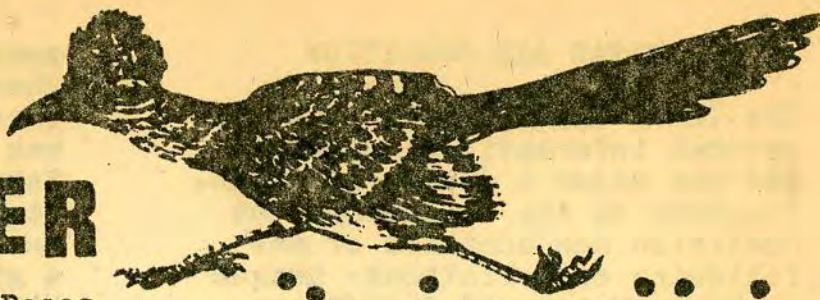


the ROADRUNNER

Newsletter of El Paso/Trans-Pecos
Audubon Society - P.O.Box 9655
El Paso, Texas 79986



Editors: Jane Fowler - Jo Nagel

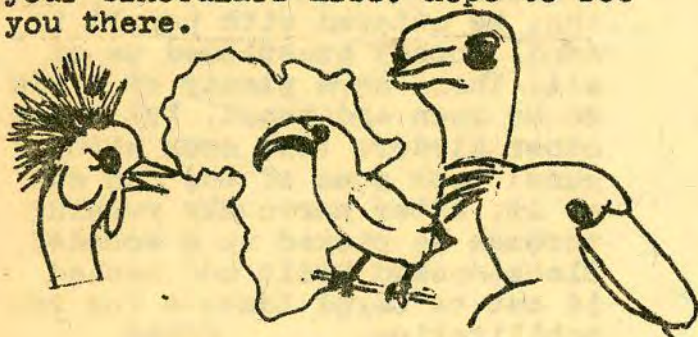
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GENERAL MEETING

MON., SEPT. 17, 1984, 7:30 PM, Garden Center, 3105 Grant St. in Memorial Park. The beauty of Africa will come alive when Dr. Albert Canaris, noted UTEP professor and researcher, gives his slide presentation of colorful African birds. He will also share with us the intriguing world of those tiny parasites that infest our feathered friends. Come see what your binoculars miss. Hope to see you there.



FIELD TRIP CALENDAR

APACHE SPRINGS

SUN., SEPT. 9. Meet at 7:30 AM in the parking lot of the Wilderness Park Museum on Transmountain Rd. This will be the fall to witness the desert of the Franklin Mts. and slopes in their fullest growth. Summer rains should have the spring running and the vegetation thick. Possibilities are good to see summer visitors and fall migrants mixed with our resident birds.

Leader: Joe Guinn (566-8438).

RIO BOSQUE/LOWER VALLEY

SAT., SEPT. 22. Before driving to the park, we will meet in the

parking lot at Feather Lake where we can bird and make car arrangements. Be ready to leave for Rio Bosque at 7:30 AM. Those who wish to continue down the river valley for more birds should bring a lunch.
Leader: Tom Baker (562-9461).

SINGH POND/UPPER VALLEY

SUN., OCT. 6. Meet at I-10 and Transmountain Rd. at 7:30 AM. We may see migrating waterfowl and other passing birds.
Leader: Joyce Davis (581-9470 H, 544-6772 W).

WEDNESDAY MORNINGS IN MEMORIAL PARK - These short field trips into Memorial are on the last 2 Wednesdays of Sept. (19 & 26) and the first 2 of Oct. (3 & 10). Meet at 7:15 AM near the Garden Club Bldg. in the southwest corner of the park on Grant St. We will be watching for birds that are migrating through - just to brighten your morning.
Leader: Tom Baker

BIG BEND NAT'L PARK

FRI., SAT. & SUN. APRIL 19-21, 1985. If you waited until now, you're too late! The Chisos Mt. Lodge has no vacancies, but we are going camping anyway.
Details later.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MON., SEPT. 10) 7:30 PM. The Board will meet at the home of Jane Fowler, 8212 Parkland Dr. (772-0296). All members are welcome.

CLEAN AIR COALITION

The Clean Air Coalition has held several informational meetings and has added a number of organizations to the Coalition. The Coalition now consists of the following organizations: League of Women Voters, El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society, Sierra Club (El Paso Chapter), Nurses Association, Lung Association, Bicycle Club, Bikeways Advisory Council and Asthmatic/Allergy Foundation.

The Coalition has collected information on inspection and maintenance programs in other cities and states. Another resource is the report of the Mayor's Task Force on Air Pollution. The Coalition wants to have some input at the hearing which the Texas Air Control Board will hold on ways to control air pollution. /Joyce D.

