

The



Roadrunner

Volume 20 (5)

THE ROADRUNNER

Oct., - Nov., 1990

The El Paso/Trans Pecos Audubon Society meets on the third Monday of each month, September through May. The general meetings are held at the Garden Center, Memorial Park, 3105 Grant, El Paso, Texas. The public is cordially invited.

GENERAL MEETING - Monday, October 22, 7:30 PM. So, what do you think of bats? It's very likely that whatever you think, your feelings are based on everything but facts. Which isn't surprising since bats may be the most mis-understood animal on earth. Their looks and habits lend an air of mystery to bats - a point which Hollywood has not ignored. And that is where most of us learn about bats. Now is your chance to learn the truth about these extraordinary creatures. Our presentation on bats will be made by Donna Howell, PhD., an extraordinary person in her own right. Her background includes teaching at Princeton, Harvard and Perdue; she has done field work in South and Central America, Africa, England and the West Indies. The BBC produced a documentary on her research, and Japanese television featured Dr. Howell in a documentary about outstanding women in science. This is a meeting not to be missed because of both the subject and the speaker.



GENERAL MEETING - Monday, November 19, 7:30 PM. Our presentation at the November meeting will cover a subject of increasing importance in a time of declining bird populations. Our speaker will be Special Agent Bustamante of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Agent Bustamante comes to us with 13 years experience with the USFWS and a strong background in law enforcement and education. His subject will be "An Overview of Migratory Bird Law Enforcement in the El Paso Area". Now that's something that should be close to our hearts, especially since so many species make their way through El Paso on migration. This is a side of birding that is very important, but one that most of us neglect. Come to the November meeting to hear Special Agent Bustamante.

CHIHUAHUAN DESERT WILDLIFE RESCUE

The CDWR has been enormously successful in supporting the wildlife rehabilitators in the El Paso area. The rehabilitators volunteer their time, effort and much of the equipment and supplies used for rescuing injured or diseased birds and mammals. These folks have methods, dedication and a success rate that is nothing short of incredible. (Remember Jim Koschman's presentation to us last season?)

To continue that work, some things are needed: old towels, heating pads, postage stamps, Purina Hi-Pro dog food, an old scale (for weighing mammals), used aquariums, and old carpeting (for bird perches).

Talk about recycling!

BUT DO WE HAVE TO TEACH THE
LITTLE GUYS HOW TO FLY?

The Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue is looking for foster parents. For birds, that is.

Very young birds require attention and frequent feedings. If they fall out of their nest, or are otherwise separated from their parents, they have little hope for survival. If found in time, the CDWR can improve their chances. But the rehabilitators need some help in that area. Hence, foster parents. The people at CDWR will train you in the care and feeding of these little guys to prepare you for the nesting season this coming spring.

This is an activity that is not that difficult, but will require an investment of some of your time. And it has the potential for being immensely rewarding. For more details contact Ann Hussmann at 584-4081.

HUMMINGBIRD SHOW

Robert and Esther Tyrrell, experts on hummingbirds who have traveled over 80,000 miles in their quest to find the rarest and most beautiful varieties, will present a colorful and exciting slide show at the El Paso Zoo on Sunday, November 11 at 2:00 p.m. For information call the Zoo's education office at (915) 532-8156.

Robert Tyrrell is the world's foremost photographer of hummingbirds and the show will include extremely rare, high-speed pictures of the bird considered to be the hardest in the world to photograph. Tyrrell's hummingbird pictures have appeared in NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC, NATURAL HISTORY MAGAZINE, NATIONAL WILDLIFE, and many textbooks and encyclopedias.

The husband and wife team recently made ornithological history by successfully locating, studying and photographing the Cuban Bee Hummingbird, the world's smallest bird. Their exciting story was featured in the June, 1990 issue of NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC.

Their appearance in El Paso is part of their 18-city nation-wide tour that will include stops in New York City, Detroit, Philadelphia and Houston.

The Tyrrells will also be autographing copies of their book HUMMINGBIRDS: THEIR LIFE AND BEHAVIOR, now in it's eleventh printing, which is considered to be the definitive book on hummingbirds.

