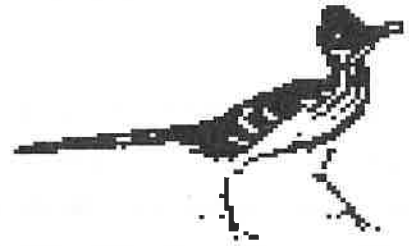


The Roadrunner

Newsletter of the El Paso/Trans Pecos Audubon Society

Volume 29 No.3 June, July & August 1998
28



Landscaping for Wildlife

by Tara Ditlevson and Katie Lino

So you think you've got it down when it comes to helping birds? Well there's probably more you can do, and the answer may be in your own front yard. I'm talking about landscaping for wildlife. If you want to help out your feathered friends, there are some things you'll want to remember:

1) Shelter- Birds need places to live too. You want to make sure that this place is sturdy and somewhat hidden so that cats and other animals can't get into the nest and eat the eggs.

2) Water- We live in a desert, and water is scarce. It would help out wildlife a lot to have a little pond or bird bath.

3) Food Source- As you probably know, birds need food. Fruit trees and berry bushes are good for birds, but you want to make sure that you don't plant anything poisonous. Here's a list of some other plants that will attract birds:

jewelweed	thistle	evening primrose
paintcup	cardinal flower	turkscap lily
honeysuckle	vervain	figwort
trumpet creeper	tulip tree	penstemon
beebalm	coralberry	ocotillo
aloe	chuparosa	cactus
lilac	milkweed	lavender

4) Grit- Birds swallow small pebbles and grit to help digest their food. Having some of that would help them.

When you are planning how you want to landscape, make sure you include a variety of plants. Landscaping for wildlife not only helps the birds, but also is very attractive and provides your home with beautiful songs.

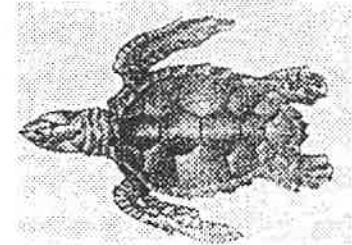
Information provided by Scott Cutler, UTEP
Centennial Museum

Two Kemp's Ridley Turtles

Nesting on Texas Beaches

The Corpus Christy Caller Times reported that two Kemp's Ridley turtles were found with a nest of about 190 eggs total. One turtle was found on Padre Island and the other on Mustang Island. Each female was tagged and rigged to a satellite transmitter and then released back into the wild. The eggs were removed from the nest and placed in an incubator. Extensive conservation efforts have been coordinated between the United States and Mexico since 1978 to protect these turtles. The article cited the Kemp's Ridley as the world's most endangered breed.

Corpus Christy Caller Times, April 26, 1998



Inside The Roadrunner

Chapter Info.....	2
Sanctuary News.....	3
Environment.....	4
National & TX. News.....	5
Special Features.....	6
On the Trail.....	7
Observations...will be posted in Sept.	
Calendar.....	8

The President's Corner

I would like to thank all those who helped out with Birdathon 1998. It was a big success! We appreciate all those who sponsored counters, those who counted and those who lead the groups. A special thanks to John Kiseda and Jane Fowler who put in many hours coordinating the whole event. We had approximately 24 counters who were able to raise a little over \$5,000. The combined total number of species was somewhere around 160. Watch for the September issue of the Roadrunner for a more complete report.

Recently, at the Texas Audubon Board meeting, it was announced that our chapter was selected to receive the Conservation Cash Award. This is a grant program for which our chapter applied in order to develop a Teacher's Guide to Feather Lake. A special congratulations goes out to all those who helped with this proposal!

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that we really need volunteers. If you would like to get more involved, please contact the chairperson listed in the area for which you have an interest or talent. I'm sure that they would be more than happy to help you take part in the fun.

Elizabeth Chase

**Volunteers
are the heart of the
El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon
Chapter!**

El Paso/Trans Pecos Audubon Society Board of Directors:

President	Elizabeth Chase	591-5119
V-President		
Secretary	Betty Fisbeck	581-0174
Treasurer		

Committee Chairs:

Conservation	John Kiseda	833-6212
Education		
Field Trips	Bob Johnson	757-1876
Hospitality	Betty Pagel	772-2686
Membership	Jane Fowler	598-2448
Programs	Nancy Wilson	833-3907
Publications	Kathy Ditlevson	751-2005
Publicity	Hector Montes	565-4032
Sanctuary	John Sproul	545-5157

About the Roadrunner:

Roadrunner is your newsletter. We welcome your contributions. For further information, you may contact Elizabeth W. Chase:

W: 857-4323

fax: 857-4324

email: echase @ socorro.k12.tx.us

Special thanks to:

John Sproul for the tour around Feather Lake on April 20th and the slide presentation that followed. It was a beautiful evening for such activities!

and to

John Green for his presentation on May 18th on the fascinating Four Seasons of the Rock Art Shelter in Big Bend National Park. It was a real treat to see that slide show.

