

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
Tribute to Bob Johnson	4 & 7
BIRDATHON Insert	5 & 6
Around El Paso	8
Bird Field Trips	9
Calendar	10

General Meetings

April 18, 2016 7:00pm

Centennial Museum, at UTEP

corner of Wiggins and University

"Planting the Water"

Utilizing Rainwater Harvesting Techniques in Habitat Restoration

Any landscape project, whether it's a small back yard garden or a vast wildlife preserve, benefits when the water is planted first. Mike Gaglio will take us on a tour of some his landscape and restoration projects, highlighting the importance of rainwater harvesting as a basis for building a living and regenerative landscape. Mike will demonstrate how you can do the same in your very own yard.

Mike Gaglio is a biologist and owner of High Desert Native Plants LLC. Mike has also been doing habitat restoration and wetland construction and focuses on rain water harvesting principles to establish self sustaining and regenerative landscapes that provide beauty, habitat, and function for replenishing water resources. He is a 4th generation native El Pasoan, has B.S. and M.S. degrees in biology from UTEP, is an outdoor enthusiast, and a strong advocate for land and water conservation.



May 16, 2016 7:00pm
Centennial Museum, at UTEP
corner of Wiggins and University



For **Janiece Ward**, the passion began on a Saturday morning, June 5th, 2004 when she discovered a Black-chinned hummingbird building a nest in the Mondale pine just feet from her front door. During this moment in time, there was nothing more important to her than watching the magic evolve as she treasured the artistry of each visceral movement from nest building until the time two chicks discovered their moment of flight. Truly a sacred dance played out over a five week span...one which the mother hummingbird alone pioneered, choreographed and championed!

She will speak on **Creating a Hummingbird Habitat** along with sharing photographs of hummingbirds that frequent her garden including *rare, casual or accidental* hummingbirds in the El Paso Area. Her favorite is the Anna's X Allen's hybrid!

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: Luis Sanchez, 599-7381
Education: Kathleen Whelen, 820-1895
Field Trips: Mark Perkins 637-3521
Hospitality: Janet Perkins, 637-5269
Membership: Roxanne Schroeder, 533-0061
Newsletter Editor: Kathleen Whelen, 820-1895
Programs: Susie Schneider, 542-3041
Publications: Jane Fowler, 598-2448
Publicity: Janet Perkins, 637- 5269
Sanctuary: John Sproul, 545-5157
Way & Means: vacant

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



2016 El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon's Birdathon will take place on Saturday & Sunday, April 30th & May 1st

This year we will be raising funds to help support **Rio Bosque Wetlands Park**, rehabilitation of injured wild raptors at the **El Paso Zoo**, **chapter expenses**, and support of **Audubon Texas**.

The raptor rehab program at the zoo was chosen because it is the only facility in our area that can care for injured hawks and owls for eventual release. The veterinarians and administration at the zoo agreed to take on this responsibility but funding for food, medicine and supplies has to come from donations. EPTPA is excited to help with this opportunity to give to such a worthwhile endeavor.

Your support of EPTPA's 2016 Birdathon will make this and our other community support efforts great successes. Details about being a counter or supporting one of our intrepid counters will be coming soon.

Audubon's primary fundraiser, Birdathon, will be held on April 30 and May 1, 2016. Would you like to be a bird counter or a sponsor? Bird counters see how many species they can count over a 24-hour period. Sponsors donate money to the counters, either per species or a flat rate. If you are interested in counting or sponsoring, please contact Jane Fowler at 598-2448. Thanks!