They are members of the American Ornithologists' Union and are represented internationally by Oxford Scientific Films, Oxford, England, the most prestigious group of high-speed photographers and scientific writers in the world.

Nature is a mutable cloud, which is always and never the same.

-- Ralph Waldo Emerson

ON THE TRAIL

FALL FOLIAGE IN MCKITTRICK CANYON

McKittrick Canyon is part of the Guadalupe Mts. Nat. Park and one of the best spots in the Southwest to see very colorful trees. There are many maples, oaks and others that give a greater variety of color than just aspens. A trip to Rattlesnake Springs, which is often good for a rare sighting, is included in the itinerary. This enjoyable weekend will take place on 20 & 21 October. Camping will be in Pine Springs campground (full facilities), motels are available in White City NM. Distances: White City; to Rattlesnake Springs 8 mi; to McKittrick 28 mi; to Pine Springs 36 mi. Meet at Avila's Restaurant 10600 Montana at 7:30 AM Sat. the 20th of Oct. Call Larry Jordan (833-5969) for details

FORT BLISS PONDS

There should be lots of ducks in by early Oct., in addition shorebirds including Sandpipers, Dowitchers, Yellowlegs and Phalaropes, will still be present. Also the possibility of Gulls, Grebes, Hawks and many sparrows. The Ponds are one of the best all-around birding areas in El Paso, especially during migration. Meet Joyce Davis (W544-5772/H581-9470) at Furniture Country, 4801 Fred Wilson Rd. at 7:30 AM on Sat. Oct 6. No lunch needed.

AGUIRRE SPRINGS

This BLM/New Mexico State Park is located on the upper east slopes of the Organ Mts. above White Sands Missile Range. Hairy & Acorn Woodpeckers are probable, as well as many other good birds. A uphill hike (med. steep trail) of about 2 miles is part of the tour. Bring lunch and water. Art Arteaga (592-8772) will meet you at I 10 & Tr. Mt. Rd. at 7:30 AM on Sun. Oct 28th.

BACK TO HUECO TANKS

The winter residents should be in, these include Sage Thrasher, White-crowned and Brewers Sparrows. We will also get a good look at the year round population some of which are Canyon & Rock Wren, Crissal Thrasher, Canyon Towhee. Peggy Riede (833-4881) will lead you from Avila's, 10600 Montana at 7:30 AM on Sat. Nov. 3. At 10:30 AM Bob Johnson invites all of you to pick up trash on US 62/180. If you wish to continue birding after trash, bring a lunch.

DOWN THE VALLEY

Fort Hancock Reservoir is usually good for some interesting Gulls and lots of Ducks, maybe Egrets, Cormorants and Grebes. Harris Hawk is also a possibility. A stop at the famous Tornillo Rest Stop is scheduled. Pat Brasfield (584-8739) will be on hand to show you the way. Meet at Feather Lake, 8 AM, Sun. Nov. 11. Bring a lunch as we will not return until around 2 PM.

BOSQUE DEL APACHE

One of the most popular National Wildlife Refuges in the Southwest. General sightings should include 8-10 species of Ducks, Canada Geese, Grebes and Cormorants. The highlight of the refuge is the WHOOPING CRANE, but along with him you will see thousands of Sandhill Cranes, tens of thousands of Snow Geese and very possibly Bald Eagles and Pheasants. Animal wildlife on the refuge includes Mule Deer, Coyote, and Porcupine. Sunday lunch will be at Percha Dam State Park, which is another great place for additional bird sightings. This great trip will take place on Sat/Sun Dec 1st & 2nd. Contact Anne Hussman (584-4081) for travel and meeting details.

Most Birders on this trip will stay at the Motel 6 in Socorro NM (505-835-4300), other motels are available, also BIRDERS RV PARK (833-1366) is located just outside the refuge. For those who want to rough it, a canyon to the west on BLM land is used,

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

Hueco Tanks	Dec. 15
El Paso	Dec. 29

For additional information on any of the above trips or anything to do with Field Trips call Larry Jordan (833-5969).

