



The Roadrunner

Newsletter of the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society

El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society
 General Meeting

Monday, September 15, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

at UTEP Centennial Museum, corner of Wiggins and University

Rattlesnake Springs Historic District:

Oasis in SE New Mexico

You won't want to miss our first fall general meeting, Monday, September 15, 2008 at 7:00 P.M. in the UTEP Centennial Museum, corner of Wiggins and University. Renee West, chief biologist for Carlsbad Caverns National Park, will speak on historic Rattlesnake Springs, where bubbling groundwater attracts Bell's Vireos, Varied Buntings, and many herons. Prehistoric and historic indigenous people and early American settlers all left artifacts there. Cottonwood trees planted by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1938 still stand at the picnic area. Rattlesnake Springs is on the National Register of Historic Places and was recently identified as a Cultural Landscape. We plan a Rattlesnake Springs field trip on Saturday, September 27, 2008.

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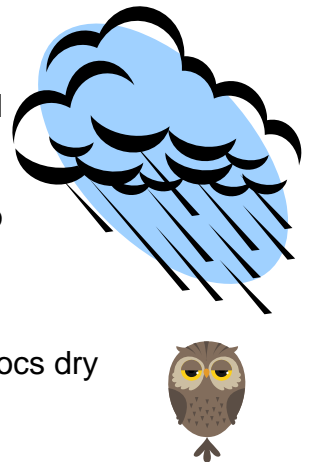
News from the Trail

UTEP Parking Choices for You
 Yes, you *can* park your car and come to the Centennial Museum for the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon programs. Here are two choices.

- There are parking spaces behind the Centennial Museum for museum visitors – turn right at the first driveway after the guardhouse on University & Sunbowl Dr.
- UTEP Parking Garage on Sun Bowl Dr. has 150 visitor parking spaces reserved on the street level. Enter & drive to the back right side, or enter on right side at the overhead Visitors' Parking sign.
- Street parking is not available to visitors till after 8 pm.

We'll see you at our fall 2008 meeting!

When eager birders are confronted with bands of hurricane rain on a much-anticipated field trip, do they retreat indoors to play cards, or go to a bar till the storm blows over? Surprisingly, the group of field trippers at Water Canyon and Bosque Del Apache July 26-27 just kept their binocs dry and focused.



Among the 59 species that popped out between rain showers were a juvenile Least Bittern, Great-horned Owls, Soras, and Wild Turkeys.

For a complete list, contact Ursula at usherrill@miners.utep.edu. You never know what great finds await you on the trail!



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

Earth Share OF TEXAS

El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society

Officers

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

Committees

Membership: Roxanne Schroeder, 533-0061
Programs: Ursula Sherrill, 526-7725
Conservation: vacant
Field Trips: Ursula Sherrill, 526-7725
Hospitality: Janet Perkins, 581-2849
Publicity: Janet Perkins, 581-2849
Education: Kathleen Whelen, 751-2408
Publications: Jane Fowler, 598-2448
Ways & Means: vacant
Sanctuary: John Sproul, 545-5157

THE ELECTRONIC 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.



Coming soon:
The El Paso/Trans-Pecos Annual Holiday Photo Contest
December 8, 2008.
More info in the Oct-Nov Roadrunner.
Call Ursula Sherrill 526-7725
usherrill@miners.utep.edu

Conservation Organizations

Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue
www.whc.net/cdwr

El Paso Zoo 521-1850
www.elpasozoo.org

Keystone Heritage Park 581-7920
www.keystoneheritagepark.org

Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park
(505) 524-3334 www.cdnpp.org

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

Southwest Environmental Center
(505) 522-5552
www.wildmesquite.com swec@zianet.com

Franklin Mt. Wilderness Coalition
www.franklinmountains.org/

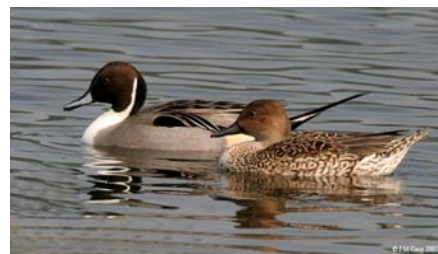
Saturday, August 9, 2008

Down The Valley

McNary, Fort Hancock and Tornillo Reservoirs are always good for Gulls, Ducks, Egrets, Cormorants, and Grebes. Quite a few passerine species could also be present, along with birds of prey, such as Harris's Hawks.