Conservation Organizations

Chihuahuan Desert Education Coalition
www.chihuahuandesert.org

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

El Paso Zoo 521-1850
www.elpasozoo.org

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

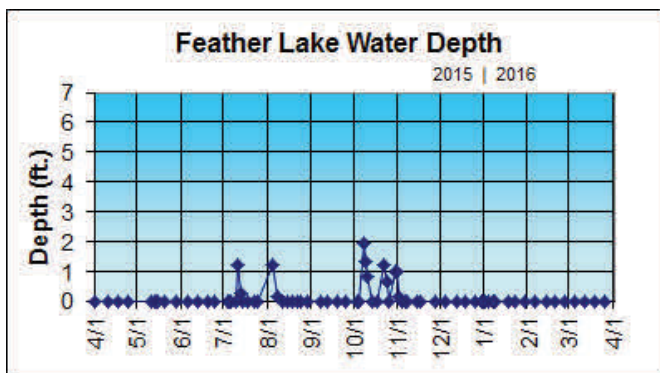
Franklin Mt. Wilderness Coalition
www.franklinmountains.org/

AT FEATHER LAKE

Except for a very modest and brief inflow of water in early January, Feather Lake has been dry thus far in 2016. The basin was completely dry throughout February for the 6th consecutive year and completely dry throughout March for the 5th year in the last 6.

Our next workday at Feather Lake will be **Sat., April 16**, starting at **2 p.m.** We'll be back at work on the diverse array of trash that washed into the basin on the few occasions it received storm runoff last year.

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 Website!

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

www.trans-pecos-audubon.com

Audubon at

Rio Bosque Wetlands Park



The Friends of the Rio Bosque will sponsor **Bosque in Bloom**, a celebration of the spring wildflower displays at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park, on **Sunday, April 17** from **1 p.m. to 5 p.m.** Tours, exhibits, talks, kids' activities, and lots of blooming bitterweed will highlight the afternoon. 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 April and May:

- 8 a.m., Sat., April 9 (Bird tour)
- 4 p.m., Sun., April 24 (Introductory tour)

- 7 a.m., Sat., May 14 (Bird tour)
- 8 a.m., Sun., May 22 (Introductory tour)

The meeting place for these tours 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.



Bob Johnson was a stalwart member of our Audubon chapter for many, many years. Bob held many official & unofficial positions and roles over the decades...chapter president, rare bird finder, field trip leader, newsletter collator aide, bird sightings reporter, Christmas Bird Count compiler, Hueco Tanks & Keystone Wetlands guide, bird identifier, teacher & cheer-leader...you name it & Bob did it, and usually with a sense of purpose & a sparkle in his eyes.

Bob was a great friend to a number of us, and a great friend to the birds. If you had known Bob, hopefully the following memories will bring a smile to your face [and if you hadn't, it may make you wish that you had].

Memories of Bob Johnson

Bob was a great friend, no matter where we were & whatever the occasion. Whether we were out in the field birding & searching for a rare bird, celebrating Christmas together with friends, teaching a Life-Long Learning class, conducting some sort of 'rescue operation' [for each other, a bird or someone else], or leading a week-end Audubon field trip, Bob was an excellent & steady influence over the course of many, many years. Bob was an organizer, a bird data compiler, & someone who always made sure that inclusiveness was a key to what he was involved in. Bob was almost always able to put on a 'best face' despite his physical condition of the past few years, and always remained interested in the latest bird, people & places info we had to share with him on our regular visits. Bob was a military man, a sportsman in his later years via regular medaling in the local Senior Games, and a very, very good man who is already missed.

John & Kathy Kiseda

Bob Johnson was my friend and neighbor. Bob was a kind man. He was always there for me when I needed help. He helped me out more times than I can remember with rides and making and fixing things. Some things I remember is that Bob was a great long-term field trip leader that went way out of his way to teach people about birds. He was easy-going and had a good sense of humor. Bob loved Zimba, my dog. He had some loveable quirks like driving off the side of the road while birding. He talked a lot and I would get impatient because he took a very long time to tell a story. I birded with Bob regularly for almost 15 years. He was my "birding buddy." I accompanied Bob over the years while he monitored "Hawk Alley" and the "Fred Harvey Wastewater treatment plant." We birded all over El Paso, SE Arizona, NM, Fort Davis, Big Bend, Hill Country, and the Coastal Bend, etc. many times over.