TEXAS NONGAME STAMP/DECAL

The 1990 Texas Nongame Stamp, featuring a trio of Mearn's Quail, is now available. This is the 6th year of the nongame stamp program and the first in which the stamp subject is a West Texas specialty. These stamps are \$5 each and are available at our general meetings. (At press time, the 1990 nongame decals are not available yet, but we hope to have them in time for our October meeting.)

Why buy a Texas Nongame Stamp? It's a way of contributing to the state's Special Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Fund. The Special Fund provides needed support for the Nongame Resources and Endangered Species programs of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. It helps support research and management projects involving nongame and endangered species, and last year it was used to help acquire a 207-acre tract on the Gulf Coast that is a crucial resting area for spring-migrant songbirds.

Nongame and endangered species programs in Texas are severely underfunded. Conservationists are working hard to find new ways to fund these programs but so far have had only limited success. What can you do to help? Buy a nongame stamp or decal. Your purchase not only adds to the Special Fund but also shows there is public support for taking better care of our nongame resources and endangered species.

AWARDS NOMINEES WANTED

Before you know it, it will be time for our Annual Meeting. And that, of course, means presentation of our annual Meritorious Service and Conservation awards.

The Meritorious Service Award recognizes chapter members who, through devotion of time, effort and expertise, have made outstanding contributions to El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon and its

programs. In 1990, this award went to Jeannette Cole and Bob Johnson.

The Conservation Award recognizes government officials, civic organizations, businesses or individuals outside the chapter for specific achievements that have furthered the Audubon Cause in Trans-Pecos Texas. The 1990 recipient was Dr. Jim Koschmann for his work furthering wildlife rehabilitation in the El Paso area.

Nominations are now open for both awards for 1991. Do you know of a deserving candidate? Please submit nominations to John Sproul, 601 W. Yandell #25, El Paso, TX 79902, phone 545-5157.

AUCTION ACTION

One of the nicest things about this year's Birdathon was the long list of great prizes El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon won for its efforts. As a fundraiser, we've decided to auction off two of those prizes at our Oct 22 general meeting. Join us and place a sealed bid on:

- a Swift 7.5 x 42 Osprey armored binocular (minimum bid \$130), or
- a Woolrich parka (tan; men's medium; ripstop cotton shell; nylon lining) (minimum bid \$80).

We will accept bids anytime between now and Oct 22. If you wish to mail in your bid, send it to: Audubon Auction, P.O. Box 9655, El Paso, TX 79986.

ENDANGERED PLANTS VIDEO

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) recently produced a video entitled "Endangered Plants: Our Choice," highlighting many of the state's rare native species. Copies can be purchased for \$19.95 from: TPWD, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744, Attn. Obi Martinez.

RUMMAGE REMARKS

Sunday, Nov 18 will be the day for our annual rummage sale. We are still eagerly accepting unwanted saleable items in preparation for this always popular event. Due to scheduling conflicts, we can't rent the Civic Center or the Cohen Sports Center as originally planned. Instead, we will hawk our wares at the fashionable weekly flea market at the old Woolco parking lot on Dyer St. If you have rummage you can donate, please contact Bob Johnson (751-0125) on the east side of town or Ann Hussmann (584-4081) on the west side. Thanks!

HUECO TANKS STATE PARK

As Audubon members know, Hueco Tanks is a priceless resource. It's also a frequently overused resource, one in need of increased protection. To help the hardworking staff at the park, we've offered to assist with an erosion control project on Oct 27, beginning at 8 a.m. It will involve placing rock dams in strategic locations in eroded areas and reseeding the areas. If you can join us, please contact Joyce Davis at 581-9470.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

OCT 12-14. NEW MEXICO AUDUBON CONFERENCE, Hummingbird Camp, near Jemez Springs, NM. New Mexico conservation issues, a presentation by Steve Hoffman of Hawk Watch International (formerly Western Foundation for Raptor Conservation), field trips to the Manzano Hawk Watch site and Petroglyph Natl. Monument.