Time: 7:30 a.m.

Meet at: Feather Lake, 9500 North Loop & Bordeaux St., 0.3 miles west of Americas Ave



Bring a lunch: We'll stop under cottonwood trees at the Tornillo Rest area

Trip Coordinator: Eddie Chew, 587-9589;
lchew@srv.net

AT FEATHER LAKE

After limping along with little water since the first of the year, conditions at Feather Lake changed dramatically with the arrival of summer rains. Water depth at the lake's inlet was greater than 3 feet for most of July. On July 26, it exceeded 5 feet for the first time since the 2006 storms.

More weather-related news: High winds leveled another cottonwood that had been killed in 2006 by the fire along the west shoreline. The Feather Lake environment continues to be dynamic and changing.

On your next visit to Feather Lake, you might not notice some of the ongoing changes in habitat conditions at the lake, but you'll notice immediately a difference in our sanctuary's visitor center. It now sports fancy new vinyl siding. Your contributions to our annual Birdathon made this improvement possible. Thank you!



Want to check out the new-look visitor center? Feather Lake re-opens to the public in September. That, of course, means we need volunteers to staff our sanctuary during visitor hours. Can you help? Please contact John Sproul (747-8663, jsproul@utep.edu) if you can put in a morning or afternoon at Feather Lake this fall.

We also welcome help at our next workday. It takes place **Sat., September 27**, an afternoon session starting at **2 p.m.** The rains have triggered a profusion of plant growth. There's lots of pruning and weeding to be done!

Audubon at RIO BOSQUE WETLANDS PARK



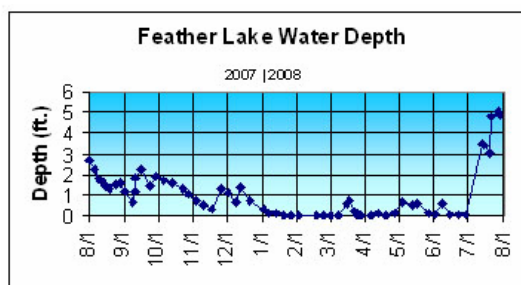
Southbound migratory birds began appearing at Rio Bosque in late July. For the latest on what is being seen, check the recent-bird-sightings page on the Park's website, www.riobosque.org.

Upcoming free walking tours at the Park:

- 8 a.m. Sun., August 3 (Bird tour)
- 8 a.m. Sun., August 17 (Introductory tour)
- 8 a.m. Sat., September 6 (Bird tour)
- 8 a.m. Sat., September 13 (Introductory 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.



Late Summer Bird-watching

Sunday, August 17, 2008

Shore Birds in Northeast El Paso

Some of the best places to find good birds in El Paso are the watery, muddy areas in Northeast El Paso after late summer rains. In August, shorebird migration is at its peak. Passerine migration may also be underway. We will check Hawk Alley also to see if Red-tailed Hawks have started to arrive and if young Swainson's and Harris's Hawks are still near their nests.

Time: 7:15 a.m.

Meet at: The south end of Lowe's parking lot behind Taco Bell

Trip Coordinator: Bob Johnson
751-0125; wildbirderbob@sbcglobal.net

HUECO TANKS

Admission

Adults-\$2

Seniors (65) \$2

Children under 12 free

Bird Identification Tours

Please check in at the Headquarters.
Reservations and information 857-1135

Friday, Saturday, & Sunday,

August 22, 23, & 24, 2008

Weekend in Lincoln National Forest

Get away for a refreshing weekend in the Sacramento Mountains.



Pitch your tent at South Fork (Elev. 7500 feet), the national forest campground just above Bonito Lake. For motels, it's only 10 miles to Alto and 5 miles more to downtown Ruidoso. Birds we may see: 3 species of Jays, Mountain Chickadee, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Mountain Bluebird. Northern Pigmy Owl has been heard from the campground, and an American Dipper was found on past trips. We make a birding stop in Cloudcroft on the return trip. Campsites will be reserved for us beginning on Friday, August 22, in case some folks want to arrive early.

For details, contact Ursula (526-7725);
usherrill@miners.utep.edu

KEYSTONE HERITAGE PARK



The wetlands are open the last weekend of each month for people to come and birdwatch on their own. No Tour Guides—binoculars are recommended.

