

The Roadrunner



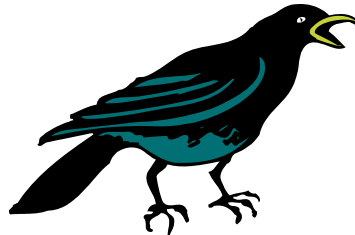
Newsletter of the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society

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**Monday, September 17, 2012, 7:00 p.m.,
Centennial Museum, at UTEP**

Susie Schneider, Audubon member and an excellent birder, will present a program entitled "The **Cornacchia** and his cousins--a (very) brief introduction to Italian birds." Susie was privileged to spend 8 days in Italy this summer. She managed to see some wonderful birds and was even able to get pictures of some of them.



She will be sharing photos and stories about those birds and a little about her trip. Open to the public. Contact Eddie Chew at 587-9589 for more information.

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.

iGive.com

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IN MEMORIAM: BETTY FISBECK

The El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society lost a great friend with the passing of Betty Fisbeck on May 14, 2012. Betty contributed to our organization in many ways through her leadership, her administrative skills, her enthusiasm for the natural world, and her active involvement in chapter activities.



Betty served as secretary of El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon in 1997-99, president-elect in 2000, and president in 2001-02. From 2003 to 2011, she maintained the financial records for our annual Birdathon fundraising event. Betty received our Meritorious Service Award, our highest chapter honor, in 2005.

Always an alert observer, Betty was a steady participant on Christmas Bird Counts and Birdathons. In 2000, she discovered the first Swallow-tailed Kite seen in the El Paso area since 1951. We'll greatly miss her bright, cheerful presence, both at chapter gatherings and in the field.

The Audubon website!

Updated information about upcoming field trips, a calendar of upcoming events, recent bird sightings.
El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon <http://www.trans-pecos-audubon.org>



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

Membership: Roxanne Schroeder, 533-0061
Programs: vacant
Conservation: Luis Sanchez, 422-5530
Field Trips: Mark Perkins 637-3521
Hospitality: Janet Perkins, 581-2849

El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society

Officers

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

Committees

Publicity: Janet Perkins, 581-2849
Education: Kathleen Whelen, 751-2408
Publications: Jane Fowler, 598-2448
Ways & Means: vacant
Sanctuary: John Sproul, 545-5157

Saturday, August 4, 2012
Reservoirs Down the Valley

We'll be traveling down I10 east to visit the reservoirs of McNary, Ft. Hancock and Tornillo. Possible sightings will be Western & Clark's grebes, Eared Grebes, pelicans, gulls, egrets, sandpipers, cormorants, herons and ducks of many species.

Meet at 6:30 a.m. at the parking lot at Burlington Coat Factory, at 1144 N. Yarbrough, Exit at Yarbrough. At the light, turn left under I10. Burlington is on the right.

Open to the public. Contact Mark Perkins at 637-3521.



Western Grebe

El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society
http://www.trans-pecos-audubon.org

Conservation Organizations

Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue
www.cdwr.org

El Paso Zoo 521-1850
www.elpasozoo.org

Keystone Heritage Park 581-7920
www.keystoneheritagepark.org

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

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

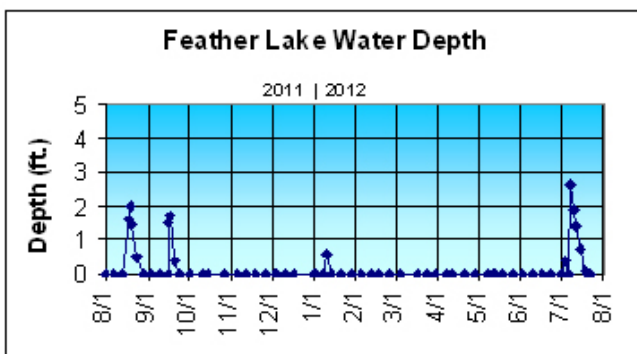
Southwest Environmental Center
(575) 522-5552
www.wildmesquite.org

Franklin Mt. Wilderness Coalition
www.franklinmountains.org/

AT FEATHER LAKE

On July 7, following a heavy storm the day before, the entire Feather Lake basin was flooded for the first time since September 2010. The water depth at the inlet was 2.6 feet. Within 2 weeks, all of that water had soaked into the ground, and the lake was again dry. If we get some more good rains, we may be able to re-open Feather Lake to the public in September, but the prospects right now are very uncertain.

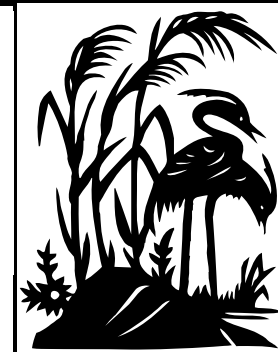
That early-July storm brought more than water to Feather Lake. All of the trash that had accumulated in the drains upstream also washed into the basin. Our next workday takes place **Sat., August 11** starting at **8 a.m.** If the lake remains dry, guess what our task will be? Plan to join us for this morning work session. Feather Lake is located at 9500 North Loop at Bordeaux in El Paso, 0.3 miles west of Americas Ave.



Overnight Field Trips.

Because of the expense of gas, and the time and preparation involved for the overnight field trips, it's important that you let Mark Perkins know in advance if you are planning to go on one of the overnight trips. If there aren't at least 5 people going on a trip, it will be a no-go. Thanks for your cooperation and understanding.