FIELD TRIP FOLLOW-UPS

A good group met June 2 for the trip to Rio Bosque. Everyone was delighted to hear and see the Painted Bunting. Among the added attractions was the sighting of a giant bullfrog and a den of coyotes or dogs. At the end of the trip we were met by a large scout troop from Ysleta. The leaders offered to work with us in preparing the Rio Bosque for park use. ****

Our June overnight trip to Ruidoso was the first of the 3 summer trips, 3 of the nicest outings I've been on. Camping with Audubon people is a real pleasure, the best of company. 14 members (and my 4 girls) saw 49 species by my count. We started at the lake at the Inn of the Mountain Gods with a Grace's Warbler and Pygmy Nuthatches. Then at Alto Lake one of Bob Johnson's many wishes came true; the sighting of a three-toed Woodpecker hammering

away right near our parked cars. Then up we climbed to the ski area where the new bird for me was a Townsend's Solitaire. Sarah Jane showed us a rare sight, an orchid (Lady Slipper) in bloom under the shadows of a giant fir tree. Sunday we birded from Ruidoso to Cloudcroft with Gloria Basden. Some continued to the area down towards Sun Spot where the Forest Service had sprayed to control the bud worm infestation of the Spruce and Fir forests, then down Karr Canyon to High Rolls and home. My family and I really enjoyed our weekend with the nicest of people.

(Ed. note - I'm sure the other 12 people would reiterate the same sentiments and add a big thanks to their hosts for the night, the Bakers!) *****

Peggy called ahead to notify the authorities at the Northeast Oxidation Ponds that we were coming. We entered with permit in hand. Nobody questioned us at all. There were plenty of birds to be seen and heard, but those other birders (the ones with guns) took some of the fun out of it. After nervously rushing through we picked up a wounded Black-necked Stilt and hauled it out to Carol Beach's for rehabilitation. *****

On the Gila Natl. Forest, Glenwood and Luna, NM trip 14 people camped in Harve Gulch near Glenwood, NM. 92 species of birds were seen by the group, collectively, that is. The Lewis Woodpeckers were very accomodating in Luna. Other highlights were: Cardinal, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Dipper, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Hairy Woodpecker and Summer Tanagers. A possible Black Hawk was seen by Sarah Jane and Joyce. A very interesting sight occurred in camp Sun. AM when we observed a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher feeding a "little" bird, twice the size of the adult. Of course,

the "baby" was a cowbird! *****

A Blue Grosbeak and a Yellow-breasted Chat serenaded the 11 people who visited Randel's Pool Aug. 4. A Cardinal and a Pyrrhuloxia are included in the 31 species counted. a stop at the El Paso Country Club provided a good view of a Mississippi Kite. *****

The Grand Tour of Central New Mexico, staged Aug 18-19, brought out 11 travelers who, by visiting habitats ranging from river valley to spruce-fir forest, found approximately 100 bird species and suffered 2 flat tires. First stop was Bosque del Apache Natl. Wildlife Refuge, where a pair of Least Bitterns made everyone forget the summer heat. Next came Water Canyon in the Magdalena Mts., where we found a pleasant campsite, Pinyon Jays and, higher up, Clark's Nutcrackers and Red-faced Warblers. From the mountains, a quick visit to the Plains of San Agustin yielded a Ferruginous Hawk and Sage Thrashers. Finally, we headed south, on dirt roads west of the Magdalena and San Mateo Mts., and were rewarded with fresh, cooling rainshowers; beautiful green, rolling hillsides with scattered pinyon and juniper; rainbows; and a group of 4-6 Lewis' Woodpeckers. A full weekend. *****

* * * * *
* * * * *
* ...Urosaurus ornatus, Vermilion *
* Flycatchers, Whooping Cranes, *
* Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus...? *
* * * * *

The deadline for the October Roadrunner is September 22.

September 1984

SLIDE LIBRARY GROWS

The El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society announces with pleasure that its Chapter Slide Library has acquired a number of limited-edition slides from the prestigious Raymond E. Waite Collection of Avian Color Transparencies. We express our gratitude to the talented Mr. Waite for these generous contributions.