OCT 26-28. AUDUBON COUNCIL OF TEXAS, Fall Meeting, Fort Worth. Chapter issues, fellowship, field trips, good food, and presentations by Pat Baldi on Audubon's population program and Jim Peterson on the Texas Breeding Bird Atlas Project. For registration information, contact chapter ACT delegate John Sproul (915/541-6126).

Want To Save Planet Earth? Audubon Has the Answer!

For just a dollar, you can own the National Audubon Society's brand new poster — **Audubon's Top Ten Tips for Saving the Planet.** Informative and entertaining, this poster features drawings by *Audubon Activist* cartoonist Chip Bok, as well as straightforward how-tos on recycling, waste reduction, and more. Audubon's Top Ten Tips is a handy and easy-to-look-at reminder that you can make a difference for a better environment. It is perfect for hanging at home or in your office.

To order, just send \$1 (no cash, please) to Top Ten Tips, Information Services, National Audubon Society, 950 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022. (Discounts available for bulk orders.)

*I wonder about the trees
Why do we wish to bear
Forever the noise of these
More than another noise
So close to our dwelling place?*

-- Robert Frost

EL PASO/TRANS PEÑOS AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICERS

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OBSERVATIONS	Joyce Davis	581-9470
EDITOR	George Barnett	581-1829
ACT DELEGATE	John Sproul	545-5157

OESERVATIONS

August 2 - Sept. 9, 1990

uncommon, rare & casual sightings

- AP - Arroyo Park
- CP - Crossroads Pond
- CF - Country Furniture
- DP - Doniphan Pond
- HH - Hunt's Hole
- LA - Lombardy Ave.
- PT - Pearson's Tree Place
- RP - Randel's Pool

Sightings by a field trip member are noted by a (+) after the leader's initials; sightings in an observer's yard or area are indicated by an (*) after his or her initials. Some of these sightings are early for fall migration.

LOONS - FALCONS

- Snowy Egret 8/5 CP/DP (JD+)
- Cattle Egret 8/10 La Union (HB)
- Green Back Heron 8/5 CP (JD+)
- Black Crowned Night Heron 8/5 RP (JD+)
- 50 White Faced Ibis 9/7 CF (BJ)
- Mississippi Kite 8/5, 8/10 LA, Fleetwood (JD+, HB)
- Golden Eagle (2 adults) 8/9 I-10 and Sunland Park Mall (BJ)
- Peregrine Falcon (3 injured to rehabilitators) 8/3 - 8/17 (HB)

QUAIL - WOODPECKERS

- Anna's Hummingbird 8/20, 9/8 (AA*)
- Broad-Tailed Hummingbird 9/16, 9/8 Westwind (BJ, AA*)
- Belted Kingfisher 8/26 DP (JD)

FLYCATCHER - VIREOS

- Violet-Green Swallow 8/4 Santa Teresita (JD)
- 9 Scrub Jays 9/8 AP (SJD+)
- Curve Billed Thrasher 9/8 AP (SJD+)
- Warbling Vireo 8/18 AP (SS)



WARBLERS - WEAVER FINCHES

- Western Tanager 8/5, 8/20 LA (JD+, AA*)
- Black Throated Gray Warbler 8/18 AP (SS)
- Black Headed Grosbeak 8/20-22 AP (SS, AA*, MLA*)
- Painted Bunting 8/21 HH (JZ)
- Lesser Goldfinch 8/1 PT (JZ)

ESCAPED CAGED BIRD:

Monk Parakeet 8/5 LA (JD+)

OBSERVERS: Mary Lou Alcorn, Art Arteaga, Helen Bigelow, Joyce Davis, Sarah Jane Dodds, Bob Johnson, Susie Schneider, James Zabriskie.

Observation Editor: Joyce Davis, 581-9470.



A CONSERVATION NOTE

- Plastic six-pack rings:
 Holders used for drink cans...
Hazards to birds and marine life!
- Six-pack rings are almost invisible in the water.
- Water birds living near recreation areas or dumps can get their necks caught in the rings and drown or starve.
- Cut the rings of every six-pack holder you use before you toss it in the trash.
- When you are at a park or on the beach, pick up any six-pack rings you find littering the landscape, cut the rings and put them in a real trash can.