Audubon at RIO BOSQUE WETLANDS PARK



Painted Buntings are typically found at Rio Bosque until mid-August, then they are gone until spring. For up-to-date information on the park's birds, check www.riobosque.org. Upcoming free walking tours:

- 8 a.m. Sun., Aug 5 (Bird tour)**
- 8 a.m. Sun. Aug 19 (Introductory tour)**
- 8 a.m. Sat., Sep 8 (Bird tour)**
- 8 a.m. Sun., Sep 16 (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.



Notes From the Field

Gila National Forest, June 22, 23 & 24.

We camped at nice, cool Cherry Creek Campground, where we saw an abundance of **warblers: Red-faced, Grace's, and Black-throated Gray warblers, and Painted Redstart.**

We birded Lake Roberts and the Gila Cliff Dwellings. At the Cliff Dwellings we had a herd of 20 or more Mule Deer. We birded some new areas in the Silver City area, including San Vicente Cienega, where we saw **Tanagers** and a **Black Hawk** nest. Other areas of interest are Boston Hill and La Capilla Wetlands. We also birded in Pinos Altos, NM, where we had **Steller's Jays** and **Acorn Woodpeckers**. Everyone had a good time and it was a refreshing trip.



Red-faced Warbler

Upper Valley & Double Sunset Birding Tour July 7, 2012

Mississippi Kite (photo by J. Perkins)



A large group turned out for this event. We got to see **Mississippi Kites** doing aerial acrobatics and saw several of them in one tree, and witnessed one actually performing a "Stuka Dive," which means it folded its wings and dove straight down! We want to thank Mary Lou Alcorn for inviting us to her house to visit her bird feeders.

We then went over to the Country Club area and observed **Acorn Woodpeckers** on palm trees and we ended the day watching 20+ **Violet-Crowned Parrots** come in to roost. Great looks and they sure are noisy! We all had a good time.



Violet-Crowned Parrot

TAXONOMIC NOTES

The 53rd Supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) *Check-list of North American Birds* appears in the July 2012 issue of the AOU's journal, *The Auk*. It summarizes decisions the AOU's Committee on Classification and Nomenclature—North and Middle America made between April 15, 2011 and May 1, 2012 regarding changes in the *Check-list*. DNA-sequence analyses continue to drive many of the changes. These analyses are revealing new and often surprising insights into avian taxonomy.

With respect to West Texas birds, the main changes announced in the 53rd Supplement involve scientific names and several rearrangements of the linear sequence on the *Check-list*. Among the name changes: the scientific name for **Gray Hawk** is now *Buteo plagiatus*, for **Mexican Whip-poor-will**, *Antrostomus arizonae*; for **Calliope Hummingbird**, *Selasphorus calliope*; for **Sage Sparrow**, *Artemisospiza belli*; for **Purple Finch**, *Haemorhous purpureus*; for **Cassin's Finch**, *Haemorhous cassinii*; and for **House Finch**, *Haemorhous mexicanus*. The linear sequence within both the hummingbird and wren families has been revised, and the sequence of orders is changed by moving Falconiformes (caracaras and falcons) and Psittaciformes (parrots) to positions immediately before Passeriformes (perching birds, including songbirds). Start getting used to the idea that falcons, based on genetic evidence, are now considered more closely related to parrots and songbirds than to hawks and eagles.

Our new checklist for the El Paso area is now officially out of date.

Field Trips

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, August 17, 18, and 19, 2012 Sacramento Mountains Field Trip

Leave behind El Paso's heat and join us in New Mexico's Sacramento Mountains! Yes, we will be making this trip even though the area has experienced fires. There are still good birding areas and some of the places we may go to bird include Upper Canyon, Cedar Creek, City Parks, Alto Lake, the Cree Burn area, the Airport Road and Ft. Stanton Rd., Glencoe Loop, Magado Creek, and others, to be determined.

The cool mountain air and good birding make this trip a must-do. At least five people need to be signed up for the trip, so it is important to rsvp to Mark at 637-3521. Open to the public. A detailed itinerary will be provided to those interested in making the trip.



Saturday, September 1, 2012 Rattlesnake Springs and Washington Ranch

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, Summer Tanagers,** and **Yellow-billed Cuckoos.**

We will then bird nearby Washington Ranch, known for **Wild Turkeys** and other great birds. Meet at 6:15 a.m. in front of Evergreen Cemetery, 12400 E. Montana, ¼ mile east of Loop 375. Bring a lunch, water and sun block.

We will carpool for the 85 mile trip. Open to the public. Contact Mark at 637-3521.



Saturday, October 13, 2012 Hawk Alley

We will travel by car along a stretch of Northeast El Paso roads called "Hawk Alley", a magnet for large diurnal birds of prey. We'll look for **Red-tailed Hawks** and **Golden Eagles**. Stops may include Painted Dunes Golf Course and Ft. Bliss Ponds. Open to the public. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Lowe's Parking Lot, 4531 Transmountain Road behind Taco Bell. Contact Mark Perkins at 637-3521.



El Paso/Trans-Pecos
Audubon Society
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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 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 422250
Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250**

Local Chapter Code C1ZW100Z

Dates to Remember Call Mark Perkins for details 637-3521

August

Sat 4: **Down the Valley**
5 & 19: **Rio Bosque**
Sat 11: **Feather Lake**
17-19: **Sacramento Mts.**
No General Meeting

September

Sat 1: **Rattlesnake Springs**
8 & 16 : **Rio Bosque Park**
Mon 10: **Board Meeting**
Mon 17: **General Meeting**

October

Sat 13: **Hawk Alley**
Mon 8: **Board Meeting**
Mon 15: **General Meeting**

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

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