



The Roadrunner

Newsletter of the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society

El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society

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The e-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.

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



WESTERN YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO UPDATE

On Nov 3, 2014, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) listed the Yellow-billed Cuckoo population in the western United States, Canada and Mexico as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. On Aug 15, 2014, in anticipation of that listing, the USFWS published a proposal for designating critical habitat for the cuckoo. The proposal was never finalized.

Now, the USFWS has prepared a revision of that original critical-habitat proposal. It is based on responses to the original proposal, new information, and changes in the agency's conservation strategy and selection criteria used to identify critical habitat for the cuckoo. The new proposal, published in the Feb 27, 2020 Federal Register, looks at changing the size of some proposed critical-habitat units, adding new units and eliminating others. Overall, the total acreage being proposed as critical habitat is reduced by 9.6%, from 546,335 acres to 493,665 acres.

In New Mexico, the number of proposed critical-habitat units would increase from 8 to 10, with the total acreage increasing from 82,408 acres to 84,261 acres. New proposed additions in southern New Mexico include Caballo Delta (north area, 190 acres; south area, 155 acres), Animas (608 acres along 6 miles of Las Animas Creek) and Selden Canyon/Radium Springs (237 acres along 12.5 miles of the Rio Grande in Doña Ana County).

In Texas, the proposed critical-habitat units would decrease from 2 to 1. The previously-proposed Arroyo Caballo unit (1,261 acres along 8 miles of the Rio Grande upstream and downstream of Arroyo Caballo in Hudspeth County) would be removed. The Terlingua Creek/Rio Grande unit, along 45 miles of lower Terlingua Creek and the Rio Grande in Big Bend National Park, would be retained and increased in size from 7,792 acres to 7,913 acres.

The USFWS may have proposed excluding the Arroyo Caballo unit in response to a request from U.S. Customs and Border Protection that units along the U.S.-Mexico border be removed for national-security reasons. The new proposal also includes an extensive discussion of other units being considered for total or partial exclusion based on programs already in progress with potential to benefit the cuckoo. Included are all of the proposed new units in southern New Mexico mentioned above.

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El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society

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Secretary/Treasurer: Eddie Chew, 587-9589

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Website: vacant
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The Audubon Foundation of Texas



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

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The USFWS is currently seeking comments on its new critical-habitat proposal. The deadline is Apr 27, 2020.



To view the entire proposal:

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2020-02-27/pdf/2020-02642.pdf#page=1>

To view a perspective from Audubon’s Western Water Initiative:

<https://www.audubon.org/news/audubon-calls-more-resources-and-attention-not-less-western-yellow-billed-cuckoo>

Conservation Organizations

Greater Big Bend Coalition

<https://greaterbigbend.wordpress.com/>

Chihuahuan Desert Education Coalition

www.chihuahuandesert.org

Second Chance Wildlife Rescue

www.secondchancewildliferescue.org

Josie Karam (915) 920-7867

El Paso Zoo (915) 212-0966

www.elpasozoo.org

Stick House Sanctuary

<https://www.facebook.com/epwildliferescue>

(915) 219-2365

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/

Celebration of Our Mountains

www.celebmtns.org

Join us on Facebook!



There is now an El Paso Audubon Society group on Facebook. Our aim is to provide a space for people around El Paso to share pictures, sightings, and other information about birds and conservation.

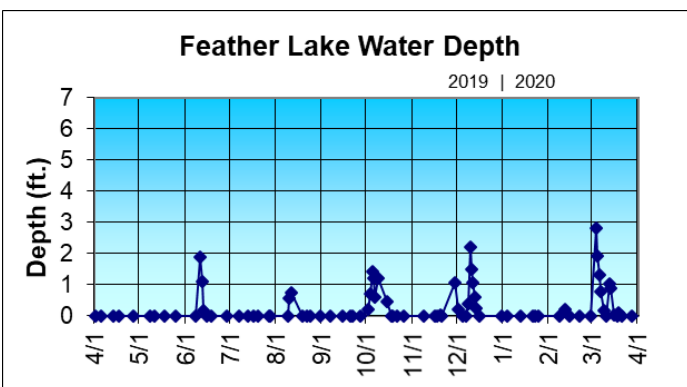
All levels of pictures are welcome. If you are looking for help with identification, please include the location and date of the picture, as both are important with narrowing the possibilities.

AT FEATHER LAKE

Since last June, Feather Lake has experienced brief but substantial flooding approximately every 2 months, with dry conditions quickly returning as the water soaks in. A storm in early March continued this pattern. Runoff flooded the basin to a depth of 2.82 feet on March 4, the first time it was fully flooded since October 2018. It was also the first time since February 2010 that the basin was fully flooded at any time during the first 5 months of the year.

At our workday on February 8, hard-working Girl Scouts removed 25 large bags of trash from the Feather Lake basin, plus many items too big to fit in the trash bags. Three days later, runoff from a smaller storm brought in fresh debris. Then came the rainfall in early March and a surge of much more debris.

Our next workday at Feather Lake was scheduled for Sat., April 11, but the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted those plans. The next workday is now planned for **Sat., June 6**, starting at **8 a.m.** Don't worry, the newly arrived trash will still be there for you. 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 Society
<http://www.trans-pecos-audubon.com>

Audubon at



Rio Bosque Wetlands Park

Water deliveries to Rio Bosque from the adjacent Roberto Bustamante Wastewater Treatment Plant did not end this year until March 15, some 5-6 weeks later than usual. The extended winter flooding was a great boon for waterfowl. Flows from the Bustamante Plant will resume May 1 and revitalize the now-dry wetland cells.

For up-to-date information on Rio Bosque's birds and water conditions, check www.riobosque.org. Also check for any changes concerning tours. With the COVID-19 pandemic, the current schedule can only be described as tentative and tenuous. April events have already been canceled, and the park is currently closed to public use. Planned for May and June:

- 7 a.m., Sat., May 9 (Birding tour)**
- 8 a.m., Sun., May 17 (Introductory tour)**
- 8 a.m., Sun., June 7 (Introductory tour)**
- 6:30 a.m., Sat., June 27 (Birding tour)**

The meeting place for the 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.



El Paso/Trans-Pecos
Audubon Society
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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 97194
Washington, DC 20090-7194**

Local Chapter Code **C1ZW100Z**

Dates to Remember

April

Mon 13: **Board Meeting (Virtual ?)**
Tue 28: **No General Meeting**



May

Mon 11: **Board Meeting?**
Mon 18: **General Meeting ?**
9 & 17: **Rio Bosque**



June

Sat 6: **Feather L. Workday**
Mon 8: **Board Meeting**
7 & 27: **Rio Bosque**

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
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