

The Roadrunner

Newsletter of the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society

El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society

Inside the Roadrunner

Chapter Info	2
Awards Celebration	3
Sanctuary	4
Rio Bosque	5
Calendar	6

The e-Roadrunner

The Roadrunner is now also available electronically as a PDF file. If you would like to receive our newsletter in this way via e-mail, just send a note to John Sproul at jsproul@utep.edu.

El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Website!

Updated information about upcoming field trips, calendar of upcoming events, and recent bird sightings.

www.trans-pecos-audubon.com



General Meetings

Monday, January 19, 2026 7:00pm
online via Zoom only
Voyage to Antarctica
Scott Cutler



Voyage to Antarctica – Experiencing the Southernmost Continent

Antarctica summons images of desolate snow and ice with frigid temperatures and a history of difficult expeditions. But during summer months it teems with life. Scott Cutler visited the Antarctic Peninsula in November of 2025, the early southern summer. He will share his experiences with the amazing wildlife and stunning scenery, helping to show that, while this can be an unforgiving land, it is also a place of unparalleled beauty.

This meeting will be online only! We will start the Zoom meeting at 6:50 pm, and the presentation will begin at 7 pm.

To join via Zoom, please register here to receive the link: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/qg_SPUdfRbyNuE1EZmU8qw

Monday, March 23, 2026 7:00pm
Centennial Museum at UTEP and online via Zoom
500 W. University Ave El Paso, Texas

This talk is part of the World Water Week events at UTEP and UACJ (Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez). The information about the presentation will be shared via email once confirmed.

The meeting will be hybrid, online via Zoom and in-person at the Centennial Museum at UTEP. The doors to the museum will open by 6:45 pm, and parking is available in the lot behind the museum. The Zoom meeting will start by 6:50 pm.

To join via Zoom, please register here to receive the link: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/dmyu1BanT4O4OijHhOs_Vg

Field Trips: Current list of upcoming field trips at <http://www.trans-pecos-audubon.com/>

Annual Awards Celebration Saturday, February 28, 2026 10:00am

Join us for the annual awards ceremony on Feb 28, 2026 at the Pavilion at Ascarate Park. We are having lunch instead of dinner so we can do some bird watching too! **Star Posada** will lead a bird walk at the park at 10:00am, also meeting at the Pavilion. Participants can expect to see several species of duck, burrowing owls, and blackbirds. And the possibility of some surprises as well!

The luncheon will start with a meet-and-greet at noon and lunch at 12:30pm. Participants do not need to go on the bird walk to come to lunch. The cost is \$25 per person, which includes the meal, drinks, and dessert. **Please RSVP by sending a check made out to El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society to Scott Cutler, 112 Colina Alta Dr., El Paso TX. 79912.**

Please indicate your meal preference: omnivore, vegetarian, or vegan. Also let us know if you have any other dietary restrictions. **The reservation deadline is Saturday, Feb 14.** We can also accept payment via PayPal. Please contact us at elpasoaudubon@gmail.com for PayPal instructions or with any questions.

This year we are honoring **Josie Karam** and **Second Chance Wildlife Rescue** with the **Conservation Award** and **Superior Copy** with the **Meritorious Service Award**. Second Chance Wildlife Rescue is the largest wildlife rescue in all West Texas and Southeast New Mexico. They receive over 4000 calls each year and care for many animals. Learn more about them at <https://sites.google.com/secondchancewildliferescue.org/scwr/home?authuser=0>. Superior Copy has been printing our newsletter for many years, always providing excellent service and quality. Josie will also be our speaker, presenting about how Second Chance Wildlife Rescue does all their great work! The presentation will be in person only due to technical constraints with streaming.

Summary:

Bird walk with Star Posada from 10 am until noon.

Meet-and-greet from noon until 12:30.

Lunch starts at 12:30.

Presentations start around 1 pm.

Directions to the Pavilion once entering Ascarate Park
Follow Thompson Loop straight down (Lake should be on your right side)
Keep traveling down until you see pavilion on your left
Parking inside pavilion gates, in front of pavilion, or on Yarbrough

Registration Form for Audubon Awards Luncheon, Feb 28, 2026

Please fill out your information, detach, and mail with your check to Scott Cutler.

