

The



ROADRUNNER

Volume 19(5)

EL PASO/TRANS-PECOS AUDUBON SOCIETY

October 1981

GENERAL MEETING

The El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society meets the third Monday of each month (Sept.-May) at 7:30 PM in the Garden Center, 3105 Grant, in Memorial Park. Visitors are welcome.

MON., OCT. 16
7:30 PM



ALASKA will be our destination in October, and BARRY ZIMMER will be our guide. We'll visit the Pribilof Islands with their huge seabird colonies; the coastal tundra near Nome; the Kenai Peninsula; Denali National Park with its Alaskan brown bears,

caribou and other large mammals; and finally Barrow, northern-most town on the North American continent. The birding will be spectacular: Red-faced Cormorant, all four eider species, Willow and Rock ptarmigan, Long-tailed Jaeger, Common and Thick-billed murre, Parakeet and Least auklets, Tufted and Horned puffins, and more. A resident of El Paso, Barry leads birding tours throughout the western hemisphere for Victor Emanuel Nature Tours. Both his photography and his knowledge of North American birdlife are exceptional, as you'll see on Oct. 16.

MON., NOV. 20

THE GRAY RANCH, 323,000 acres of majestic beauty and incomparable wildlife in New Mexico's bootheel in Hidalgo County, remains a tremendous conservation opportunity. The ranch has been on the market for almost 10 years, and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service wants very much to acquire it for a national wildlife refuge. What makes the Gray Ranch special? Diverse habitats, ranging from cienega wetlands and nearly pristine grasslands through Douglas-fir forest, combine with the ranch's geographic location to produce remarkable biological diversity. The New Mexico Nature Conservancy has long been a key player in efforts to acquire this area for a refuge. Join us Nov. 20 as TOM WOLF, Development Director for that organization, introduces us to the Gray Ranch, updates us on the acquisition effort, and fills us in on other

exciting projects The Nature Conservancy has underway in southern New Mexico.

EL PASO/TRANS-PECOS AUDUBON SOC. OFFICERS

President	John Sproul	545-5157
Vice-president	Larry Jordan	833-5969
Secretary	Jane Fowler	598-2448
Treasurer	Bob Johnson	751-0125
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	Joyce Davis	581-9470
	Peggy Riede	833-4881
	Norma Vargas	533-8848
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Education	Peggy Riede	833-4881
Field Trips	Bob Johnson	751-0125
Hospitality	Anne Hussmann	584-4081
Membership	Norma Vargas	533-8848
Programs	Nancy Wilson	833-3907
Publicity	Robert Doss	581-8090
Sanctuary	Jane Fowler	598-2448
Ways & Means	Larry Jordan	833-5969
Publications	Helen Barto	755-4744
Observations Editor	Joyce Davis	581-9470
Editor		
ACT Delegate	John Sproul	545-5157

OCT 89

THE ROADRUNNER

ON THE TRAIL

WITH BOB JOHNSON

HELP - OUR ADOPTED HIGHWAY - HELP

BE THERE!! Meet Bob Johnson at 8 AM on Sat. Oct. 14 at the Flying Saucer building, which is located at the junction of Highway 62/180 and the entrance road into Hueco Tanks State Park. Each 2 person team will only have a 2/10th mile section to clean. Even if you cannot do any walking there is something you can do to help. **PLEASE COME.** Free donuts, see you at 7:45 AM.

UPPER VALLEY HOTSPOT

The Owen's/Durling's area on Gardner Rd., west of Canutillo is often good for a rare species. Meet at the Crossroads ponding area (Doniphan & Country Club) 7:30 AM, Sun. Oct. 1. A scan of the pond, followed by a walk of the Lombardy area will precede the trip to Owen's/Durling's. Possibles are Orange-crowned and Townsends' warblers, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and maybe even a Common Ground-Dove. Lunch not needed, as the tour will be over by noon. Leader-Peggy Riede 833-4881.

FALL FOLIAGE

We will be taking in the beauty of Mottitrick Canyon, while looking for good birds in the Guadalupe Mts. This will take place on Sat. & Sun. Oct. 21 & 22. This is strictly a camping trip as no motels are nearby. Call for details on transportation and times. Bob Johnson 751-0125, recorder 757-1876.

