

the ROADRUNNER

Volume 17 (7)

EL PASO/TRANS-PECOS AUDUBON SOCIETY

September 1987

GENERAL MEETING

MON., SEPT. 21, 7:30 PM in the Garden Center, 3105 Grant in Memorial Park. Miss Karen Kaplan, Educational Curator at the El Paso Zoo, will present the program. Several bird species (zoo residents) will be there for a "hands on" experience. Come and bring your children, grandchildren or the neighbor's children for an evening of FUN.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MON., SEPT. 14, 7:30 PM. The Board will meet at the home of Jane Fowler, 1594-B Bengal Dr. (598-2448). All members are welcome.

HATS OFF TO JO NAGEL

What's different about this month's newsletter? Look on page 2. This issue is the first in 5 years that Jo Nagel hasn't co-edited and co-published. Preparation of this influential journal is no mean feat, and Jo has contributed monthly to every part of it, from typing copy to printing each issue on our chapter's low-tech mimeograph machine to collating the printed pages and preparing them for mailing. She has the permanently ink-stained hands to prove it. Jo will continue to help with the newsletter when needed, but is retiring as co-editor. We greatly appreciate all the time and effort she has expended over the past 5 years in getting this nationally circulated periodical out to its loyal readers every month. We hope you do to. Many thanks, Jo, for all you've done!

FIELD TRIP CALENDAR

NORTHEAST OXIDATION PONDS

SAT., SEPT. 12. Meet at 7:30 AM at Furrow's parking lot, 4801 Fred Wilson. We will

look for migrating birds and waterfowl. Leader: Bob Johnson (751-0125 h, 757-1876 answering machine).

FEATHER LAKE

SAT., SEPT. 26. Meet at lake, 9500 North Loop, at 7:30 AM. Leader: Tom Baker (877-3365).

MCKITTRICK CANYON

SAT.-SUN., OCT. 17-18. Meet at 7:30AM at 10600 Montana (Avila's parking lot--formerly Bella Napoli). Leader: Tom Baker (877-3365).

UPPER VALLEY

SUN., OCT. 25. Meet at Crossroads Pond (Doniphan and Country Club Rd.) at 2:30 PM. Leader: Joyce Davis (581-9470).

LA CUEVA, N.M.

SAT., NOV. 7

AUDUBON COUNCIL OF TEXAS

FRI.-SUN., NOV. 13-15. Meeting will include several field trips.

FEATHER LAKE

SUN., DEC. 6

CBC HUECO TANKS

SAT., DEC. 19

CBC EL PASO

SAT., JAN. 2

BOSQUE DEL APACHE NWR, N.M.

SAT.-SUN., JAN. 9-10

Call Bill Doebele (593-4835) if you have questions.



SUMMER BOOK FAIR

The annual Book Fair was held on June 20 at B DALTON BOOKSELLER in Cielo Vista Mall. The chapter received a \$273 donation from the store based on a percentage of total sales. A special THANK YOU goes to B DALTON and manager, Ms. Judy Coons, for their continued interest in local environmental programs and for supporting our chapter so generously over the years. And we would like to express our appreciation to chapter members who volunteered their time throughout the day at B DALTON: Jean Coyle, Joyce Davis, Sarah Jane Dodds, Jane Fowler, Elza Gilboe, Anne M. Hussmann, Jo Nagel, Betty Pagel, Bart Rumaker, and Nancy Wilson.

JUST A REMINDER

Are you saving up those white elephants and other saleable items for our Nov. rummage sale? Good for you. This is a simple way to earn funds for chapter programs. More info in the next RR.

THE ROADRUNNER

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Publications Chair - Sarah Jane Dodds
Editor - Jane Fowler
Publisher - Mary L. Bradley

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 address above. Also, please send us any changes or corrections in your name or address.

Note to Editors: Articles appearing in THE ROADRUNNER may be reprinted without prior permission. Credit is appreciated.

