

The



ROADRUNNER

Newsletter of the El Paso/Trans Pecos Audubon Society

Volume 23 (4)

September, 1993

Audubon Ecology Camp Recipient

General Meeting - Monday, September 20, 7:30 PM - Welcome back to another season with EP/TPAS!

Our program this month will be presented by Mr. Bob Calamusso. Mr. Calamusso was this year's recipient of the El Paso/Trans Pecos Audubon Society's Audubon Ecology Camp Scholarship. As this year's recipient, he attended the Audubon Camp of the West at Whiskey Mountain Conservation Camp in Wyoming.

Bob is presently a teacher in Life/Earth Sciences at Lincoln Junior High School, and the founder and sponsor of the Lincoln Junior High Ecology Club. He will be presenting to us his perspective on the program and operation at Whiskey Mountain, along with slides taken during the week he attended.

In addition, Jane Fowler will be passing out pins to the Birdathon participants. It was another banner year for our chapter in Birdathon, so attend the September meeting and catch all the details. By the way, don't forget your non-disposable coffee cup for refreshments.

// Craig Braginton //

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Birding...is not just a hobby to fill in the empty hours. It is a way of life, in tune with the total natural scene. Call it an addiction if you like; but it is a benign addiction from which great blessings flow.

- Lola Oberman, provided to
THE ROADRUNNER by Jane Fowler

Audubon Activist

Shipment of Rare Birds Stirs International Protest

An estimated 5,000 rare tropical birds, as well as numbers of reptiles and monkeys, were shipped in January from Georgetown, Guyana, in South America to Amsterdam, Netherlands, touching off a firestorm of international protest. Most of the birds - including four species of macaws, five of parrots, and four of toucans - are found in neighboring Venezuela and are believed to have been caught in the wild there, in violation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

The shipment of wildlife arrived at Schipol Airport, Amsterdam, on January 30, where it was documented by investigators from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, a British conservation group. The carrier was Southern Air Transport, a U.S. cargo company. Several birds died in transit, the investigators reported, and the rest were distributed by vans to other European countries.

Most of the species involved are listed on CITES Appendix II, which means they are of "high conservation concern" and may be traded only if it can be shown the trade is not harmful to their populations. But countries like Guyana and Venezuela lack the means of enforcing the treaty. Although Venezuela prohibits the export of wildlife, according to Mary Lou Goodwin, vice-president of the Venezuela Audubon Society, conservationists suspect that as many as 75,000 birds a year are trafficked from the forests of the Orinoco Delta of Venezuela to Guyana.

Although most U.S. commercial airlines no longer accept shipments of wild-caught birds, many charter and non-U.S. commercial airlines still do. Unregulated and illegal trade in exotic species of birds continues to contribute to the decline of many species and destruction of their habitats.

Action

Write to James Bastion, Chairman, Southern Air Transport, P.O. Box 52-4093, Miami International Airport, Miami, FL 33152. Ask his company to refuse any shipment of birds unless it can prove they are not wild-caught or species of conservation concern.

Contact

Andy Romero in Audubon's Washington, DC office, or Mary Lou Goodwin, SCAV, Apdo. 80450, Caracas 1080-A, Venezuela.

Join the Audubon Activist Network

More than 100,000 members have joined and are making a difference for wildlife, wetlands, forests, endangered species, and more. Stand up and be counted! To join, you must be an Audubon member and make a pledge to write at least two letters and make at least two phone calls a year on behalf of environmental issues.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Send To: Audubon Activist, Box AA, 700 Broadway, New York, NY 10003.

Upper Valley and
Country Club
Area

Saturday,
September 11 - The
many swimming
birds in the Crossroads Ponding area
will greet the birders as they meet in
this location for a leisurely morning of
birding. The Crossroads Pond is
located at the Southwest corner of
Mesa and Doniphan. Meet at 7:30 AM
for a less than four hour trip. We
should see many water and desert birds
plus a "mystery" hawk. For more
information, call Nancy Wilson at
833-3907.

Manzano Mountains and
Hawk Watch

Saturday and Sunday, September 25 and
26 - This is an overnight expedition to
watch migratory raptors traveling from
North to South America for the winter.
This trip will give the birder an
opportunity to see up to 200 individual
hawks each day. It's just a matter of
sitting still while the hawks fly by.
Call Nancy Wilson at 833-3907 for
information about camping, itinerary,
etc. We'll meet at 7:30 AM at I-10 and
Transmountain Rd. on Saturday. Or
just look for Bob Johnson in the
mountains.

