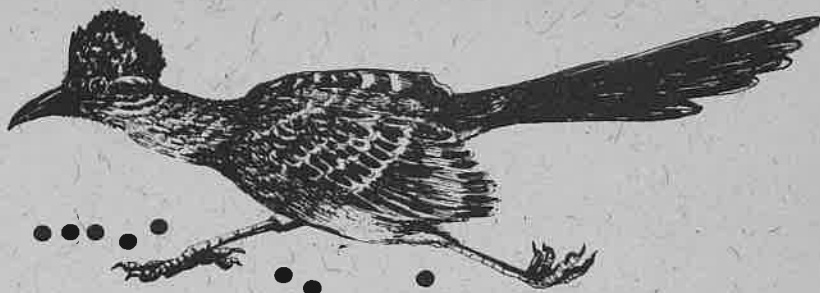


the ROADRUNNER



newsletter of
El Paso Trans-Pecos Audubon Society
published at
2809 Hector Drive, El Paso, Texas, 79935 (by: President: Robert P. Bleicher)

May, 1979, Vol 9, Nr. 5.

CALENDAR

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING:

The Board of Director's agreed, at its May meeting, not to meet in June or July since there is no formal program at the Garden Club in June and only one Field Trip in June. The Board will meet again at 7:30 p.m., 20 August 1979, at the home of A.E. & Josephine Nagel, 3020 Douglas St., El Paso, Tx., 79903, Ph: 566-2143.

PROGRAM:

Monday, 7:30 p.m., 17 September, 1979: Regular meeting at the El Paso Garden Center 3105 Grant Street, El Paso, Texas. Members are requested to bring some slides they would like to show as we want membership participation in this program. So call Joe Guinn, Ph: 566-8438, if you will participate. A projector and card will be available for your use.

June, 1979: As stated above there will be no formal program during the months of June, July, and August. In the past, members being out-of-town combined with the HOT summer weather had reduced attendance levels to low to justify the expense and effort of summer programming. However, several of us who actively birded throughout last summer found it to be individually interesting and worthwhile--so keep birding!

FIELD TRIPS:

Saturday, 0600, 9 June 1979. This will be our only field trip in June. We will meet for "Breakfast" in Tom May's Park, off Trans Mt. Road. We did this before with individuals bring their breakfast with them. We will have portable stoves so just bring your "orange juice" and "bacon & eggs" and come along for the fun. After a good breakfast, we will go birding in Tom May's Canyon till around noon. Do be sure and bring some water to drink along the trail. See you there!

MEMBERSHIP:

The most recent membership mailing list from the National Audubon Society shows that we have continued to grow (just a bit) and that our Chapter National membership is now at 233. It was 226 in January and 230 in April 1979. I'm glad we're growing!

Birds seen during the May Day Count, held on 6 May 1979, are listed by the area in which they were seen. So if you would like to visit these areas, you may see some of the same birds and we know that there are always similarities and differences in the birds seen at various areas.

Earl King led a team of observers to the Country Club Bridge and Randal's Pool:

House Sparrow	Western Kingbird	Brown-headed Cowbird
Cliff Swallow	Great-tailed Grackle	Black-throated Grey Warbler
Barn Swallow	Red-winged Blackbird	Wilson's Warbler
Mourning Dove	Black-chinned Hummingbird	Western Wood Pewee
Rock Dove	Yellow-headed Blackbird	Common Gallinule
Starling	Red-shafted Flicker	Kestrel
Lark Sparrow	Brewer's Blackbird	Mexican Duck
Spotted Sandpiper	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Great Blue Heron
Killdeer	Rufous-sided Towhee	Mallard
House Finch	White-crowned Sparrow	Swainson's Hawk
Mockingbird	Yellow-rumped Warbler	Turkey Vulture
Gamble's Quail	Grey-headed Junco	Blue-winged Teal

Earl King's team at Durling's Farm Area, saw the following birds:

Cactus Wren	Mockingbird	Yellow Warbler
Northern Oriole	Rock Dove	Chipping Sparrow
White-crowned Sparrow	Gamble's Quail	Crissal Thrasher
Mourning Dove	Western Tanager	House Wren
House Finch	Black-throated Grey Warbler	Blue Grosbeak
Pyrrhuloxia	Western Kingbird	Burrowing Owl

Other birds found are as follows: The Double-crested Cormorant (at a small man made lake), White-winged Dove, Inca Dove, American Coot, and the Roadrunner. This team had a total of fifty-one bird species. Thank you Earl King and team members.