Lois Balin

Bob Johnson was pivotal in my journey into serious birding. I had always been a passionate naturalist and outdoorsman but upon meeting Bob and seeing birds through his eyes, my interest in listing and traveling to see specific birds really took off. We had many chases together, Bob usually sleeping in the back of his van. He also had the best system I've seen for keeping a bottle of wine upright and stored properly, and always quick with a story around happy hour. Bob had what I call the "hunter's eye". If there was any movement within his field of vision, he was on it immediately. A great birder, a great friend and mentor. I miss him greatly.

John Groves

(Continued on page 7)

Let's "Fly" into Action! Audubon's Birdathon 2016!

Birdathon counters are already "in training" in preparation for Birdathon 2016. It all takes place April 30 to May 1.

What is Birdathon, you might ask?

One thing is for sure, it's not your average bird count or fund raiser! Birdathon is unusual and different: a wild weekend of birding and our organization's most important source of income for conservation and education programs.



We hope you can join us for a full, rewarding weekend of birding by being a **sponsor** and possibly even a counter (if you want to become part of the "Birdathon Flock" as a counter, please contact Jane Fowler at 598-2448 or Eddie Chew at 587-9589).

Birdathon 2016 will benefit the following programs and projects:

CHAPTER OPERATIONS

Your support allows our chapter to work alongside other organizations to support conservation & education.

RIO BOSQUE WETLANDS PARK

Each year, this site along the Rio Grande becomes more valuable as habitat for birds and other wildlife.

AUDUBON TEXAS

Our support helps keep National Audubon's state office an effective voice for birds, other wildlife and their habitats in Texas.

EL PASO ZOO

Our support helps injured or young birds to be rehabilitated and released back into the wild.

How Birdathon Works

On the weekend of **April 30 - May 1**, our dedicated Birdathon counters will be busy scouring the countryside, trying to find as many bird species as possible, in a single 24-hour blitz. These hardy, energized and intrepid individuals will start early, stay out late, visit varied wildlife habitats and give their eyes, ears and bird knowledge a full workout. Why do they push themselves so hard? For the pleasure of a day in the field, for a test of their birding skills and **most importantly, for a better West Texas environment.**

Each counter will be backed by sponsors who pledge either a given amount for each species seen or a fixed total amount. Most counters will identify 50 to 100 species. A pledge of, say \$0.50 per species for 60 species would result in a contribution of \$30. 95% of Birdathon income goes to the programs and projects; 5% to fundraising (printing, paper and postage).

Looking for someone to sponsor for Birdathon? This year's outstanding counters are a dedicated bunch, most of whom are experienced Birdathoners. If you supported one of these people last year, please give them a call and sponsor them again. If you don't know any of the counters personally and don't know whom to choose, please give Jane (598-2448) or Eddie (587-9589) a call.

At press time, our confirmed counters for this year's Birdathon include:

Eddie Chew	John Kiseda	Mark Perkins	Laura Ditlevson
Scott Cutler	Jim Paton	Susan Schneider	Kathy Whelen
John Sproul	Joe Cancellare	Richard Hermosillo	

Please pick one or more individuals and give them your support!

Birdathon 2016 POT LUCK Sunday, May 1 at 6:00 p.m.

Join us for the POST-BIRDATHON pot-luck picnic on May 1. While enjoying good food, we will be totaling all the counters' sightings, unusual birds and other events of the weekend. Those who saw the most species and raised the most money will be recognized at the May 18th General Meeting, so plan to join us then also.

Bring something to share: salad, dessert or a favorite casserole. The chapter will furnish tableware, coffee, tea, sodas, fruit juice. Everyone is invited, **sponsors, counters and chapter members**. The potluck/picnic is May 1 at 6:00pm at the home of Janet and Mark Perkins, 813 Montclair Drive.

Whether it's \$0.25 per species or \$1.00 per species or any given amount, we hope you will consider a pledge to Birdathon 2016. Please pick one or more counters to sponsor and return the enclosed coupon today.

Your generosity and support help make Audubon Birdathon a success.

EI Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society

BIRDATHON 2016

YES! I'll sponsor _____
for \$ _____ per species for each species she/he finds on
Birdathon 2016 or for a flat amount of \$ _____.

