



the ROADRUNNER

Volume 17 (4)

April 1987

GENERAL MEETING

MON., APRIL 20, 1987, 7:30 PM in the Garden Center, 3105 Grant in Memorial Park. Dr. Lillian Mayberry, Adjunct Professor of Biology at UT-El Paso, will present Part II of "National Parks of Yugoslavia". Her husband, Dr. Jack Bristol, had earlier entertained us with Part I. Come and bring a friend.

FIELD TRIP CALENDAR

CASAS GRANDES

SAT., SUN., APRIL 11-12. Leader: Tom Baker (877-3365 h, 566-9461 w). We will visit the Casas Grandes Indian Ruins site and bird around the Hacienda Corralitos area e. of Casas Grandes in the Janos Valley. In January both Harris' Hawks and Black-shouldered Kites were seen. A block of rooms are already reserved at the Rodeway Inn in Casas Grandes (Phone 4-10-48), s. of Columbus, NM. Driving time one-way is approx. 4 hrs. Any car going in must have proof of Mexican insurance, Title and notarized letter from any lienholder. Each person must have either a birth certificate or voter's registration card with them. Please call Tom Baker or Tony Worth (592-4296) before 4/6/87 if you plan to go. We will meet at the crossroads pond 7:30 AM, drive the Strauss Road to Columbus and enter there. Sun. pm we will return the same way.

EAST FRANKLIN MTS.

SUN., APRIL 19. Meet at Wilderness Museum at 7:30 AM.

AGUIRRE SPRINGS

SAT., APRIL 25. Meet at 7 AM at the blue spire in Sunrise Shopping Center, 8500 Dyer. We will be walking the 4½ mile nature trail.

BIRDATHON

SAT., MAY 2.

COUNTRY CLUB AREA

SAT., MAY 9.

TEXAS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY'S CONVENTION - El Paso

THURS., FRI., SAT., MAY 14, 15, 16

CAVE CREEK CANYON/CHIRICAHUA MTS.

SAT., SUN., MAY 30-31.

Call Bill Doebele (593-4835) for more information.


BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MON., APRIL 13, 1987, 7:30 PM. The Board will meet at the home of Ann Schultis, 7301 Clemente, El Paso (584-7382). All members are welcome.

ACT MEETING

The Audubon Council of Texas will hold its spring meeting in Lubbock, April 24-26. Host chapter is Llano Estacado Audubon Society. You do not have to be an ACT delegate to attend. In addition to the business meeting, there will be field trips - including one to see Lesser Prairie-Chickens, a tour of Llano Estacado's nature trail at Buffalo Springs Lake and a banquet. For a registration form, contact Jane Fowler (772-0296).

Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept.



1987 Nongame Stamp \$5.00

YES, I want to help support the nongame wildlife and endangered species programs of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Please send me:

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1987 Nongame Stamp		\$5	
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 P.O. Box 9655, El Paso, TX 79986

TEXAS NONGAME STAMP & ART PRINT

The 1987 Texas Nongame Stamp and associated limited-edition art print feature a magnificent Bald Eagle by Connecticut artist Bob Kuhn. Once again, you can place orders for the print through PRINTS CHARMING, (&)\$) N. Mesa, Space L, El Paso, TX 79912 (584-3808). The price (one stamp included) is \$130, of which \$41.50 goes to the Special Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Fund of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. (TPWD). If you're interested, don't wait too long to order: the edition size will be limited to the number of orders received by May 31.

To buy the nongame stamp, come to one of our general meetings or use the order form in this newsletter. All proceeds from EP/TPAS's stamp sales go to TPWD's Nongame Fund.

EMISSIONS/MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

The Emissions/Maintenance Inspection required for automobiles in El Paso County will be the subject of an open meeting sponsored by the League of Women Voters of El Paso and the Clean Air Coalition of El Paso, April 13, 1987, 6 PM, in City Council Chambers, 2 Civic Center Plaza. Representatives of the Texas Air Control Board, the El Paso Clean Air Coalition, Southwest Region Respiratory Care, the Texas Department of Public Safety, and an experienced car emissions inspector will discuss the Emissions/Maintenance Program and accept comments and questions from the public. All car owners are invited to participate in this meeting. For further information, call the League of Women Voters, 584-9530.