Western Franklin Mountains

Saturday, October 2 - This is where the
desert meets the mountains, so there
will be the opportunity to see a wide
variety of birds from both ecosystems.
Meet at the entrance to Tom Mays Park
on Transmountain Rd. at 7:30 AM. Wear
comfortable hiking shoes and you may
want to bring refreshments as this trip
will last 3 to 4 hours. Once again, call
Nancy Wilson for the details.

ON THE TRAIL

Looking Ahead

Mark your
calendars now for
these top birding
and great fun
weekends. Details

in the October/November Roadrunner.

Sunday, October 17 - Picnic at Feather
Lake
Saturday, October 23 - Rattlesnake
Springs

New Field Trips Chairperson

Over the summer, Hugh Jameson
resigned his position as Field Trips
Chair for our chapter. We'll miss his
help with the newsletter as well as his
always insightful comments at the board
meetings.

Nancy Wilson has volunteered to take
over the position of Field Trips Chair.
Nancy has served the chapter in a
variety of positions over the years and
we are looking forward to working with
her in this new assignment.





The EP/TPAS Wildlife Sanctuary is located at 9500 N. Loop Dr., El Paso.

Haven't seen Feather Lake since last spring? You're in for a few surprises. Surprise #1 is on the east side of the basin where, following the low water of spring, dense cattails and bulrush have replaced most of the open water.

Surprise #2 is out front, where quiet little North Loop Dr. is now a four-lane divided highway that backs right up to the sanctuary fence. There are even stoplights at the sanctuary entrance (for traffic moving on and off Bordeaux St., not for Feather Lake).

In 1992-93, 755 visitors (250 from November's open house) enjoyed Feather Lake during our October-to-April public-use season. On October 2, we open again. As always, we need volunteers to staff the sanctuary during visiting hours, one of the nicest jobs our organization has to offer. To take advantage of this opportunity, call John Sproul (545-5157).

Of course, with Opening Day fast approaching, some preparations are needed. Our next workday is set for Saturday, September 18. Gates open at 8:00 AM. Please join us.

// John Sproul //

El Paso Environmental Center

The El Paso Environmental Center (800 S. Piedras) was a beneficiary of this

year's Audubon Birdathon, and your support was greatly appreciated. Thus far, Birdathon has paid bills for printing Center stationery, installing a new phone system and replacing two large double-pane windows that were cracked several years ago but never repaired due to lack of funds. Thanks, Birdathon sponsors!

Among the volunteers who have helped at the Center in recent months: Julie Cross, Jean Hagesfeld, Josefina Hernandez, Jo Nagel and Charlie Robinson. Thanks to all! Also, special thanks go to Jose Ramirez, who worked at the Center through a Summer Youth Employment Training Program administered by the El Paso Independent School District and did an outstanding job during his stay.

The Center's recycling program remains popular, but its success presents a problem. Recycling creates most of the workload at the Center and, as the volume of recyclables grows, so does the need for volunteers. Without more help, we will soon have to cut back on recycling operations. Can you contribute a few hours each week or each month to keep the recycling program at full strength? Please contact the Center (532-9645) or John Sproul (545-5157).

// John Sproul //

Fourth Chihuahuan Desert Symposium

The University of Texas at El Paso will be the site for the Fourth Symposium on Resources of the Chihuahuan Desert. The symposium is sponsored by the Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute, UTEP, Sul Ross State University and the Big Bend Natural History Association, and will be held September 30 through October 2. The theme will be "Conservation and Sustainable



OBSERVATIONS



May 16, 1993 - August 15, 1993
 Uncommon, RARE and CASUAL sightings.