WRENS AND SPARROWS

Starting out from the Wilderness Park Museum on Sat., Oct. 28 a 2 mile round trip walk should find Cactus and Rock Wrens, also Rufus-crowned and Black-throated Sparrows. We could also see Crissal Thrasher and ????. Morning tour only. Leader: Larry Jordan, 833-5969.

FORT HANCOCK RESERVOIR

A good trip to see wintering water birds. We usually see over 50 species including Bufflehead, Cormorants, Egrets and Gulls. Also seen in the area have been Geese, Western and Clarks' Grebes and Harris Hawks. Plan to meet at Feather Lake at 7:15 AM, bring your lunch as this a 6+ hour trip. If you plan on going call Bob Johnson, telephone number above. So you won't forget this trip, mark your calendar now for Sun., Nov. 5.

PICNIC LUNCH AT HUECO TANKS

Good birding in the morning then the fun of lunch with good people. This great trip will occur on Sat. Nov. 18. We might spot the Great Horned Owl and three types of Thrashers, Crissal, Curve-billed and Sage. Meet at Avilla's restaurant, 10000 Montana, 7:30 AM. Leader-John Sproul, 545-5157 or 541-6126 w. Bring a lunch

WHOOPIING CRANES

Nice weather is usually still with us during the 1st weekend in Dec. A tour of the Bosque Del Apache National Wildlife Refuge is planned for 2&3 to take advantage of this. Want to see thousands of Snow Geese and Sandhill Cranes? Bald Eagles still not on your life list? Come along and see these and a few Whooping Cranes. Meet at Transmountain and I10 (Canutillo exit) at 7:30 AM on Sat. the 2d. or at the Refuge Hqs. at 11:30 AM. Motels in Socorro NM (12 miles north), one is Motel 6 (505) 835-4300. Birdwatchers RV Park is just outside the north boundary of the refuge (505) 835-1366. As above leader not yet designated, so call Bob.

SIGHTINGS FROM THE TRAIL

During the weekend of Aug. 19/20 a motel dweller and 10 campers were spotted in the Bonito Lake area of the Lincoln National Forest. These unusual species themselves spotted 2 Dippers, 9 Turkeys, a Hairy Woodpecker, a Calliope Hummingbird, Pygmy Nuthatches and 43 more species.

Sat. Sep. 9, 6 birders including 2 new ones saw 10 swimming and 13 wading type birds at Fort Bliss Ponds. A total of 50 species, including 2 Ospreys and a Barn Owl made this a great morning.

GRACIAS

An unexpected bonus this summer was an opportunity for some chapter members to hear firsthand about the Prince William Sound oil spill. Former El Pasoan and current Valdez, Alaska resident L. J. Evans was in El Paso in August. L. J. is an information officer with the Oil Spill Response Center of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. When she offered to give an impromptu program on the Prince William Sound spill and associated wildlife-rescue efforts, we quickly made the necessary arrangements. Those able to attend on Aug 17 enjoyed a highly informative and eye-opening presentation. Thanks, L. J. for taking the time to speak to us.

* * *

On Aug 30, our chapter education committee introduced over 30 El Paso Independent School District teachers to education programs offered by Audubon and the local Sierra Club group. In the morning, the teachers toured Feather Lake and saw how it can be used as an outdoor classroom. In the afternoon, they learned about Audubon Adventures, our scholarship program, our slide presentations and the Sierra Club's Inner City Outings program. Many thanks to Ginny Baker, Jeanne French, Bob Johnson, Anne Hussmann, Peggy Riede and Nancy Wilson for helping make Aug 30 a most educational day. /John Sproul/

EL PASO NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

From the river valley to the rugged slopes of the Franklin Mts., the flora of the El Paso area is fascinating. Want to expand your knowledge of the plants of this area? Join the El Paso Native Plant Society. At \$5 per year, the dues are one of the great local bargains. The society holds meetings/field trips monthly and has an informative monthly newsletter. To join, send your \$5 check to: El Paso Native Plant Society, c/o George Carlstrom, Treasurer, 7760 Maya, El Paso, TX 79912.



AWARDS NOMINEES WANTED

Plans are afoot for our chapter's next Annual Meeting, scheduled for Sunday, Feb 18, 1990. Once again, we'll induct new officers and present our chapter awards at a special dinner in classy surroundings. You'll get full details in future newsletters, but mark Feb 18 on your calendar now.

The 2 awards we'll present are for Meretorious Service and Conservation Achievement. The MERETORIOUS 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 1989, this award went to Joyce Davis.

