details submitted).

FLYCATCHERS - VIREOS

A Black Phoebe was noted in the Canutillo area 1/1 (BJ,RW), and 2 Vermilion Flycatchers at a pond back of Owen's 12/30 and 1/5 (JoD). A Red-breasted Nuthatch seen in the EPCC area 1/6 (JoD) was the only 1 reported. Western Bluebirds were reported on three occasions during the period, twice from Hueco Tanks and once from the upper valley (mob). At least 15-20 Mountain Bluebirds were observed in n.e. El Paso near Castner Park 1/23 (KB,LB). A Townsend's Solitaire was seen at Hueco Tanks 1/20 (AG, MG). The unusually large numbers of American Robins and Cedar Waxwings reported from all areas are of interest (mob). On 12/29, 2 Sage Thrashers were counted at Fourmile Draw in the Hueco Mountains (JS,JF,JeC,JoC), and a Brown Thrasher was at Hueco Tanks 1/19 and 1/20 (AG,MG). Single Phainopeplas were in the EPCC area 12/30 (JoD), near Durling's 1/1 (BJ,RW), and at Hueco Tanks 1/20 (AG,MG).

WARBLERS - WEAVER FINCHES

An Orange-crowned Warbler appeared at Horizon City 1/8 and 1/16 (AG,MG). A possible MacGillivray's Warbler was noted in the Los Nogales area 1/1 (BJ, RW). At least 40-50 Red-winged Blackbirds visited an e. El Paso yard for several days in early January (JF), and 5 Yellow-headed Blackbirds were at Feather Lake 1/6 (NK). A female oriole (sp.), possibly attracted by fruit placed on cages, was present at Anthony from 1/8 to 1/10 (HB). Two American Goldfinches were observed at Feather

Lake 1/6 (NK).

CONTRIBUTORS: Lois & Ken Beno, Helen Bigelow, Janet Brockmoller, Tom Carson, Jean & John Coyle, Joyce Davis, Jane Fowler, Madeline & Al Gavit, Jean Hagesfeld, Bob Johnson, Neil Keith, Betty Murray, John Nielson, Patricia Russell, John Sproul, Ray Waite. /Bettie Roberts, Observations Editor/ (591-0421)

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
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Membership Application
Yes, I'd like to join. Local Chapter:

El Paso/Trans-Pecos
W10 7XCH

Membership Category desired:

<input type="checkbox"/> Individual/\$30 (H)	<input type="checkbox"/> Senior Citizen
<input type="checkbox"/> Family/\$38 (J)	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual/\$21(N)
<input type="checkbox"/> Student/\$18 (K)	<input type="checkbox"/> Senior Citizen
	<input type="checkbox"/> Family/\$23 (P)

This is a new renewal membership.

Name.....

Address.....

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

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

Please make checks payable to National Audubon Society. Mail to Bob Johnson, 5109 Paris, El Paso, TX 79924.



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