CORMORANTS TO SCAUPS

NEOTROPICAL CORMORANT: 7/20, 7/24
 1st sanctuary record (JS) FLk
 GREAT EGRET: All Period (JS) FLk
 LITTLE BLUE HERON: 7/10-27,
 2nd sanctuary record (JS) FLk
 YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON: (JK) RBq
 LESSER FLAMINGO: 7/16, (LJ) FBP
 LESSER SCAUP: 6/16, (RH) FBP

KITES TO FALCONS

Mississippi Kite: 7/11, (NW) DMr
 7/20, (JK) DMr
 BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE: 7/17, (SH) Ant
 Northern Harrier: 8/15, (BJ) FBP
 HARRIS HAWK: All period (AG) Hor
 Golden Eagle: (1-Adult, 2-Immature)
 8/12,13, (BJ) FMT
 PEREGRIN FALCON: 8/14, (DE) FHC
 Prairie Falcon: 8/15, (BJ) FBP

PLOVERS TO PARAKEETS

SEMI-PALMATED PLOVER: 8/15, (JP) FBP
 WILLET: 7/16, (BZ) FBP
 Bairds Sandpiper: 8/15, (JP) FBP
 LEAST TERN: 8/14, (DE) FHC
 Parakeets: 6/15, (MB-yd) Cor

SUMMER FIELD TRIPS

The Memorial Day weekend in the Chiricahua Mts. was enjoyed by 19 birders. All got to see the Elegant Trogon and other unusual species. The Sat. evening campfire BBQ turned out to be the chapters social event of the season.

The weekend of Jul 24/25 found 7 Auduboners at South Fork campground above Bonito Lake in the Lincoln Nat. Forest. No rain to dampen the activities and an American Dipper was seen by all.

HUMMINGBIRDS TO TOWHEES

Calliope Hummingbird: 7/20, (DE-yd)ThH
 7/20, (MG-yd)Hor
 7/20, (TZ-yd)Cor
 8/1, (JK-yd) Cor
 BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD: 7/8, (DE-yd)ThH
 7/20, (TZ-yd)Cor
 BELTED KINGFISHER: 8/7, (JF) FLk
 CASSIN'S KINGBIRD: 6/19, (BJ) HTk
 Western Tanager: 7/30, (DE-yd) ThH
 BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK: 7/27, (DE-yd)ThH
 GREEN-TAILED TOWHEE: 6/2, (JF-yd) Ewd

(OBSERVERS: M.Bender, D.Emkalns, J. Fowler, A.Gavit, M.Gavit, R.Hermosillo, S.Homan, B.Johnson, L.Jordan, J.Kiseda, J.Paton, J.Sproul, N.Wilson, T.Zegarra, B.Zimmer. -yd=at the feeder.)

Ant-Anthony; Cor-Coronado; DMr-Doni-phan Marsh; Ewd-Eastwood; FBP-Fort Bliss Ponds; FHC-Fort Hancock; FLk-Feather Lake; FMT-Franklin Mountains; Hor-Horizon City; HTk-Hueco Tanks; RBq-Rio Bosque; ThH-Three Hills.

The reporting of Uncommon, RARE or CASUAL birds will be determined using the El Paso Audubons checklist "Birds of El Paso County, Texas and Adjacent Areas" 7th Edition, October 1987 and "Birds of Hueco Tanks State Historical Park" 10/90.

If you do not have a copy of the El Paso checklist, which is on sale at each general meeting and at Feather Lake for \$0.50, contact Bob Johnson or any chapter officer. The Hueco Tanks checklist is available at the entrance building to the park.

REPORT YOUR SIGHTINGS TO BOB JOHNSON 757-1876 (recorder)

Calendar

September

Sat., 11 - Field trip to the Upper Valley, see page 3.
Mon., 13 - Board Meeting at the El Paso Environmental Center, 800 S. Piedras, 7:30 PM.
Sat., 18 - Feather Lake workday.
Mon., 20 - General Meeting, see page 1.
Sat., 25 - Field trip to the Manzano Mountains, see page 3.

October

Sat., 2 - Field trip to West Franklins, see page 3.
Sat., 2 - Feather Lake open, 8:00 to Noon.
Sun., 3 - Feather Lake open, 2:00 PM to dusk.
Sun., 10 - Feather Lake open, 2:00 PM to dusk.
Mon., 11 - Board meeting, location to be announced.
Sat., 16 - Feather Lake open, 8:00 to noon.
Sun., 17 - Feather Lake open, 2:00 PM to dusk.
Mon., 18 - General Meeting.
Sat., 23 - Field trip to Rattlesnake Springs, see page 3.
Sun., 24 - Feather Lake open, 2:00 PM to dusk.
Sun., 34 - Feather Lake open, 2:00 PM to dusk.

El Paso/Trans Pecos Audubon Society
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