The Chapter thus moves several steps closer to its goal of presentation-quality slides for all El Paso-area birds. Numerous gaps remain in the collection, however -- some rather glaring. Photographers wishing to follow Mr. Waite's fine example have no shortage of opportunities. This month's target species: the elusive Verdin. *****

We wish to extend a hearty welcome to the following new members of National Audubon and our local chapter: F.H. Arevalo, Paul Beebe, Dick Bounds, Robert Davis, Mrs. V. Quijada Finch, Nelson Martin, Susan McAlpine, Jesse Young, Helen Lindsay, Mrs. G. Bradford, Bill Doebele, Bennett St. John, Raymond S. Woods, and also N. Tallman who is a transfer into our chapter. *****

THE ROADRUNNER is sent to all members of the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society. Nonmembers can subscribe for \$4 per year. Make check payable to "El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society" and mail to: RR Editor, P.O. Box 9655, El Paso, TX 79986. Please send any changes or corrections in name, address or telephone # to this same address.



OBSERVATIONS - May 21 to August 22

Most reports for this period were consistent with the expected. However, it was not without its surprises and several very interesting items appear along with 6 species of accidental or casual status.

LOONS - FALCONS

Three Double-crested Cormorants (1 ad., 2 imm.) were at Madden Lake 6/3 (BJ,RW), 2 immature there 7/6 (BJ,RW,LB,KB), and 7 noted at the Northeast Oxidation Ponds (NEOP, formerly FBSP) 7/8 (PR,mob). Great Blue Herons were reported on 3 occasions during the period: 6 at Madden Lake 6/3 (BJ,RW), 1 at Randel's Pool 7/21 (JoD), and 1 at NEOP 8/12 (BJ,RW). A Great Egret at Madden Lake 6/3 (BJ,RW) was the only 1 reported. An adult LITTLE BLUE HERON was observed at NEOP on 5/30 (BJ,RW), and TRICOLORED HERONS - 1 at Madden Lake 6/3 (BJ,RW) and an immature at the Crossroads Pond in the upper valley 7/22 (JoD). Three Cattle Egrets were seen near the 4 mile marker on the Alamogordo Hwy. 5/27 (AB,HB), 1 at Madden Lake 6/3 (BJ,RW), 20+ there 7/6 (BJ,RW,LB,KB), and 26 at Durling's Farm 7/21 (JoD). On 6/9, it was noted that White-faced Ibis were fewer in numbers than usual at the NEOP (BJ,RW).

Four N. Pintails were at Madden Lake and another 4 at Fort Hancock Res. 6/3 (BJ,RW), and on 7/6, a male and 2 females, plus a flock of 10 flying over, were at Madden Lake (BJ,RW,LB,KB). Blue-winged Teal were seen at Madden Lake and Fort Hancock Res. 5/27 (JoD) and again at FHR on 6/3 (BJ,RW). Mississippi Kites were reported to have returned to the El Paso Country Club (EPCC) area the latter part of May (fide JoD). A Harris' Hawk was seen near McNary 6/3 (BJ,RW) and again 7/6 (BJ,RW,LB,KB). Golden Eagles were reported on 4 occasions: 1 near the Tornillo exit of I-10 on 6/3 (BJ,RW), 1 at NEOP 6/9 (BJ,RW), 2 at the Sunland Park exit on 6/21 (JF,NP), and 1 flying low off I-10 near Executive Center 8/13 (BJ). A Prairie Falcon was seen at the nest feeding young in the Hueco Tanks area 5/26 (JoD).

QUAIL - WOODPECKERS

Six Greater Yellowlegs were at Fort Hancock and 20 Yellowlegs sp. at Tornillo

7/6 (BJ,RW,LB,KB), while 2 Lesser Yellowlegs were observed at Fort Hancock 6/3 (BJ,RW). A Spotted Sandpiper was at Rio Bosque Park 6/10 (BJ). Three Semipalmated Sandpipers were observed at NEOP 5/30 and 1 at FHR 6/3 (BJ,RW). Approximately 16 (equal numbers of each) Western and Least Sandpipers were at FHR 7/6 (BJ,RW,LB,KB), and a Stilt Sandpiper was at NEOP 5/30 (BJ,RW). Six Wilson's Phalaropes were noted in a canal at Rio Bosque Park 6/10 (BJ) and large numbers at NEOP 8/12 (BJ,RW). Single Ring-billed Gulls were at Madden Lake 6/3 and at NEOP 6/9 (BJ,RW). A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was seen at EPCC 7/1 and heard there 7/21 and 7/22 (JoD). A Broad-tailed Hummingbird frequented a Coronado feeder from 5/22 to 5/29 (JoD), and a fall migrant was in central El Paso 8/8 (JN). On 8/11, a pair was reported as having been present a short while in Mt. Park (JB). Rufous Hummingbirds were appearing in the area the week of 7/20 (mob). Belted Kingfishers, irregularly present during the summer, were seen singly in the lower valley 6/3 (BJ,RW), near FHR 7/6 (BJ,RW,LB,KB), and at the Crossroads Pond 7/22 (JoD).