Another observation team led by Joe Guinn, and consisting of Sid Shepperd, Cap and Bobby Johnson, and Janet Cole, covered the Franklin mountain area and the Fort Bliss ponding areas. This team saw the following:

Eared Grebe	Scaled Quail	Say's Pheobe
Double-Crested Cormorant	Gamble's Quail	Western Wood Pewee
Great Blue Heron	Killdeer	Violet-green Swallow
Snowy Egret	American Avocet	Cactus Wren
Cinnamon Teal	Black-necked Stilt	Canyon Wren
Northern Shoveler	Forester's Tern	Rock Wren
Ruddy Duck	Mourning Dove	Mockingbird
Turkey Vulture	Inca Dove	Robin
Red-tailed Hawk	Black-chinned Hummingbird	Loggerhead Shrike
Golden Eagle	Common Flicker	Starling
Prairie Falcon	Ladder-backed Woodpecker	Black-and-White Warbler
American Kestrel	Western Kingbird	Yellow Warbler
Common Gallinule	Cassin's Kingbird	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Red-winged Blackbird	Western Meadowlark	Wilson's Warbler
Scott's Oriole	Yellow-headed Blackbird	House Sparrow

continued:

Here is a continuation of the birds found at the Fort Bliss Ponds and Franklin Mts:

Bullocks' Oriole	Great-tailed Grackle	House Finch
American Goldfinch	Lesser Goldfinch	Brown Towhee
Black-throated Sparrow	Chipping Sparrow	***end***

A big thanks to the above team. One is ready to rest at the end of the day!

John Sproul was in charge of a team covering the Rim Road Area. Birds seen were:

Mockingbird	House Sparrow	Gamble's Quail
Wilson's Warbler	House Finch	Robin
Cactus Wren	Mourning Dove	Roadrunner
Black-throated Sparrow	Rock Wren	Crissal Thrasher
Western Kingbird	Epidomas Species	Black-chinned Hummingbird
Lesser Goldfinch	Bullocks Oriole	Verdin
Starling	Inca Dove	White-throated Swifts

Additionally, Bill Hoppes spotted a White-winged Dove to add to the above.
My thanks to this team for their contribution to the bird count.

Another birding team led by Bob Bleicher and consisting also of Jane Fowler, Lucial Swick, and Josephine and A. E. Nagle, visited the HEUCO Tanks area.

On the way to HEUCO Tanks State Park the team saw:

Western Kingbird	House Sparrow	Scaled Quail
Roadrunner	Great-tailed Grackles	Mourning Dove
Bullock's Oriole	Mockingbird	Say's Pheobe
American Kestrel	Brown-headed Cowbirds	Pyrrhuloxia
Cactus Wren	Scott's Oriole	Brown Towhee
Audubon's Warbler	Wilson's Warbler	Trail's Flycatcher
Black-throated Sparrow	Chipping Sparrow	Turkey Vultures
Scrub Jay	Western Wood Pewee	Western Meadowlark
Red-tailed Hawks		

Inside the HEUCO Tanks Park, the following additional species were seen:

House Finch	House Sparrow	Killdeer
Cliff Swallows	White-crowned Sparrows	Song Sparrows
Black-chinned Hummingbirds	Canyon Wrens	Ladderbacked Woodpecker
Blue Grosbeak	Black-headed Grosbeak	

We missed any owls or Verdins — if any were around; oh well, next year!

Quick report on Feather lake, our El Paso, Texas, Bird Sanctuary:

Most of the many wintering ducks have "gone North" at this time. There are two Mexican Ducks present which may be nesting (according to Al Gavit—Sanctuary Chairman). At the present time, the water level is the highest seen for a long time—that's good.

May Day Bird Count Continued:

Al Gavit lead a time of birders down the lower Rio Grande levee, to Feather lake and down to the Fort Hancock area. Here are the findings from his team:

Eared Grebe	Mallard Ducks	Mexican Ducks
Gadwall	Pintail	Cinnamon Teal
Northern Shoveler	Ruddy Duck	Swainson's Hawk
American Kestrel	Gambel Quail	American Coot
Spotted Sandpiper	Long-billed Dowitcher	Western Sandpiper
American Avocet	Wilson's Phalarope	Ring-billed Gull
Mourning Dove	Roadrunner	Black-chinned Hummingbird
Burrowing Owl	Ladder-backed Woodpecker	Western Kingbird
Say's Phoebe	Olive-sided Flycatcher	Western Wood Pewee
Barn Swallow	Cliff Swallow	Cactus Wren
Mockingbird	Loggerhead Shrike	Starling
Solitary Vireo	Yellow Warbler	Yellow-throated Warbler
Wilson's Warbler	House Sparrow	Western Meadowlark
Red-winged Blackbird	Scott's Oriole	Northern Oriole
Brewer's Blackbird	Great-tailed Grackle	Brown-headed Cowbird
House Finch	Lark Sparrow	White-crowned Sparrow

Thanks to Al Gavit and his team. It seems that there was a lot of species to see.