THE ROADRUNNER

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THE ROADRUNNER is sent to all members of the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society. Nonmembers can subscribe for \$4 per year. Make checks payable to EPTPAS and mail to RR Editor at the above address. Also, please send us any changes or corrections in your name or address.

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DONATIONS

We gratefully acknowledge donations to the chapter from:

Helen Barto
 Marilyn Fankhauser

THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE

ANTI-FRANKLINS PARK BILL INTRODUCED

Rep. Fred Agnich of Dallas, generally well regarded by conservationists but a man with a perverse antipathy towards Franklin Mts. St. Park, has introduced a bill (H.B. 1839) to remove 5 square miles of land from the Park. The land, located in the n.e. part of the Park, is still owned by the City of El Paso for use by its Water Utilities Dept. (WUD). The City has consistently resisted conveying this land to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. (TPWD) because some members of the Public Service Board, which oversees the WUD, would prefer to see the land sold to developers.

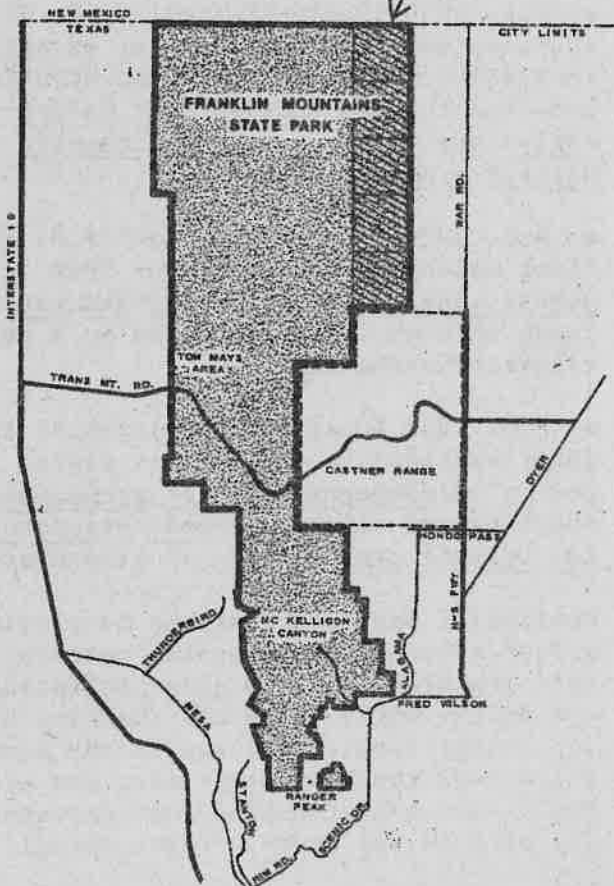
Fortunately, the bill is not given much chance in the legislature. El Paso Sen. Tati Santiesteban opposes it and, as chair of the Senate Natural Resources

Committee, intends to kill it should it reach the Senate. H.B. 1839 also isn't garnering much support from El Paso's state representatives.

Still, El Paso's legislators need to hear from you that the bill is a bad one. Removing 13% of the land from the Park would set a terrible precedent. The land is important for a variety of reasons: topography otherwise not well represented in the Park, beautiful foothills, some steep slopes, areas ideal for camping and Park interpretive facilities, barrel cactus populations, wildlife habitat and more. Though proponents of the bill say the land is too costly for TPWD to acquire, in reality the City of El Paso has the power to convey the land to TPWD at a minimal price, should it choose to do so.