Name: _____

Number of Attendees: _____

Meal Preference and Number of Each Type

Omnivore:_____ Vegetarian:_____ Vegan:_____

Amount of Check (\$25 X Number of People Attending): _____

El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society

Officers

President: Scott Cutler, 494-2193
Vice President: Jane Fowler, 598-2448
Secretary/Treasurer: Eddie Chew, 587-9589

Committees

Conservation: Kevin Floyd, 613-6354
Education: Kathleen Whelen, 820-1895
Field Trips: Star Posada, 407-6442
Hospitality: vacant
Membership: vacant
Newsletter Editor: Kathleen Whelen, 820-1895
Programs: Kevin Floyd, 613-6354
Publications: Jane Fowler, 598-2448
Publicity: Heather Rivera, 212-2825
Sanctuary: John Sproul, 545-5157
Website: vacant
Facebook: Kevin Floyd, 613-6354

**The Audubon
Foundation of
Texas**

represents Texas
 Audubon chapters in the Earth Share of Texas
 payroll deduction plan for charitable giving.



In the News

Our field trip Coordinator, **Estrella (Star) Posada** was recently featured in an El Paso Matters article about the growing interest in birdwatching in and around El Paso. She led a field trip around Memorial Park and spoke with Reporter, Priscilla Totiyapungprasert. They were able to see quite a few winter species such as the northern flicker, a ruby-crowned kinglet and quite a few dark-eyed juncos. The article contained some beautiful photos taken by Corrie Boudreaux of El Paso Matters. Here is a link to the online article if you would like to view it in its entirety.

<https://elpasomatters.org/2026/01/04/bird-watching-clubs-el-paso-texas-birding/>

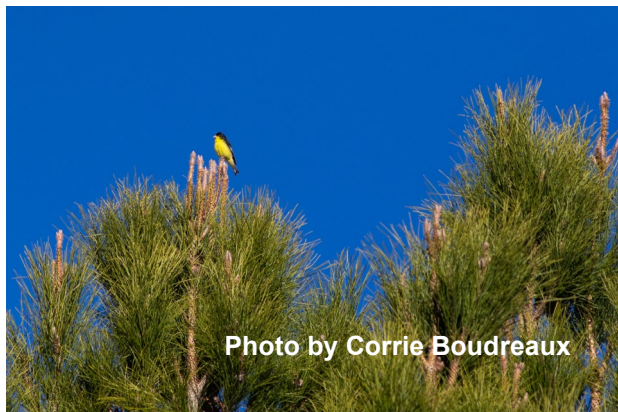


Photo by Corrie Boudreaux

You may subscribe to El Paso Matters by submitting your information here.

<https://elpasomatters.org/subscribe/>

Conservation Organizations

Chihuahuan Desert Education Coalition
<http://www.chihuahuandesert.org>

Second Chance Wildlife Rescue
<https://www.secondchancewildliferescue.org>
 Josie Karam (915) 920-7867

El Paso Zoo (915) 212-0966
www.elpasozoo.org

Stick House Sanctuary
<https://www.facebook.com/epwildliferescue>
 (915) 219-2365

Keystone Heritage Park 581-7920
www.keystoneheritagepark.com

Asombro Institute
 (575) 524-3334 www.asombro.org

Friends of Rio Bosque 747-5766
www.riobosque.org

Celebration of Our Mountains
<https://celebrationofourmountains.squarespace.com/>

Frontera Land Alliance (915) 351-8352
www.fronteralandalliance.org

www.trans-pecos-audubon.com

AT FEATHER LAKE

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

In 1969, the City of El Paso created a stormwater basin next to North Loop Road in the Mission Valley. The water table was higher in 1969 than it is today, and groundwater seeping into the new basin sustained a small lake. It was often referred to as Water Table Lake.

Birds quickly discovered this area. So did members of the local Audubon Society. In 1974, members of our organization approached the City with a proposal to establish a wildlife sanctuary at the site. The idea was met with enthusiasm. It worked its way through the necessary reviews, and on February 12, 1976, the City Council approved leasing the land to Audubon. Feather Lake Wildlife Sanctuary became a reality. Now, February 12, 2026, will bring its 50th anniversary!

For 35 years, the lake held water much of the year (except for a 1-year period in 1986-87 when the basin was expanded). Wetland and riparian habitats thrived. Then, the year 2011 brought a period of severe drought...and dramatic change at Feather Lake. The storm runoff and excess irrigation water that had been key to maintaining the lake became increasingly unavailable. Since then, the basin has been dry most of the time.

The trend continues today. In 2025, just one mid-October storm delivered enough water to flood most of the basin. On October 14, water was 1.62 feet deep at the basin's inlet. Four days later, it had all soaked into the soil.

The past 15 years, including the fire last spring, have been hard on Feather Lake. Still, the 42.5-acre sanctuary, together with the adjacent Feather Lake II stormwater basin, provides an important parcel of wildlife habitat and undeveloped open space in an otherwise urban landscape.