BIRDATHON 1987

The following names are the FABULOUS PEOPLE who devoted from 8 - 20 hours on May 2 to count our local birds and earn our annual Birdathon money. This money is divided in equal parts. One part goes to the regional office in Austin; this year our half will be shared equally by local wildlife rehabilitators and the chapter's scholarship fund. Those of us who were

unable to share in the counting for '87 salute all of you for a job well done: Tom Baker, Berttye Barnhart, Ken Beno, Gabriel Bickle, Pat Brasfield, Betty Bowen, Mike Chintis, Joyce Davis, Jane Fowler, Jeanne French, Joe Guinn, Roxanne Gunter, Richard Hermosillo, Anne M. Hussmann, Bob Johnson, Jo Nagel, Iola Pennington, Peggy Riede, Bart Rumaker, Ann Schultis, John Sproul, James Vaughn, Nancy Wilson and Scott Wilson.

The following names are the GENEROUS PEOPLE who sponsored the counters for a specified amount for each species seen. YOU helped the chapter raise \$2180.29---our second highest total! YOU are so important to EPTPAS, and each year your tax-deductible donations support chapter activities. THANK YOU VERY MUCH! A.M. Adelung, C. Bahner, D. Baker, Mrs. D.E. Baker, G. Baker, J.R. Baker, N. Baker, B. Barnhart, A. Barron, J. Bartlett, H. Barto, M. Baroz, J.L. Beno, K. & L. Beno, M. Blackburn, B. & P. Bleau, J. Bowen, A. Bowman, M. Bradley, J.C. Bridges, C.H. Brown, P. Chrapliwy, B.H. Collier, J. J. Coyle, W.E. Cumley, J. Davis, M.A. Dix, S. Dodds, B. Doebele, R. Doss, U. Dryden, M. Dunnell, C. & P. Elliott, H. Emery, H. Farah, B. & J. Fowler, M. Garcia, A. & M. Gavit, E. & E. Gilboe, S. Goad, K. Gorman, J. & L. Green, E. Guerra, J. & L. Guinn, R. Gunter, J. Hagesfeld, V. Hair, B. Heggem, B. Helzel, P. Henderson, V. Hermosillo, M.A. & D. Hirston, R.H. Hornbeck, B. Hosket, Q. Hosmez, T., A. H. Hussmann, C. Kelley, L. Kelly, D. Kidston, L. Leahey, V. Lotspeich, E.M. Lyons, T. Melendez, P.D. McCoy, M. McNeal, Dr. & Mrs. H. Miskimins, D. Monroe, J. Nagel, C. Navidomskis, E. Neumann, N. & S. O'Hara, B. Pagel, H. Paine, E. Pannage, I. Pennington, R. Perez, P. Peticolas, H. Pierce, J.H. Polk, M.S. Relveal, H. Reiquam, P. Riede, J. Rios, B. Roberts, G. Roberts, M. Rodriguez, G. Rose, B. Rumaker, M. Sanderson, A. Schultis, J. Shelby, S. Shepperd, A.I. Shields, Sommer & Maca, Inc., C. Sotol, L. Spencer, G. Spozarsky, J. Sproul, I. Sterbach, B. Strapho, V. Terrian, G. Thomas, Thompson & Weaver Co., A. Toren (cont. on p. 7)

THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE

FRANKLINS MTS. LAND IMPASSE RESOLVED

H.B. 1839, the bill to remove 1,290 acres of land from Franklin Mts. State Park (RR, June), passed the Senate May 29, was signed by the governor June 11 and took effect Aug 31. Its passage followed a compromise agreement the Franklin Mts. Wilderness Coalition and Sen. Tati Santiesteban's Natural Resources Advisory Group reached with El Paso Mayor Jonathan Rogers and the City's Public Service Board (PSB).



What was gained and what was lost in the compromise? On the plus side, it ended a long-standing impasse that had prevented the Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. (TPWD) from acquiring the City's PSB land within the Park boundaries. With the boundary change, some 6,836 acres of City (PSB) land still remain in the Park. The Mayor and the PSB have agreed to transfer all of this land to the TPWD.

Further, the TPWD will be getting an excellent deal. For 4,852 of the 6,836 acres, the agency will acquire the land for what the City originally paid for it plus 3% per year interest, or approximately \$53 per acre. The TPWD will also acquire the remaining 1,984 acres under the same terms if the Attorney General of Texas rules such a transfer legal. Otherwise, the 1,984 acres will be leased to TPWD under a long-term lease with rent on the order of \$1 per year. At any future time that the legal obstacle (possible restrictions associated with bonds the City has sold) ceases to exist, the City and the PSB will sell the land to TPWD for the original cost plus 3% per year.