Feather Lake Notes

By, John Sproul

Our Feather Lake Wildlife Sanctuary continues to get excellent help and community support. In late March, the Cuckoo Conservation Club at Eastwood Heights Elementary School installed two artificial burrows for Burrowing Owls, using materials generously provided by John C. White. This winter, Hanks High School students propagated willow baccharis, a native riparian shrub, from cuttings. In late April, they planted the cuttings in areas recently cleared of salt cedar at the lake. And one more helper: credit the seed-processing and dispersing ability of our gray fox for a number of young western honey mesquites now appearing around the basin. Our sincere thanks to all!

Thanks also to our great crew who staffed the sanctuary during visiting hours in 1997-98: Lupe Barrera, Craig and Darbie Bragington, Barbara Buck, Jean Coyle, Betty and Weldon Fisbeck, Jane Fowler, Beth and Bob Garcia, Vince Giordano, Lucie Hunt, Hugh and Sally Jameson, Bob Johnson, Bob and Joyce Kautz, John and Kathy Kiseda, Jody Lawrence, Fran McCarty, Betty Pagel, Roxanne Schroeder, Rafaela Schuler, Charles and Helen Simpson, Rita Slusser, and John Sproul. With their help, we had Feather Lake open this past year more days than ever before. Once again, Charles Simpson coordinated this vast enterprise. Thanks Charles!

Feather Lake is now closed until this October, but for you, we'll make one exception. Join us Sat., July 11, to enjoy Feather Lake's mid-summer wildlife and help with ongoing projects. The gates open at 8:00 am. Feather Lake is located at 9500 North Loop at Bordeaux, 0.3 mi. west of Americas Ave.

If you enjoy drawing wildlife and would like to submit sketches or drawings for use in the Roadrunner, please submit your original work to the editor at 5215 Wally Dr., El Paso, TX 79924, or call 751-2005.



CONTRIBUTIONS

The El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society gratefully acknowledges recent donations to our organization from these thoughtful friends:

Donations

Bettie Roberts

Feather Lake Appreciation Day:
Join us Saturday, July 11 at 8:00am and help with habitat management at Feather Lake.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES BEGIN FOR REGIONAL WATER PROJECT by, John Sproul

Here in far western Texas and southern New Mexico, the Rio Grande is at a crossroads. Over the past century, we haven't paid much attention to the ecological health of the river, and it shows. Today's Rio Grande is a highly artificial and biologically degraded system. Can we bring the Rio Grande back to a semblance of ecological health? Many think we are approaching a real opportunity to do so. El Paso is moving toward a greater reliance on the river for its municipal water supply. Today, El Paso draws water from the river only during the 7 month irrigation season. The next step will be to provide the city Rio Grande water year round.

The project to do this is called the El Paso-Las Cruces Regional Sustainable Water Project. When you hear about it in the media, it is inevitably described as a project to bring water from Caballo Reservoir to El Paso by canal or pipeline. The environmental implications of this approach are, in a word, grim. But there are other alternatives being considered, alternatives that involve using the river itself as the delivery system and that can be the foundation for meaningful ecological restoration. The body pursuing this project is the New Mexico-Texas Water Commission. To date, engineering and economic concerns have driven the Commission's planning. Now, though, we are at the point where, thanks to the National environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the environment must become part of the equation.

The NEPA-mandated environmental evaluation of the project is just getting under way. This, folks, is a public process. You have an important voice in it. Meetings to gather public input on the scope of the environmental analysis and the alternatives to be evaluated are planned for late August or early September. Watch the local news media for dates and other details.



Burrowing Owl

Feather Facts

presented by
Eastwood Heights Elementary
Cuckoo Conservation Club

THE LARK SPARROW

By, Katie Lino

The lark sparrow is a small brown bird. Both male and female look similar in appearance. Its scientific name is "Chondestes Grammacus" which means "grain eater with striped head". The bird is striped with brown and has red-orange shoulders with a whitish ring around its eye. Their length is about 14-15 centimeters long.

The lark sparrow inhabits grassy pastures, country roadside ditches, and open woodlands. Their nests are made of weed stems, twigs, and lined with grass. Their diet is mostly weed and grass seeds. The lark sparrow also eats insects, mainly grasshoppers. The female lays 4-5 cream colored eggs with black and brown spots. The young leave the nests 9-10 days after hatching.