FLYCATCHERS - VIREOS

A GREATER PEEWEE (Coues' Flycatcher) was carefully studied at Horizon City 5/21 (AG,MG). A pair of Black Phoebes was at Madden Lake 6/3 (BJ,RW), 1 was seen along the river levee in the lower valley 7/6 (BJ,RW,LB,KB), and 1 at Randel's Pool 8/18 (DW, fide JoD). On 5/23, a SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER appeared in a lower valley yard in the vicinity of Black's Nursery, returned on 5/24 and was carefully studied both days (GA,RA). Unusual was a Tree Swallow seen at Madden Lake 7/6 (BJ,RW,LB,KB). A rather late House Wren was in an e. El Paso yard 5/22 (BR). Am. Robins may have nested in the Cielo Vista area. They were seen and heard singing on several occasions and an immature was observed there 7/3 (JF). They were also observed with young in the EPCC area 7/7 (JoD).

WARBLERS - WEAVER FINCHES

A Yellow Warbler was at Randel's Pool 8/18 (DW, fide JoD) and a fall Wilson's Warbler seen there the same day (JoD). A N. Cardinal seen on the upper valley field trip 8/4 was the only 1 reported (JF, et al.). Two Black-headed Grosbeaks were at Rio Bosque Park 6/10 (BJ) and a male in a central El Paso yard 8/4 (JN). Two female Painted Buntings were seen in the Tornillo area 6/3 (BJ, RW), several Painted Buntings at Rio Bosque Park 6/10 (BJ), and a male was seen and 2 heard singing in the Madden Lake area 7/6 (BJ, RW, LB, KB). A flock of Lark Buntings was at Canutillo and N. Mesa off I-10 8/9 (BJ). A few Yellow-headed Blackbirds were seen in the lower valley 7/6 (BJ, RW, LB, KB). At least 3 Bronzed Cowbirds were at Mt. Park all summer (JB). On 7/6, a first year male ORCHARD ORIOLE was observed in the Madden Lake area; and on 8/11, at least 5 Hooded Orioles (2 males, 3 females) were reported as having been in Mt. Park since June (JB).

CONTRIBUTORS: Geneva & Robert Alexander, Lois & Ken Beno, Flora Bittick, Anne & Hampton Bowman, Janet Brockmoller, Joyce Davis, SarahJane Dodds, Jane Fowler, Al & Madeline Gavit, Ed & Elza Gilboe, Bob Johnson, Jo Nagel, Norma Peticolas, Peggy Riede, Marie Smith, John Sproul, Ray Waite, Dave Weinstein.

/Bettie Roberts, Observations Editor/
591-0421

Ed. note: A big THANK YOU to Bettie for keeping tabs on birds and birders during the summer. She is a super lady doing a super job.

NEW DIRECTORY

Our chapter directory is in the process of being updated. If your address differs from the one which appears on the address label on this newsletter, please call (772-0296) or drop a card to Jane Fowler, 8212 Parkland, EP 79925, as soon as possible. Also, if your telephone number has changed since the EP telephone directory Feb '84-'85 was issued, please let her know. We would like the new directory to be as accurate as possible. It will be available at our general meetings in the near future and will only contain local addresses

and phone numbers. If you can't attend meetings, contact JF to obtain a copy.

"NONGAME" STAMP WILL FEATURE WHOOPIING CRANES

Two stately Whooping Cranes standing in a shallow marsh will be the subjects of the 1st Texas "nongame" stamp, decal and art print. That was the decision of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission on July 25, when it accepted the bid submitted by Collectors Covey of Dallas for design, production and marketing of the "nongame" artwork.

Collectors Covey submitted the only bid, but it was a good one. Montana wildlife artist Ken Carlson did the artwork, which, says Becky Lasley of Travis Audubon, "is so realistic that I had to look twice to tell it wasn't a photograph." Carlson, who is in the process of moving to Kerrville, Texas, is already well known to Texas conservationists as the artist who did the pintails on the 1982 Texas duck stamp.

In addition to the print, Collectors Covey also plans to sell a medallion and posters based on the artwork. It guarantees a minimum royalty payment of \$250,000 from its sales. The figure could well go higher, depending on popularity of the artwork.

These revenues, plus those from sales of the stamps and decals, all go, of course, to the Special Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Fund established by the state legislature in 1983. It appears that "nongame"-wildlife and endangered-species programs in Texas are about to get a very significant boost.

The stamps and decals go on sale in November. Orders for the prints will be accepted from November until Jan. 31, 1985, with deliveries some time next spring. More details next month.

/John Sproul/

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