Finally, the agreement defused a situation in which far worse things could have happened. H.B. 1839, as originally introduced, would have removed 3,275 acres from the Park (RR, Apr). The PSB told the Legislature they would force the TPWD to buy this land at market value, estimated to be at least \$24 mil-

lion, if H.B. 1839 failed. The budget-conscious Legislature took this threat seriously, and many legislators supported the bill as a cost-saving measure.

During the regular session, Sen. Santiesteban, as chair of the Senate Natural Resources Committee, could have killed the bill if necessary. But if the PSB remained intransigent, his opposition might not have been enough during a special session or a future regular session. Loss of all 3,275 acres was a realistic long-range possibility. And the future of the other City (PSB) land in the Park would have remained uncertain.

On the minus side, 1,290 acres of land that fully merited protection have been removed from the Park and will be sold for development. The Park's biological and topographic diversity have been reduced, for the deleted acreage included the only extensive alluvial-fan area within the Park boundaries. Today, when there is still plenty of open land in n.e. El Paso, the loss of this gently sloping terrain at the base of the Franklins may not seem critical to some. But 50 years from now, when all that open land is gone, no one is going to call the PSB farsighted for spearheading development of this area that once was protected.

The agreement was not easily achieved. In fact, one major issue couldn't be resolved and so was not part of the agreement. The PSB wants to retain the right to put water-storage tanks within the Park. Park supporters argue that suitable sites for such tanks can be found outside the boundary. Further, a mechanism already exists whereby the PSB can seek an easement from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission should it truly have no reasonable alternative to placing tanks inside the Park. This issue will have to be resolved when the details of the land transfer are worked out.

Who stood up for the Park and who didn't during the debate over H.B. 1839? The main proponents of removing land from the Park were Mayor Jonathan Rogers, PSB Chair Clinton Wolf, PSB members Ellis Mayfield, Robert Peinado and Marshall St. John, El Paso Water Utilities General Manager John Hickerson and State Reps. Arves Jones of El Paso and Fred Agnich of Dallas.

State Reps. Nancy McDonald, Paul Moreno, Nick Perez and Jack Vowell opposed the idea. So did El Paso City Reps. Suzie Azar, Robert Candelaria, Ed Elsey, Jimmy Goldman, Jethro Hills and Tony Ponce, plus former representatives Alicia Chacon and Pat Haggerty. And so did Sen. Santiesteban, whose support was crucial in gaining an acceptable compromise with the mayor and the PSB and who did all he could to ensure the best possible outcome for the Park. /John Sproul/

LEGISLATURE'S PERFORMANCE ON GROUNDWATER DISAPPOINTING

Audubon's top priority during the Texas Legislature's regular session that ended June 1 was groundwater. Although S.B. 779, Sen. Santiesteban's bill to establish a state program for regulation of underground storage tanks, was enacted into law, the Legislature fell short on most other opportunities to

make progress on groundwater management. For example:

- S.B. 967/H.B. 1451 would have authorized the Texas Water Commission to set minimum standards for groundwater districts. The bill had been weakened considerably as it moved through the legislative process but still contained its key minimum-standards provision. It passed the Senate in a compromise form acceptable to interest groups on both sides of the issue. But it failed in the House by a 57-80 vote. The votes of our Trans-Pecos representatives: For - Nancy McDonald, Paul Moreno, Nick Perez, Jack Vowell; Against - Dudley Harrison, Arves Jones, Larry Don Shaw.

- H.B. 1033 would have provided for a legislative study of groundwater quality in Texas and required annual reports of groundwater contamination and monitoring. It passed the Senate but was held up in the House Calendars Committee just long enough to prevent its coming up for a House vote before the session ended.

- S.B. 675 would have allowed the Texas Water Commission to assume jurisdiction over groundwater in critical areas where voters have failed to approve creation of a groundwater district. It also passed the Senate but was too far down the House calendar for a vote on the final day of the session. /JS/

NATIONAL AUDUBON REORGANIZES, CHAPTERS REACT

When the National Audubon Society (NAS) board of directors voted May 16 to balance the Society's budget by reducing and radically reorganizing its field staff (RR, June), they ensured a lively summer both for themselves and for Audubon chapter leaders throughout the country. The dust still hasn't settled.