Please thank Sen. Santiesteban for his opposition to H.B. 1839 and urge El Paso's House members (see box) to do all

H.B. 1839 would remove these 5 square miles of land from the Park



TRANS-PECOS LEGISLATIVE GUIDE

Texas Senate

P.O. Box 12068, Austin, TX 78711

- H. Tati Santiesteban (most of El Paso County)
- Bill Sims (rest of Trans-Pecos)

Texas House of Representatives

P.O. Box 2910, Austin, TX 78769

- Dudley Harrison (Brewster, Pecos, Presidio, Terrell and Val Verde counties)
- Larry Don Shaw (Culberson, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis and Reeves counties)
- Jack Vowell (El Paso County)
- Arves Jones (")
- Paul Moreno (")
- Nancy McDonald (")
- Nick Perez (")

Bill status info: 1-800-252-9693
 Copies of Senate bills: 512-463-0252
 Copies of House bills: 512-463-1155

they can to ensure the bill goes nowhere in the House. Send copies of your letters to Mayor Jonathan Rogers and your city representative. El Paso's City Council is the body that ultimately must convey this land to TPWD for the Park. /John Sproul/

AGENCIES MAY FACE BUDGET CUTS

The Texas Legislature is working rapidly to develop an appropriations bill for the 1988-89 biennium. At press time, budget-bill mark-ups were underway in both the Senate Finance Committee and the House Appropriations Committee.

Crunch time will come when a conference committee meets to reconcile differences between the bills passed by the House and Senate. And they will be different. Currently, the House is looking at 17% cuts in general-revenue funds allocated to state agencies. The Senate, on the other hand, is generally budgeting enough funds to maintain current services. For some agencies, including the TPWD, the Senate is budgeting above that level, which will help when compromise with the House-proposed cuts becomes necessary.

What might 17% cuts mean? Possible closures of some state parks, curtailment of the Texas Natural Heritage Program (a computerized database on sensitive Texas flora and fauna), deferral of the Texas Air Control Board's renewable air-quality permits program, elimination of its acid-rain monitoring program, reduced effectiveness of the water-quality and enforcement programs of the Texas Water Commission -- these are just a few examples.

Audubon supports the Senate position on the budget and is urging legislators to seek new revenue sources to ensure full and adequate funding for programs of our state natural-resource and environmental agencies. Please let your senator and representative know the importance of these programs to you and the need to maintain them. Particularly important local players in the budget process are

Reps. Jack Vowell and Larry Don Shaw, both on the House Appropriations Committee, and Sen. Tati Santiesteban, on the Senate Finance Committee. /John Sproul/

PENDING LEGISLATION

Among the bills now before the legislature (sponsors names in parentheses):

- H.B. 1250 (Saunders-LaGrange and Agnich-Dallas)/S.B. 702 (Santiesteban-El Paso) to create a Texas Rivers Conservation System. Hearings were held before both the House and Senate natural resources committees on Mar 25.

- S.B. 779 (Santiesteban) to establish a state program for regulation of underground storage tanks.

- H.B. 1451 (Smith-Austin)/S.B. 967 (Santiesteban) to set minimum standards for groundwater districts and to revise Ch. 52 of the Texas Water Code to strengthen the role of these districts in groundwater management.

- H.B. 2050 (Oakley-Terrell)/S.B. 997 (Santiesteban) to eliminate an existing contradiction in the Parks and Wildlife Code and thereby clarify that Golden Eagles may not be hunted or trapped without a permit to do so.

- H.B. 2226 (Hackney-Houston)/S.B. 1000 (Santiesteban) to provide for TPWD acquisition of natural areas and wetlands through funds generated by a real-estate-transfer tax.

- H.B. 2232 (Guerrero-Austin)/S.B. 1033 (Santiesteban) to establish a state policy of nondegradation of groundwater supplies and set enforcement standards for organic contaminants in groundwater.

Obviously, Sen. Santiesteban is playing a lead role on environmental matters in this legislature. How about selecting one of the bills above and thanking him for championing that issue in the Senate? Write your representative also and urge him or her to get behind the corresponding bill in the House. /John Sproul/

AUDUBON MEMBERS URGED TO ACT

- Dede Armentrout
SW Regional Vice-president

"There's not a lot of ocelot along the Rio Grande..." So goes the new Bill Oliver song, "Rio Grande Valley," written for Audubon's top Texas priority - the conservation of subtropic habitat in the lower Rio Grande Valley. Chapters in the Audubon Council of Texas endorsed the Rio Grande Valley land protection plan as its top state priority in April, 1986. This plan seeks to conserve over 100,000 acres of wildlife habitat in the form of important, large tracts of land connected together by smaller corridors to facilitate the movement of large-ranging species such as the ocelot and jaguarundi.