Saturday, August 30, 7:00-9:30am

Sunday, August 31, 5:00-7:30pm

Saturday, September 27, 7:00-9:30am

Sunday, September 28, 5:00-7:30pm

Any questions, call Bob (915) 751-0125
wildbirderbob@sbcglobal.net

Saturday, September 27, 2008
Daytrip to Rattlesnake Springs

Rattlesnake Springs, part of Carlsbad Caverns National Park, is an Important Bird Area (IBA) and outstanding stopover site for land birds. The historic 80-acre New Mexico wetland features up-welling groundwater that draws Mexican vagrants as well as eastern and western birds, such as Painted Buntings, Vermilion Flycatchers, Scarlet Tanagers, and Yellow-billed Cuckoos. A visitors' picnic area has tables, grills, drinking water, and bathrooms. After Rattlesnake Springs, we will visit nearby Washington Ranch, known for wild turkeys and other great birds.

Time: 7:30 a.m.

Bring a lunch, binoculars, & water

Meet at: In front of Evergreen Cemetery, 12400 E. Montana, ~ 1/4 mile east of Loop 375. We will car-pool for the ~ 85 mile trip.

Trip Coordinator: Ursula Sherrill, 526-7725
usherrill@miners.utep.edu

Celebration of Our Mountains
Saturday, October 4, 2008
Birding Hike

Enjoy our mountain birds on a hike in the majestic Tom Mays area of Franklin Mountains State Park. Wear hiking shoes & bring a light jacket and water.

Time: 7:45 a.m.

Meet at: Tom Mays Area entrance, Franklin Mountain State Park, Trans-Mountain Rd

Trip Coordinator: Ursula Sherrill, 526-7725,
usherrill@miners.utep.edu

Celebration of Our Mountains highlights the Franklin Mountains' unique geological, biological, and archeological features. Festivities begin with Chihuahuan Desert Fiesta, Sept 20. Enjoy 30-plus hikes, field trips, nature walks, bicycle rides and other free events. Details: Sept & Oct *El Paso Scene*, www.epscene.com/oct.html, and the *El Paso Times* newspaper.

Celebration of Our Mountains
Saturday, October 18, 2008
Sunday, October 19, 2008

2008 Hueco Tanks Interpretive Fair

Ancient stories and cultures of native people come alive at Hueco Tanks Fair. Some highlights are Native American dancing and drumming, a Buffalo Soldier encampment, and folkloric dancers, as well as pictograph and bird tours, climbing demos, campfire storytelling, food, music, art, gifts and books for sale. Free admission, but volunteerism and donations in support of the site are welcomed.

When: 8am-9pm Saturday, 8am-6pm Sunday

Celebration of Our Mountains
Saturday, October 25, 2008

Keystone Heritage Park Birds

What: Identification of and information about the Birds of Keystone

When: 8:00am– 12:00 noon on Sat., Oct. 25

Where: Keystone Heritage Park
 (off Doniphan near Frontera)

Coordinated by: El Paso Audubon Society & Bob Johnson, 751-0125,
wildbirderbob@sbcglobal.net

Bring: Binoculars – we will also have some pairs on hand.



More than 200 land birds, waterfowl, shore-birds, and rare species have been recorded at the park.

Young and beginner birders are welcome. Keystone is also an archaeological site estimated to be 4,500 years old, and has a botanical garden.

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

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National Audubon Society

Chapter Membership Application

Yes, I'd like to join.

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and my local chapter. Please send AUDUBON magazine and my membership card to the address below.

My check for \$20.00 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
El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon

W10
Local Chapter Code

7XCHA

Dates to Remember Call Ursula Sherrill for details 526-7725

August

3 & 17: **Rio Bosque**
Sat 9: **Down the Valley**
Mon 11: **Board Meeting**
No General Meeting
Sun 17: **Shore Birds, NE**
22-24th: **Lincoln Forest**
30 & 31: **Keystone**

September

Mon 8: **Board Meeting**
6 & 13: **Rio Bosque**
Mon 15: **General Meeting**
27: **Feather Lake**
Rattlesnake Springs
27&28: **Keystone**

October

Sat 4: **Franklin Mts.**
Mon 13: **Board Meeting**
18 & 19: **Hueco Tanks**
Mon 20: **General Meeting**
25 & 26: **Keystone**

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

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