The initial reorganization plan had NAS reducing its regional offices from 9 to 3 and its state offices from 6 to 4. Chapter leaders were not pleased with this plan, and they let the NAS board

and national staff know it. El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon was among the many critics. The Audubon Council of Texas (ACT) played a major role nationally in urging the NAS board to re-evaluate its decision.

The chapter leaders were upset for a number of reasons: They valued the regional offices and considered them vital to Audubon's overall strength and effectiveness. They objected to the board making its decision without first seeking chapter input, in direct conflict with a stated board policy to consult with chapters on matters directly affecting them. And they feared the

reorganization signaled a philosophical shift within NAS towards reduced emphasis on action at the chapter level.

The strong negative reaction from around the country had an impact. NAS first made a new proposal: it would replace the regional offices with 10 state offices, including offices in New Mexico and Texas. When chapter leaders remained dissatisfied, NAS restored the regional office concept, albeit with reduced staffing and with some regional realignments. In the southwest, Audubon's Austin office remains a southwest regional office covering Louisiana, New Mexico and Texas. The Randall Davey Audubon Center in Santa Fe remains a New Mexico state office.

That's not to say there aren't changes in our region, though. NAS proposed eliminating the regional representative position, currently held by Murray Walton, but offered to continue the position if ACT covered the position's salary and fringe benefits. For the current fiscal year, that amounts to about \$37,000.

ACT has voted to raise the necessary funds. To do so on an annual basis is going to be a major challenge for Audubon chapters in Texas. ACT has also created a new charitable foundation, the Audubon Foundation of Texas, as the first step in its fund-raising efforts. To help fund the regional representative position, El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon's board voted Aug 10 to contribute to the Foundation the \$1,090 we raised for the regional office through our 1987 Birdathon.

Finally, the negative reaction to the NAS board's decision has had another far-reaching impact. In response to what chapters perceived as the board's insensitivity to chapter concerns, momentum grew during the summer for nominating a slate of chapter-activist candidates for election to the board this December. Seeking to avoid a proxy fight, the NAS board held a special meeting July 27. They passed a resolution affirming their commitment to the

regional-office structure and empowered a special committee to establish a mechanism that would ensure adequate chapter representation on the board.

The committee met in Washington, DC Aug 7-8 with 20 chapter leaders from around the country, including ACT President David Carson, to hammer out the mechanism. The result? Henceforth, each of Audubon's 9 regions will have a place on the 36-member NAS board, with each region's board member selected directly by the chapters in that region.

So, it has been an eventful summer. The debate over the reorganization has been a vigorous and generally healthy one. Will the result be a stronger National Audubon Society? Time will tell.

/John Sproul/

A.C.T. TO MEET IN EL PASO NOV. 13-15

The National Audubon Society's recent reorganization of its field staff will be a hot topic Nov 13-15 when Audubon members from throughout the state gather in El Paso for the Fall 1987 Meeting of the Audubon Council of Texas. Also on tap: a workshop on effective promotion of the Texas Nongame Stamp program, a presentation by Dr. Jim Koschmann on the effort now underway to reintroduce the Thick-billed Parrot to the Chiricahua Mts. of s.e. Arizona, plenty of good food and a variety of field trips.

El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon is hosting the meeting, and we'll need your help to make it a success. Can you pick up incoming ACT delegates at the airport? Please contact our transportation coordinator Bob Johnson (751-0125 h, 757-1876 w). Can you host an ACT delegate in your home? Let our housing coordinator Jane Fowler (598-2448) know. Can you help feed the assembled multitude? Chief chef Anne Hussmann (584-4081) needs to hear from you.