I will add a bonus of \$ _____ if my Birdathon counter sees a

From: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ___ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

My tax deductible gift of \$ _____ sponsoring
_____ **is enclosed.**

Please make checks payable to
EI Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society.

Please return this form by April 25 to:

Eddie Chew
390 Flemish Cir.
EI Paso, TX 79912

Thank you for your generous Birdathon pledge! Your gift is tax deductible as allowed by law

Memories of Bob Johnson continued

When I first moved to El Paso twenty four years ago, Bob was the face of the local chapter. Whether it was Audubon or UTEP basketball, he was an energetic and loyal supporter of that which he loved. Bob was most in his element at a chapter function, like a Birdathon potluck, where he was quick with a story or joke and eager to hear about what others had seen. A strength was his ability to include others. He has been missed.

Jim Paton

In early years of the ROADRUNNER the collating and folding was done entirely by hand, a time-consuming task, and often a solo one. Bob was really good about coming to my house to help out. He used a tool from his wallpaper business to make a sharp crease on the edge of the newsletter before I stapled them. I was happy for his company and help.

Jane Fowler

Bob and I were good birding friends. He was my mentor. I was the eyes and ears so I would find the bird and he would identify it. I learned a lot about birding from Bob. We made a good team. He was kind enough to pick me up and take me to the Audubon meetings and bird tours when I was not old enough to drive. He was the president of the El Paso/Trans Pecos Audubon chapter for several years and field trip leader and organizer. People would call and report birds and he and I would go check out the sightings. Sometimes we would find it was just an unusual looking rock dove, other times it would be a yellow billed loon or three long tailed jaegers at the NEOP. He did not talk much about his time as an officer in the Army. About all I knew was he worked with the Nike missile system. He volunteered as a bird tour guide at Hueco Tanks state park, and I was his assistant. Now I volunteer at Hueco Tanks, so his influence lives on.

Richard Hermosillo

Goodbye to Bob Johnson, Power Birder, Guide, Photographer, Lecturer, Friend. Devoted UTEP Sports Fan. Generous with his time & energy, and knowledge of birds. On one of Bob's East Texas T.O.S. trips, I saw 99 lifers. I still have that list, somewhere. Bob strived to help all Birders add to their list and know birds personally. 'Hawk Alley' was one of his favorite places. We could call it 'Bob's Hawk Alley. Hawks are always there.

Mary Lou Alcorn

We shared season tickets to Miner basketball in the same small section of the Don Haskins Center as Bob for many years. We looked forward to seeing him at each game we attended and chatting with him. Our conversations ranged from how we each thought the Miners were doing & how they could improve to the most recent birding news. He always greeted us with a friendly smile and enthusiasm. Section RR hasn't been the same without him. He will be missed.

Barry Zimmer

Bob Johnson didn't earn the nickname "Wild Birder" by accident...but it was by almost-accident. On an Audubon field trip in Hudspeth County in the late 1980s, the caravan of vehicles was stopping when interesting birds were seen. At one stop, Bob, his focus on the countryside and potential birds, nearly bumped the vehicle ahead. Art Arteaga, startled but always quick with a quip, commented, "That Bob Johnson, he's a wild birder!" Not surprisingly, Bob enthusiastically adopted the moniker. Gradually, it began to appear on name tags, on business cards, in outgoing phone messages, in field-trip announcements and, once email became prevalent, in Bob's email address. And, given his boundless energy and wild enthusiasm for birds, it truly was the perfect nickname.