-- Audubon Leader

The United States Environmental Protection Agency can provide methods manuals for protecting lakes, streams, and wetlands, offering helpful advice for project development and resources.

Contact: Alice Mayio
USEPA, Office of Water
Mail Code WH553
401 M Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20460

ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

The El Paso Environmental Center will be opening soon in an office at Paisano and Alameda. The Center is sponsored by the Sierra Club, the El Paso/Trans Pecos Audubon Society, Habitat for Humanity and the National League of Women Voters.

Plans for the Center include a special-interest library, a meeting room, recycling collection point and an educational center. Obviously, this is a very ambitious project that will serve an increasingly important need for El Paso and its citizens. At this point, the Center has needs of its own to get off the ground. These needs include all sorts of office/educational paraphernalia such as shelving, file cabinets, desks, chairs, tables, etc. Big Ticket items such as film projectors, TVs, VCRs, and a copier will help the Center to do its job properly.

Donation can be made by calling the Sierra Club or John Hamilton at 532-0374, or Terese Garcia at 833-4946. They will also be happy to hear from volunteers to staff the the Center a couple of hours a week.



NEW NATURE TRAIL INAUGURATED

A new nature trail has been inaugurated in the Desert Garden at the Wilderness Park MUseum. The trail comes complete with numbered stakes indicating elements of natural history that may be seen along the trail. A Trail User's Guide, which is available at the museum, describes what can be seen along the trail.

There are more than 200 species of plants in the Desert Garden including succulent plants from El Paso County, and drought resistant trees and shrubs that might give you some idea about landscaping in El Paso.

Museum docents will take groups on tours of both the Desert Garden and the museum exhibits if reservations are made in advance with the museum secretary. Being a museum docent can be a very interesting activity and, if that appeals to you, you are urged to call the Wilderness Park Museum at 755-4332 for information about the new docent training classes to be held in October and November. Funds, labor and cacti are also needed to maintain the Desert Garden. The staff at the Widerness Park Museum will be happy to hear from you.

CALENDAR

OCTOBER

- Sat., 6 - Feather Lake open, 8 AM to 11 AM.
6 - Field trip to Ft. Bliss Ponds, see page 3.
Sun., 7 - Feather Lake open, 3:30 till dusk.
12 - 14 - New Mexico Audubon Conference, see page 5.
Sat., 13 - Feather Lake work day.
Sun., 14 - Feather Lake open, 3:30 till dusk.
Mon., 15 - Board Meeting at the Snelling's home, 11689 Tony Tejada, 592-9642.
Sat., 20 - Feather Lake open, 8 AM to 11 AM.
20 - 21 - Field trip to McKittrick Canyon, see page 3.
Sun., 21 - Feather Lake open, 3:30 till dusk.
Mon., 22 - General meeting, see page 1.
26 - 28 - Audubon Council of Texas, Fall Meeting.
Sun., 28 - Feather Lake open, 3:30 PM till dusk.
28 - Field trip to Aguirre Springs, see page 3.

EL PASO/TRANS PECOS AUDUBON SOCIETY
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NOVEMBER

- Sat., 3 - Field trip to Hueco Tanks, see page 3.
3 - Feather Lake open, 8 AM to 11 AM.
Sun., 4 - Feather Lake open, 3:30 till dusk.
Sat., 10 - Book Fair at B Dalton Bookseller, Cielo Vista Mall.
Sun., 11 - Field trip to Ft. Hancock, see page 3.
11 - Feather Lake open, 3:30 till dusk.
11 - Hummingbird Show, 2 PM, El Paso Zoo, see page 2.
Mon., 12 - Board meeting at Joyce Davis' home, 200 N. Mesa Hills, #1505, 581-9470.
Sat., 17 - Feather Lake open, 8 AM to 11 AM.
Sun., 18 - Feather Lake open, 3:30 to dusk.
18 - Rummage Sale, see page 5.
Mon., 19 - General Meeting, see page 1.
Sat., 24 - Feather Lake work day.

DECEMBER

- 1 - 2 - Field trip to Bosque del Apache, see page 3.

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