Victory Against Logging

contributed by Mike Leahy
Forest Campaign Coordinator

On March 27, the House of Representatives strongly rejected a bill promoting logging as a means to healthy forests. In a precedent-setting vote, the House voted 201-181 against Congressman Bob Smith's (R-OR) logging bill. 51 Republicans and 149 Democrats opposed this timber industry agenda, including many Representatives specifically targeted by Audubon Activists.

Endorsing the industry philosophy that forests are somehow incapable of surviving without being logged, Congressman Smith's bill would have subsidized and promoted more logging. Ignoring overwhelming evidence that insects, disease, and dead trees are necessary natural processes occurring at mostly natural levels, this bill would have required National Forests to be identified as having too many insects and diseased and dead trees based on undetermined criteria. It would have allowed logging and road building in our healthiest forests, including roadless and ancient forests.

The Forest Campaign wishes to thank all those who contributed to this victory by asking their representative to oppose the bill; it is a testimony to the potential of grassroots activism. For more details and a press release contact me at 202/861-2242 or mleahy@Audubon.org.



THE SWAINSON'S HAWK

In the past year, there have been numerous stories about the deaths of as many as 20,000 Swainson's hawks in Argentina as a result of monocrotophos, a particularly virulent pesticide applied to alfalfa fields and used to control grasshoppers. Scientists have noted a decline in the Swainson's hawk in recent years and speculate that the deaths last winter may represent 5 percent of the world's population. A new agreement, brokered by the American Bird Conservancy, may provide some protection for the birds. Under the agreement, the companies distributing monocrotophos in Argentina will stop selling it in the areas where the Swainson's hawk winter and will buy back existing stocks. They will also provide new labels warning of the danger and will co-sponsor public education programs. The Argentinean government have also agreed to ban the pesticide's use in alfalfa fields in the area.

- Article Reproduced from
THE BWD SKIMMER, February 1997

Special Features



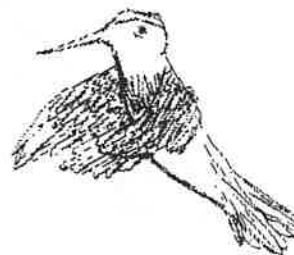
A Tribute to Iola Pennington

Iola Pennington was born August 17, 1911 in a farm in Newcastle Nebraska. She grew up on a farm near there. She was the second oldest of 9 children born to Charles and Petra Schram. Her husband, Ivo V. Pennington, preceded her in death in 1992. She is survived by three brothers: Wesley Schram of Ponca, NE, Donald Schram of Phoenix, AZ, Clarence Schram of Woodbridge, VA, and one sister, Rowenna Erbach of Lincoln, NE; two daughters: Barbara Johnson of Zavalla, TX and Ruth Spencer of El Paso, TX; eight grandchildren: Sharon Johnson, Glenda Redworth, Carolyn Strongheart, Gary Johnson, Richard Spencer, Sibyl Spencer, Jane Spencer, Liliana Spencer; three great-grandchildren: Dana Marie Johnson, Marcus Murray and Jessica Louise Spencer.

Iola graduated at the age of 16 and went to Iowa State Teachers College for two years and began teaching at the age of 18. In Iowa she married Lain B. Sill and Ruth Elaine was born to that union. In 1942, she moved to Wauneta to teach school and in 1943 she married Ivo Pennington. She quit teaching to care for Ivo's mother who was ill and then returned to teaching grade school in 1952 to 1958. In 1958 she returned to college to obtain a degree from the University of Nebraska in Vocational Home Economics Education. She then taught Home Economics until age 62 when she retired in 1973. In 1986 she and Ivo moved to El Paso to be close to their daughter, Ruth Spencer, but returned every summer to Wauneta to the joy of gardening and friends there. Iola fulfilled duties of the librarian at a nearby elementary school in Canutillo, TX for three years. She was a life-long student with a zest for learning.

In 1992 Iola survived an accident in which she broke her neck and Ivo died. Even after that she was active in her family and community, cooking, sewing, gardening.

Iola Pennington was a teacher, a gardener, a bird-watcher, a photographer, a seamstress, a poet, a world traveler, a musician, a librarian, but most of all she loved the Lord and her family, and nothing would keep her from expressing her love in very tangible ways to them.... they came first before any other endeavor.



On the Trail

Gila Cliff Dwellings

The beautiful mountain country in the vicinity of Silver City, New Mexico will be the destination of this overnight trip during the weekend of June 27 & 28. We'll be visiting the Cliff Dwellings, the Gila Wilderness, and Lake Roberts. A large *Great Blue Heron* Rookery is nearby and wild animals are always visible. A few years ago we saw a *Beaver* Lodge and the *Beaver* swimming in the pool. *White-breasted Nuthatches* eating out of Sid's hand, and *Blackheaded Grosbeaks*, *Hepatic Tanagers* and *Lark Sparrows* on the ground within 20 feet. Great camping along the Gila River, but if you would like more comfort, call Doc Campbells Trading Post (505-536-9551) or a new place, "SAPILLO CROSSING LODGE", (505) 536-3206. Call Bob today for a discount ticket. We will have a campground picnic Saturday evening. For all the details call Bob Johnson (757-1876).