The land acquired will, for the most part, become part of the Lower Rio Grande Valley Nat'l Wildlife Refuge. State wildlife management areas, state parks, Audubon's Sabal Palm Grove Sanctuary and private holdings in which owners are willing to conserve the wildlife habitat are also essential elements in the success of the conservation effort.

Congress is presently considering appropriations for national wildlife refuges in its appropriations bill. In order for Texas to obtain funds for the Rio Grande Valley, our state delegation must be behind the effort and lend political support. You can help. We need \$30 million dollars to add important habitat this year while land prices are down.

1. YOU CAN WRITE TO SENATORS LLOYD BENTSEN AND PHIL GRAMM, ASKING THEM TO PERSONALLY PUSH FOR APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE VALLEY. Their personal involvement, particularly Sen. Bentsen's (because of his important Finance Committee chairmanship) is vital. Both Senators Bentsen and Gramm supported appropriations for the refuge last year, but the message I got in D.C. was that, to insure success, they must push for the money this year.

Thank them for their support last year. Ask them to contact Chairman Yates of the

House Interior Subcommittee (of the Appropriations Committee) and personally ask for substantial appropriations for the valley. Ask them to provide testimony in support to the subcommittee on Members Day, April 29th. Ask them to convey their strong support to Sen. Bennett Johnston, Chairman of the Senate Interior Subcommittee (of the Senate Appropriations Committee). We have already met with their staff and supplied them with maps, biological information and other supportive materials.

2. YOU CAN WRITE TO CONGRESSMAN RON COLEMAN AND ASK HIM TO JOIN VALLEY CONGRESSMEN KIKA DE LA GARZA AND SOLOMON ORTIZ IN SUPPORTING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE VALLEY. Support from the local congressman for a project is almost essential. Congressmen de la Garza and Ortiz are the Congressmen in whose districts the refuge lands are located. They are solidly supportive of this effort, but the more support from the Texas delegation, the better.

Congressman Coleman is especially important because he serves on the House Appropriations Committee and can be very influential with other committee members. I met with Coleman's staff when I was in Washington. They were very supportive, but indicated that it would be especially desirable to have mail from home, since this project is not in Coleman's district. PLEASE let him know that this is an issue important to his constituents!

3. THERE ARE 3 NAT'L WILDLIFE REFUGES PROPOSED IN TEXAS: LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY, MATAGORDA ISLAND AND ATTWATER PRAIRIE CHICKEN. Tell your U.S. congressman that all are important and Texas should get funding for all of them. Compared to California and Nevada, Texas has only 1/6 the acres of refuges. Yet the California and Nevada delegations are pushing for twice the expenditures (cont. next page)

(cont. Members Urged To Act)
for refuges. Of 6 similarly sized and diverse habitats in the nation, Texas has only half to a sixth the refuge land. We don't need to feel apologetic in asking our delegation to help us secure this sorely needed funding.

4. YOU CAN WRITE TO GOVERNOR CLEMENTS.
Let him know that this effort is supported statewide. Ask Gov. Clements to write the Committee chairmen in support of these acquisitions. PLEASE HELP!

Addresses:

Honorable Lloyd Bentsen/Phil Gramm
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
(202) 224-5922 (Bentsen) 224-2934 (Gramm)

Honorable Ronald D. Coleman
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-4899

Governor William P. Clements, Jr.
Governor's Office
Room 200, State Capitol
Austin, Texas 78711

EDUCATION NOTES

SCHOLARSHIP: Talk about a tough choice! With a number of excellent candidates to choose from, selection of our chapter's first scholarship recipients was no easy matter. The lucky -- and deserving -- winners are:

- JEANNE FRENCH, an EP/TPAS member who teaches at Jefferson HS and also heads the Inner City Outings program of El Paso's Sierra Club group; and
- KAY THURMAN, a science teacher and chair of the science curriculum committee at St. Clement's Episcopal School.

Jeanne will use her scholarship to attend the Audubon Ecology Camp in Wyoming this summer; Kay will attend the Ecology Camp in Connecticut. Congratulations to both, and thanks to Jane Fowler, Pam Henderson and Gloria Woelfel for serving ably on the Scholarship Selection Committee.