Followup on the Tornillo Area Field Trip, 20 May 1979:

Local birders who missed this trip missed some real good birding. Observers on the trip, Joe Guinn, Sid Shepperd, and John Sproul found thirty species in just four hours with most of the birds in salt cedar and cottonwood trees near the irrigation ditches. One dead cottonwood was especially productive in attracting birds. Seen were: White-winged Dove, Mourning Dove, Western Kingbird, Cactus Wren, Painted Bunting, Yellow-breasted Chat, Northern (Bullock's) Oriole, and the Brown-headed Cowbird. The Chats were so common that we considered designating the area the Bob Bleicher Yellow-breasted Chat Preserve. Other noteworthy species included: Say's Phoebe, Empidonax species, Vermillion Flycatcher, Summer Tanager, and Blue Grosbeak. Last year at this time, we would have called the ducks we saw Mexican Ducks, but recent research suggests that "Mexican Ducks" in the southwestern U.S. may have a fair amount of Mallard blood. Well, we'll still call them Mexican Ducks. (The above article was written by John Sproul of our El Paso Trans-Pecos Chapter.)

PROGRAMED REVISION OF THE EL PASO AUDUBON CHAPTER FIELD CHECKLIST: by John Sproul.

It has been 5½ years since the last revision of our field checklist for the birds of El Paso County, Texas. An update is in order. As a first step in this process, I would like interested members to review the present checklist and see where they feel the status indicated for a species is no longer correct. If a bird's status has changed, write in the correct status on the checklist, and send your marked-up checklist to me (John Sproul). If you don't have a spare handy, call me or Bob Bleicher and we will send, or give, you one. We will revise the list sometime later this fall. (John Sproul, 601 W. Yandell #25, El Paso, Texas, 79902; Ph 545-5157.)

NOTED - APRIL-MAY BIRD OBSERVATIONS:

Perhaps the most valuable function an Audubon newsletter can serve is to provide a record of noteworthy bird observations. For this month, most of the action came during the May Day Bird Count on 6 May 1979. However a flock of ten Pinon Jays did move through the south end of the Franklin mountains on 13 May (JS). Also a Vermillion Flycatcher, Summer Tanager, and five Painted Buntings were in the Tornillo Lakes area on 20 May (JG, SS, JS) Local back yards have produced some good back yard sightings: An Acorn Woodpecker was in N.E. El Paso near McKellegan Canyon Park on 13 May, (Mrs. Brockmoller), a Grey Catbird was seen in Horizon City in mid-May (A. Gavit), a Hooded Oriole was seen in Kern Place on 11 May '79 (S.J. Dodd). The Ringed Turtle Dove that has been in the Cielo Vista Area since last August is still around that area (E. Gilboe). On 28 Apr '79, Al Gavit reported seeing a Philadelphia Vireo. Bob Bleicher reports an Audubon's Warbler in his back yard at 2809 Hector Drive on 1 May 1979—first time in the yard. Joe Di Pasquale reported seeing in Memorial Park, on 29 April '79 the following: a Red-breasted Nuthatch, Solitary Vireo, Western Tanager, American Goldfinch, Cedar Waxwing, Black-headed Cowbird and then seeing three White Pelicans flying overhead. Bob Bleicher reports Black-chinned Hummingbirds, Wilson's warbler and Swainson's Thrush all having been in the back yard during the month of May.

John Sproul asks readers to send to him data on any sightings of any uncommon birds or even sightings of common birds if seen in an uncommon place or a bird at an atypical time of the year. He cannot report anything unless he hears from you. His address is: 601 West Yandell #25, El Paso, Texas, 79902, Office Ph: 543-6126; and his home phone number is 545-5157. So even though The Readerunner will not be published again till the end of August (for September) he will receive summer observations. The reporting area is the Trans-Pecos Texas, plus adjacent areas in New Mexico (roughly a line from Las Cruces to Carlsbad, N. Mex.).

John says that he is interested in more than the immediate El Paso area. So all of you members in other Trans-Pecos communities can help greatly by reporting the uncommon birds that show up around Van Horn, Pecos, Ft. Davis, and similar places.

HOUSE PASSES STRONG ALASKA BILL (by member John Sproul)

Many thanks to all of you who expressed your opinions to Representative Richard White on the Alaska national-interest lands issue. On 16 May, the U. S. House of Representatives passed the Udall-Anderson Substitute—the bill all conservation groups, including Audubon, backed—without any weakening amendments. It took efforts such as yours from conservationists all over the nation to overcome an intense anti-Udall-Anderson lobbying effort by major oil companies, mining interests, the National Rifle Association, and the State of Alaska.

The key vote was the decision to adopt the Udall-Anderson Substitute in place of the combined Breaux-Dingell-Huckaby Substitute that development interests were backing. Udall-Anderson passed this decisive test, 268 to 157. Dick White voted with the minority. After that showdown, the fight was over. The House then passed the Udall-Anderson bill, 360 to 65. This time our representative was with the majority.

Lasting protection for Alaska's unequalled wilderness and wildlife resources is almost a reality. Keep speaking out for strong Alaska legislation as the scene now shifts to the Senate. Audubon is supporting S.222, the Durkin-Nelson-Roth bill.

Mr. Robert P. Bleicher
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