Plan on joining us for all or part of what should be a memorable weekend. You'll get registration details and a full schedule of events in next month's newsletter. /JS/

OBSERVATIONS

May 23 - August 20

- CP - Crossroads Pond
- EPCC - El Paso Country Club
- FH - Ft. Hancock
- FL - Feather Lake
- FQ - Ft. Quitman vicinity
- HT - Hueco Tanks
- LL - Lombardy Lane
- TM - Tom May's area, Franklin Mts.
State Park
- V - Vado

LOONS - FALCONS

Double-crested Cormorants were seen at V 6/14 (JD) and 8/9 (JS). Great Blue Herons were found at FH 7/3 (BJ, BR, RW). Green-backed Herons were reported at FH 7/3 (BJ, BR, RW) and LL 7/4, 7/12, 7/26 (JD). Great Egrets were seen below FQ 7/3 (BJ, BR, RW). Black-crowned Night-Herons were reported at V 6/14, 7/11 (JD) and 8/9 (JS). White-faced Ibis were seen near the Sunland Park bridge 8/9 (TB). A Greater White-fronted Goose was seen and photographed at the CP 6/8 (BJ). A male Cinnamon Teal was reported at FL 6/26 (BJ). A female and 2 male Redheads were seen at FL 6/26 (BJ). A Bufflehead was spotted at CP 6/19 (BJ) and FQ 7/3 (BJ, BR, RW). Nesting Harris' Hawks were seen near FH 7/3 (BJ, BR, RW). Golden Eagles were seen over the Franklin Mts. several times 6/25, 8/1 (BJ).

QUAIL - WOODPECKERS

Spotted Sandpipers were found at FH and a Willet was seen below FQ 7/3 (BJ, BR, RW). A Least Tern was reported at FL 6/12 (BJ). Yellow-billed Cuckoos were reported from an e. El Paso yard 7/20 (BeR) and LL 7/26 (JD). A Great Horned Owl was seen at HT 6/26 (BJ). Broad-tailed Hummingbirds were first reported from TM 7/25 (TB). Rufous Hummingbirds appeared in e. El Paso 7/14 (DT). Calliope Hummingbirds were seen in e. El Paso 7/16 (DT) and at an upper valley home 7/24 - 8/8 (TB). A Belted Kingfisher was seen around EPCC 6/14, 7/4-5 (JD).

FLYCATCHERS - VIREOS

A Cassin's Kingbird was reported at HT 8/8 (JS). Vermilion Flycatchers were seen at FQ 7/3 (BJ, BR, RW). Violet-green Swallows were spotted at HT 6/26 (BJ). Am. Robins were seen on a nest in e. El Paso 7/16 (DT)

and feeding young EPCC 7/4 (JD).

WARBLERS - WEAVER FINCHES

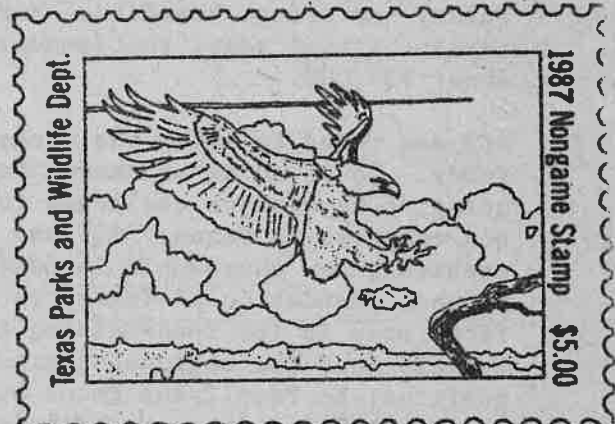
Two Virginia's Warblers were reported at HT 8/8 (JS). Yellow-headed Blackbirds were found at CP 7/26 (JD). Black-chinned Sparrows were found at TM 7/25 (TB, JS).

OBSERVERS: Tom Baker, Joyce Davis, Bob Johnson, Bettie Roberts, Bart Rumaker, John Sproul, Dennis Taylor, Ray Waite.

/Joyce Davis, Observations Editor/
(581-9470)

JOB OPENING

NATURALIST/MANAGER position - NAS Sabal Palm Grove Sanctuary in Lower Rio Grande Valley. Full-time temporary position, November 1 - April 30. Must supply own housing. Contact Jesse Grantham, NAS, 518 Bronte St., Rockport, TX 78382 (512) 729-3532.



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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(Birdathon '87 cont.)

B.Vaughn, P.Viescas, J.Weaver, D.Weinstein,
F.M.White, D.Williams, J.Wilson, N.Wilson,
M.L.Wright, T.Zubiate.