Also, thank YOU for helping launch our scholarship program through contributions to last year's Birdathon. As detailed elsewhere in this newsletter, proceeds from the 1987 Birdathon will also be dedicated in part to our Scholarship Fund. Our scholarship program is off to an excellent start; please take part in this year's Birdathon and keep the program rolling.

SLIDE SHOW: More thanks are due Neil Keith and Jane Fowler for giving our chapter's "Birds of El Paso" slide show to the La-An-Can Garden Club recently. Do you belong to an organization that would like to see this program? Contact Ginny Baker (877-3365) or Jane Fowler (772-0296).

AUDUBON ADVENTURES: It's not too early to start thinking about sponsoring a school class in the Audubon Adventures program for the 1987-88 school year. You'll get full details next month. If you have questions in the meantime, contact our Audubon Adventures coordinator, Peggy Riede (833-4881). /John Sproul/

Project WILD

A Project WILD Teacher-In-Service Workshop is scheduled for April 25, from 9:00-4:15 PM. It will be applicable for 6 hours of teacher in-service credit, or 1 hour of credit at UTEP. The workshop will be lead by Ilo Hiller, Project WILD Coordinator for TPWD. The facilitator will be Gloria Woelfel, Conservation Chair for EPTPAS. No fee is required for the workshop. Participants will receive a Secondary Project WILD manual, supplementary material, and a tour of Rio Bosque Park. For further info, please call: Joanne Foster (Head of Secondary Curriculum, E.P.I.S.D., 779-4036) or Gloria Woelfel (833-7523).

PROJECT WILD IS.....

- * an understanding of wildlife
- * learning by doing and experiencing
- * student enthusiasm
- * thoughtful stewardship of our wild heritage

BIRDATHON

87



The El Paso/Trans-Pecos Chapter of the National Audubon Society announces Birdathon '87. This will be our chapter's seventh year to participate in what has become a successful fund-raising effort throughout the country. This annual activity is FUN, and it enables us to raise money for chapter and region. Birdathon contributions are tax-deductible and proceeds are divided between our southwest regional office (where they support high priority Audubon programs such as wetland protection, habitat acquisition and environmental education) and our chapter. With your help, we plan to use our portion of the money raised in two ways. Last year, the chapter used the Birdathon to establish an Audubon Ecology Camp Scholarship Fund; we plan to augment the fund this year. Also, we will be helping El Paso-area wildlife rehabilitators. They are working to establish a new nonprofit wildlife rehabilitation organization, and we wish to contribute funds to aid them in this worthwhile venture. We need the support of all members as counters or sponsors or, better yet, BOTH to make this a successful event. Will you help?

HERE'S HOW

Birdathon day is May 2. On that day, chapter birders (counters) will go out to identify as many bird species as possible in a 24-hour period. Sponsor yourself or another counter for a stated amount per species seen. For example, you sponsor a counter for 20¢ per species; he sees 50 species. Your tax-deductible donation would be \$10.00. As a sponsor, you may stipulate a maximum amount to your pledge if you wish. Or be a counter and recruit as many sponsors as you can. You don't have to be an El Paso resident or a member of EP/TPAS to be a counter or a sponsor.

The following evening (May 3), we will meet at 6 PM at the Garden Center in Memorial Park, 3105 Grant St., for a pot-luck dinner and drawing. All sponsors will have their names entered in the drawing for a Grand Prize. Come to the April 20 general meeting where the Prize will be on display---see for yourself how GRAND it really is. Persons who raise the most money, see the most species, and recruit the most sponsors will be recognized.

Return this form by April 30 and have a chance to win the Grand Prize which will be given away the evening of May 3 at our pot-luck dinner.

Count on me to be a COUNTER.

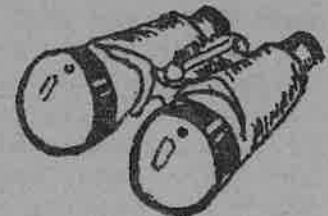
Count on me to be a SPONSOR. I'll sponsor _____ at \$_____ per species. (If desired, maximum contribution not to exceed \$_____.)