MISSISSIPPI KITE

On Sunday, July 12, Mary Lou Alcorn (584-8768) will guide you through the the Upper Valley ending at the river levee by the Country Club Road Bridge. The Mississippi Kite should have young big enough to see in the nest. See where Doniphan Marsh and the Indian Village are located. Meet Mary Lou at the Crossroads Ponding Area at 3:27 pm.

SHOREBIRD MIGRATION

Saturday, July 25th, a tour of the Fort Bliss Ponds should turn up some migratory shore birds. We should get at least 6 species of ducks and 6 waders. Maybe the elusive Sora and Red-necked Phalaropes. The tour will be over by noon, but bring water. Meet the leader in the parking lot of the old Walmart store (NORWEST Bank is in the front corner) 9825 Dyer Street at

7:32 AM. For other details, call Bob 757-1876.

WATER CANYON

This trip will take us from the Rio Grande River Valley to the fir forests and will occur on the weekend of Aug. 8 & 9th. Birding stops at the Bosque Del Apache NWR for summer waders, Water Canyon for *Goshawks* and *Red-faced Warblers* and Magdalena for *Pinyon Jays*. Camping in the canyon or motels in Socorro. Call Bob Johnson (757-1876) for map and details.

ALONG THE LEVEE

On Sunday, August 23rd you will take a tour of the Rio Grande Levee in the Lower Valley. The TARGET birds for this trip will be the Vermillion Flycatcher, Painted Bunting, Summer Tanager, Blue Grosbeak, and Yellow-breasted Chat. Also a stop at McNary Reservoir where Clarks Grebes have raised young. Meet Bob, (757-1876), at Feather Lake at 7:07AM. Bring a lunch.

MIGRATION

The Vireos and Warblers are starting to come through early in September and, who knows, maybe we could catch a rare one. We will drive and walk and drive and walk, in the vicinity of the El Paso Country Club. The *Red-shafted Flickers* and *Belted Kingfishers* could be around, and an unusual duck could be in the Crossroads Ponding Area. That is where you will meet Bob Johnson (757-1876) at 7:47 AM on Saturday, September 12th. For those who do not know where that is, turn LEFT immediately over the railroad tracks at Mesa/Country Club Road and Doniphan, on the west side of town.

FRIENDS OF HUECO TANKS

Saturday, June 20, 8:00pm
Slide Show "Birds of Hueco Tanks"

Sunday, June 21, 8:00am
Bird Identification Tour

Sunday, July 18, 8:00am
Bird Identification Tour

Saturday, August 15, 8:00pm
Slide Show "Birds of Hueco Tanks"

Sunday, August 16, 8:00am
Bird Identification Tour

Dates to Remember

June

Gila Cliff Dwellings
Saturday, & Sunday
June 27 & 28

Board Meeting
June 15, 7:00pm
Environmental Center

July

Country Club Area
Sunday, July 12

Fort Bliss Ponds
Saturday, July 25

Board Meeting
Monday, July 20, 7:00pm
Environmental Center

August

Bosque del Apache Wildlife Refuge
Saturday & Sunday, August 8 & 9
Call Bob Johnson 757-1876

Board Meeting
Monday, August 10, 7:00pm
Environmental Center

McNary Reservoir
Sunday, August 23

September

Crossroads Area
Saturday, September 12

Board Meeting
Monday, September 14
Environmental Center

Friends of Hueco Tanks

Rock Art Tours

Every Sat & Sun 10:00am & 2:00pm

Birding Activities at Hueco Tanks

Bird Identification Tours

&

Slide Show Presentations

National Audubon Society

Chapter Membership Application

Yes, I'd like to join.

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and of my local chapter. Please send AUDUBON magazine and my membership card to the address below.

My check for \$20 is enclosed.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Please make all checks payable to the
National Audubon Society

National Audubon Society

Chapter Membership Data Center

P.O. Box 51001

Boulder, Colorado 80322-1001

EL PASO/TRANS-PECOS AUDUBON SOCIETY

W10

Local Chapter Code
7YCHA

The Roadrunner is published six times a year. Contributions are welcome. Please e-mail to echase@socorro.k12.tx.us or mail to 5215 Wally Dr. El Paso, Texas 79924. Publication is assisted by Eastwood Heights Elementary Cuckoo Conservation Club students. Printed by Superior Copy on recycled paper.

EL PASO TRANS/PECOS AUDUBON SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 9655
El Paso, Texas 79995

Return service request

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
El Paso, Texas
Permit #2440