/Jean Coyle, Birdathon Chair/

PAST FIELD TRIPS

During the period May 28 to June 1, 34 birders enjoyed one of the best birding spots in the U.S., the Chiricahua Mts. Seventy-two species of birds were seen. Some of our birders saw most of these, and some just a few. As always, most saw and enjoyed the Elegant Trogon (for some this was a "lifer"). Other species enjoyed were: Flammulated and Pygmy owls, (a W. Screech-Owl appeared each night at Anne Hussmann's campsite in Idlewild Camp-ground), Magnificent and Blue-throated hummers, Strickland's Woodpecker, Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, Pygmy Nuthatch, Olive and Red-faced warblers, and Red Crossbills. Look for this trip to be repeated in May of '89; however, we should see similar species on a trip to Sierra Vista, Az. in May of '88. /BJ/

The July 18-19 outing to Bosque del Apache, Water Canyon and other points in central New Mexico had something for everyone, as the 19 participants collectively found 110+ species of birds. Bosque del Apache had plenty of water, which meant plenty of cormorants, herons and egrets; and plenty of emergent growth, which meant Soras calling everywhere. Most group members found Red-faced Warblers in the Magdalena Mts., but only a couple of lucky individuals glimpsed N. Goshawk and Clark's Nutcracker. And no one saw the N. Pygmy-Owl that called persistently near our Water Canyon campsite just after lunch on Sunday. For those who traveled NM Hwys. 78 and 52 en route back to El Paso, a Sage Thrasher, a flock of Pinyon Jays and some 12-15 Lewis' Woodpeckers capped the weekend nicely. /JS/



Franklin Mountains

Oh Franklin Mountains, now so fair,
You welcome Beauty everywhere.

Remoteness is your shield and sword
Repelling the uncaring horde.

For only those whose love runs deep.
Will climb your slopes which are so steep.

Peeved vandals cannot hear your call;
They have no love for you at all.

But when the car brings all to share
What once belonged to those who care;

No longer you'll be wild and free;
Your slopes will be for all to see.

Great changes will take place, we fear.
We hope this is not what we hear:

That sounds of Nature once were heard
Where now we hear the spoken word;

That missing now's the cougar's spoor,
And tracks of deer are made no more.

Oh Beauty rugged, yet so frail,
So injured by the road and trail,

Can you still live, or will you die?
If you should die, we will know why.

You will be slain by trash and can
And by the fire that's set by man.

Things that were once a part of you
Will disappear like morning dew.

Let us hope that those who plan
To open wide your door to man,

Will have the vision and insight
To see that they may put to flight

The very things that they now seek
To bring alike to strong and weak;

That these may flee like morning mist
When by the rising sun 'tis kissed,

For Beauty is a fragile thing
That dies where Ugliness is King.

So, make sure, planners, you plan well;
Let Beauty have its place to dwell;

Remote and wild that spot should be,
Where it can linger, yet to see,

Protected by the rough terrain;
Changed only by the wind and rain.

Then, perhaps, most can be content
Through compromise and good intent.

CLARK CHAMPIE

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
Membership Application

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and of the local chapter. Send AUDUBON magazine and membership card to:

Name.....

Address.....

City.....State.....Zip.....

Membership category desired:
 Individual/\$30 Senior Citizen
 Family/\$38 Individual/\$21
 Student/\$18 Senior Citizen
 Family/\$23

This is a new renewal membership.

Please make checks payable to National Audubon Society. Mail to Neil Keith, 1525 Meadowview, El Paso, Tx 79925.

LOCAL CHAPTER

EL PASO/TRANS-PECOS
W10 7XCH

EL PASO/TRANS-PECOS AUDUBON SOCIETY

Officers

President	Tom Baker	877-3365
Vice-President	Sid Shepperd	566-2162
Secretary	Ann Schultis	584-7382
Treasurer	Bart Rumaker	544-6432
Elected Directors		

Anne Hussmann	584-4081
Larry Jordan	833-5969
Neil Keith	778-5937

Committees

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Education	John Sproul	545-5157
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Publications	Sarah Dodds	533-4150
Sanctuary	Sid Shepperd	566-2162
Ways & Means	Larry Jordan	833-5969

ACT Delegate	John Sproul	545-5157
Clean Air Coalition Representative		
	Joyce Davis	581-9470
Franklin Mts. Coalition Representative		
	Gloria Woelfel	833-7523

The deadline for the October ROADRUNNER is September 21!

El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society
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