John Sproul

TEXAS NATURE TRACKERS TRAINING HOW TO DOCUMENT AND LEARN ABOUT YOUR OBSERVATIONS IN NATURE

Cullen Hanks, TPWD Texas Nature Trackers Biologist, and Michael Warriner, TPWD Rare Species Biologist, will be giving a training and leading a participatory field trip for Texas Master Naturalists and members of the public interested in observing nature. The Texas Nature Trackers Program, a citizen-science monitoring effort is designed to engage the naturalist community and contribute data on species of concern in Texas. Learn about the species TPWD is tracking and how you can help document them. Both the training and the field trip will highlight iNaturalist, a platform for documenting your observations.



www.tpwd.texas.gov/trackers

Date: April 7, 2016, Lecture

Time: 6:30 p.m. Trans-Pecos Texas Master Naturalists Membership 30-minute meeting

Time: 7 p.m. Training on Nature Trackers & iNaturalist

Location: TX A&M AgriLife Extension Office, before entrance gate to Ascarate Park, 301 Manny Martinez Dr., 2nd Floor (upstairs from El Paso County Tax Assessor)

Cost: Free

Date: April 8, 2016, Field trip

Time: 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Location: Rio Bosque Wetlands Park.

Field trip will be a Bio-Treasure Hunt! We will conduct a treasure hunt for species of plants and animals expected to be found in the park. In addition, we will see if we can find any new species for the park. Leaders will be on hand to demonstrate techniques for photo-documenting plants and animals. Observations posted to iNaturalist.

Cost: Free

Special Information: Bring water, snacks, hat, sunscreen, cell phone with camera or camera. If you have a smart phone, download the iNaturalist or the Texas Nature Trackers App.

Do not use internet for address of Rio Bosque Park.

DIRECTIONS: Heading East on Interstate 10, exit Right on Highway 375 South (Americas). Go south and take the Socorro / Pan American exit. Pass Socorro Road (middle lane), turn Left on Pan American Drive. Continue on Pan American, pass Winn Road, cross the canal bridge and turn Left at the entrance to the Bustamante Wastewater Treatment Plant along the levee road alongside the canal. Continue down the levee road to the Visitor Center entrance off the Right just short of the intersecting road & bridge.

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.

Field Trips

Saturday, April 9, 2016 Mesilla Valley Bosque and Leasburg Dam State Parks

Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Southwest corner of the parking lot of the El Paso Outlet Mall at I-10 and Transmountain (Talbot Road entrance to the Mall). We hope to see **wintering passerines, water fowl and raptors**. There is a \$5 fee per car that covers both parks. Bring a lunch. Open to the public. Beginners and nonmembers are welcome.

Contact Mark Perkins at 915-637-3521.



Enjoy the bitterweed in bloom at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park! Celebrate the broader "blooming" of the park made possible with water during the growing season, thanks to the efforts of El Paso Water Utilities and the City's Public Service Board!

Join us for a free event with fun activities for the whole family. Learn about our river-valley environment through tours, educational presentations and exhibits.

Park at the [corner of Pan American Dr. and Winn Rd.](#) Shuttles will be provided to take visitors to the park site.

Saturday, May 14, 2016 Rattlesnake Springs & Washington Ranch

Rattlesnake Springs, part of Carlsbad National Park, is an Important Bird Area (IBA) and outstanding stopover site for migrating birds. We'll be looking for **Cardinals, Tanagers, Orioles, Vermilion Flycatchers, Raptors**, and any other migrants coming through.

We'll need to leave early because it's a long drive, so meet at 6:00 a.m. in front of the Evergreen Cemetery at 12400 E. Montana, 1/4 mile east of Loop 375. We'll carpool from there.

Bring lunch, water and binoculars. Open to the public. Beginners and nonmembers are welcome. Contact Mark Perkins at 915-637-3521.

Bosque in Bloom! Sunday, April 17, 2016 1:00pm-5:00pm



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 422250
Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250**

Local Chapter Code C1ZW100Z

Dates to Remember Call Mark Perkins for details 637-3521

April

Sat 2: **Franklin Mt. Poppy Fest**
9 & 24 : **Rio Bosque**
Sat 9: **Mesilla Valley**
Mon 11: **Board Meeting**
Sat 16: **Feather Lake**
Sun 17: **Bosque in Bloom**
Mon 18: **General Meeting**

May

Sun 1: **BIRDATHON**
Mon 9: **Board Meeting**
14 & 22: **Rio Bosque**
Sat 14: **Rattlesnake Springs**
Mon 16: **General 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