HELP WANTED

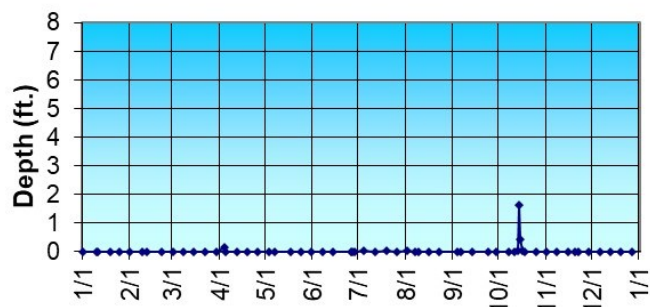
In October 1981, we began opening Feather Lake to the public on Saturday mornings. In 1987, we added Sunday afternoons to the schedule. At the close of 2010, we put this schedule on hold due to lack of water in the basin. It has not re-opened since.

We would like to re-open the sanctuary to public visitation, but to do so, we need volunteers to staff Feather Lake when it is open. Duties are simple: open and close the area, greet visitors, field their questions. If you can help in this way, please let us know. Volunteer availability will dictate how often the sanctuary can be open. Contact: elpasoaudubon@gmail.com, jsproul49@outlook.com, or 915-861-4361.



Want another opportunity to get involved? Our next workday at Feather Lake will be **Sat., Feb 7**, starting at **9 a.m.** Join us. Feather Lake is located at 9500 North Loop at Bordeaux in El Paso, 0.3 miles west of Americas Ave.

Feather Lake Water Depth - 2025



Audubon at

Rio Bosque Wetlands Park



Rio Bosque Wetlands Park also saw its share of water-related challenges in 2025. A short irrigation season limited the amount of irrigation water available in spring and summer. One of the park's 2 wells was out of operation the last 5.5 months of the year (and remains so in early 2026). The park's resident beaver worked hard to minimize water getting past its main dam across the old river bend that winds through the park.

Normally, late fall-early winter is when the park's two wetland cells are fully flooded and attract peak waterbird numbers. Currently, Cell 2, the smaller of the two, is flooded. Cell 1 is starting to flood but still has a long way to go.

For up-to-date information on birds and water conditions at Rio Bosque, check www.riobosque.org. Upcoming tours at the park:

8 a.m.	Sat., Jan 10 (Birding tour)
3 p.m.	Sun., Jan 18 (Introductory tour)
8 a.m.	Sat., Feb 14 (Birding tour)
9 a.m.	Sun., Feb 22 (Introductory tour)
3:30 p.m.	Sun., Mar 8 (Birding tour)
8 a.m.	Sat., Mar 28 (Introductory tour)

The meeting place is a bridge crossing the Riverside Canal. To get there from I-10, take Americas Ave. (Loop 375) to Pan American Drive, turn left onto Pan American and travel 1.5 miles. Information: 915-861-4361.

Feather Lake is located at 9500 North Loop at Bordeaux in El Paso, 0.3 miles west of Americas Ave.

Directions to Rio Bosque Wetlands Park

From I-10, take Americas Ave. (Loop 375) to Pan American Drive,

Turn left onto Pan American and travel 1.5 miles.

Information:
915-861-4361.



Want to get involved in the organization?

We are looking for new board members, field trip leaders, and help with outreach events.

This is a great opportunity to share your love of birds with the rest of El Paso! Please email us at elpasoaudubon@gmail.com for more information.

We are looking for ideas for more presentations. If you have someone in mind, please email us at elpasoaudubon@gmail.com.

El Paso/Trans-Pecos
Audubon Society
P.O. Box 972441
El Paso, Texas 79997

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**National Audubon Society
Chapter Membership Application.**

Yes, I'd like to join. Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Chapter.

Send AUDUBON magazine and my membership card to address below.

☐ Check for \$20.00 enclosed payable to National Audubon Society

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State ____ Zip _____

**National Audubon Society
Chapter Membership Data Center
PO Box 8908
Topeka, KS 66608-9978**

Local Chapter Code **C1ZW100Z**

Dates to Remember

January

Mon 12: **Board Meeting**
Mon 19: **General Meeting**
10 & 18: **Rio Bosque**

February

Sat 7: **Feather Lake Work Day**
Mon 16: **Board Meeting**
Sat 28: **Award's Luncheon**
14 & 22: **Rio Bosque**

March

Mon 9: **Board Meeting**
Mon 23: **General Meeting**
8 & 28: **Rio Bosque**

El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society
<http://www.trans-pecos-audubon.com>

El Paso/Trans-Pecos Local **Chapter Only Membership** Your \$15.00 will help support chapter activities & you'll receive

The Roadrunner delivered to your mailbox.

Make checks payable to the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Mail to: EPTP Audubon P.O. Box 972441 El Paso, Texas 79997