Name _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Whom to sponsor? Sponsor yourself or the counter of your choice. In the past, most counters have seen from 50-120 (some over 140) species on count day. Clip and mail this form to BIRDATHON, El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Soc., P.O. Box 9655, El Paso, TX. 79986.

The week following the Birdathon, report your findings to your sponsors & collect pledges. Send checks to BIRDATHON, El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Soc., PO Box 9655, El Paso 79986. Please make checks payable to "El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon".



OBSERVATIONS
February 21 - March 20

Migrants are returning and nesting has started for some species.

- CP - Crossroads Pond
- DP - Doniphan Playa
- FH - Ft. Hancock
- HC - Horizon City
- RR - Ranchos del Rio
- RP - Randel's Pool
- TR - Tornillo reststop

LOONS - FALCONS

A Great Blue Heron was seen at Feather Lake 2/28 (BJ,et al.). A Black-crowned Night-Heron was spotted at RP 3/15 (JD). Seventy-five Snow Geese were reported at the Anthony Country Club 2/22 (SD,GW). A Redhead duck was seen at CP 3/8 (JD). Common Goldeneyes were found at CP on 3/7, 3/14, 3/18 (BJ,JD). Buffleheads were spotted at DP 2/22 (TB,et al.), west of Tornillo 2/28 (JD,JS,SD). A Bald Eagle was reported near Coronado Country Club 3/20 (details noted) (RV). Cooper's Hawks were seen at DP 3/14 (JD) and near Tennis West 3/17 (PR). Three Harris' Hawks were spotted west of FH 2/28 (BJ,et al.). A Ferruginous Hawk was seen at RR 2/22 (TB,et al.) A Rough-legged Hawk was seen in Horizon City 3/7 (AG,MG). A Prairie Falcon was reported at the Socorro Sewage ponds 3/1 (LJ) and near Bassett Center 3/15 (JF).

QUAIL - WOODPECKERS

Greater Yellowlegs were found in the lower valley 2/28 (BJ,et al.) and at DP 2/22 (TB,et al.). Two Dunlins were spotted on the Rio Grande west of FH 2/28 (BJ,JS). Long-billed Dowitchers were seen on the river 2/28 (BJ,et al.) and at DP 2/22 (TB,et al.).

FLYCATCHERS - VIREOS

A Black Phoebe was found at FH 2/28 (BJ, et al.). A House Wren was reported in the east Franklins 2/21 and West Cottonwood Spring 3/7 (LJ). A flock of Mt. Blue-birds was in a HC yard 2/22,23 (AG,MG). Townsend's Solitaires were seen at TR 2/28 (BJ,et al.) and on Pebble Beach Dr. 3/1 (JD). Cedar Waxwings were seen all month all over the city. Phainopeplas

were spotted at TR 2/28 (BJ,et al.) and at RR 2/22 (JD).

WARBLERS - WEAVER FINCHES

Cassin's Sparrows were reported in the east Franklins 2/21 (LJ). A Hooded Oriole has been in a Mt. Park yard several days 3/20 (JB).

Exotic Birds

Three Black-hooded Conures were seen near El Paso Country Club 2/22 (TB, et al.).

Notes; A Clark's Grebe was found at Balmorhea Lake (HF). Black Vultures were reported at Ruidosa, Tx. all winter (HF). Turkey Vultures were seen near Alpine 3/17,18 (JD).

OBSERVERS: Tom Baker, Janet Brockmoller, Joyce Davis, Sarah Jane Dodds, Hal Flanders, Jane Fowler, Al & Madeline Gavit, Bob Johnson, Larry Jordan, Peggy Riede, John Sproul, Rosemary Vaughn, Geth White.
/Joyce Davis, Observations Editor/
(581-9470)

BIRD BRAINS

1. What is a dertrum? It is the tip of the upper mandible of a bird's beak.
2. LBJ - the term for describing small, unidentifiable birds with obscure markings, especially sparrows-- (Little Brown Jobs).
3. Why don't water birds' feet freeze? They automatically reduce the flow of blood to unfeathered parts; feet have little nerves or fleshy muscle.

/Anne Hussmann & Nancy Wilson/

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