The CONSERVATION ACHIEVEMENT 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. We presented our 1989 Conservation Achievement Award to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission for its decision to acquire the 215,000-acre Big Bend Ranch for a state natural area.

We are actively seeking nominees for both awards, and we want your suggestions. Please give it some thought and submit your nominations to John Sproul, 601 W. Yandell #25, El Paso, TX 79902, phone 545-5157.

RUMMAGE '89

Rummage '89, the event everyone has been waiting for, is drawing near. It takes place Sunday, Nov 12, and it promises to be a profitable experience for one and all. You benefit by cleaning unneeded items from your closets, your cupboards, your garage. Audubon benefits when we sell these items to help fund chapter programs. If you have rummage to donate, please contact either Larry Jordan (833-5969) or Bob Johnson (751-0125, 757-1876). If you can help at the sale on Nov 12, please call Larry.

HELP WANTED

We're looking for a few good volunteers. Can you help? Check out the opportunities below:

- NEWSLETTER EDITOR. The search continues. Do you have a way with words, an eye for design and a typist's nimble fingers? Please contact Helen Barto (755-4744) or John Sproul (545-5157).
- RUMMAGE STORER. Bob Johnson is giving up the storage area he has generously let us share in recent years. We'll soon need new space for storing rummage for our annual sale. Please contact Larry Jordan (833-5969).
- ACE PLUMBER. We need a skilled plumber to oversee work on our planned new restroom at Feather Lake Wildlife Sanctuary. Contact Jane Fowler (598-2448).
- NATIVE PLANT PROPAGATORS. Want to apply your skill at propagating native shrubs to help Feather Lake? Among our needs: soap tree yucca, longleaf ephedra, mesquite, tornillo, broom dalea, Torrey wolfberry, fourwing saltbush, sand sagebrush and seepwillow baccharis. Contact John Sproul (545-5157).

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- OCT 13-15. NEW MEXICO AUDUBON CONFERENCE, Black River Village, south of Carlsbad, New Mexico. See the enclosed flyer. Don't worry about the Oct 2 deadline printed on the flyer. If you're interested, you can register after Oct 2.
- NOV 3-5. AUDUBON COUNCIL OF TEXAS, Fall Meeting, San Antonio. Chapter issues, field trips, fellowship, good food and two fascinating programs: "Will the Prairie Chicken Survive?" by Dr. Nova Silvy, Texas A&M, and "The Future of Wildlife Conservation: the Human Factor" by Dr. Clark Adams, Texas A&M. The registration deadline is Oct 3. For registration materials and information, contact chapter ACT delegate John Sproul (915/545-5157).

CHIHUAHUAN DESERT WILDLIFE RESCUE

Whom can you call in the El Paso area when you find an injured wild animal? Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue has developed a healthy network of cooperators:

CDWR CHIEF DISPATCHER

Helen Bigelow 882-2910

AREA REHABILITATORS

West El Paso/Canutillo

Dr. Jim Koschmann (birds) 584-3459

John & Sylvia Weyenberg 877-3215
(songbirds)

East El Paso

Gay & Michael Kozusko (birds) 857-3787

Pam Vella (mammals) 857-0775

Northeast El Paso

Charles & Carol Bella 755-9667

(birds and mammals)

Dr. Gail Patrick 532-5966

(birds and mammals)

Marcia Wheatley (birds) 757-1723

COOPERATING VETERINARIANS

West El Paso

Dr. Jim Koschmann 584-3459

Crossroads Animal Clinic

Central El Paso

Dr. Roger Kendrick 545-1148

Animal Emergency Center

East El Paso

Dr. Bernie Page 592-6200

Johnsen Animal Hospital

Dr. Donna Robinson 593-0713

Eastwood Animal Clinic

Dr. Robert Colvin 855-4100

Desert East Animal Hospital

Northeast El Paso

Dr. Tom McCabe 755-2231

Northeast Veterinary Clinic

Dr. Rob Moreland 755-7647

Skyline Veterinary Hospital

Lower Valley

Dr. Alfred Ellis 778-5355

Dr. George Navar

Animal Clinic

Anthony

Dr. Joseph Kincaid 886-4558

Anthony Animal Clinic

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to our chapter's newest members:
 Walter Aeschbach, D. Bonneau, Larry Brent,
 William Brown, Carol Cotsonis, Tina Daniels,
 E. W. Dierdorf, Donna Enmon, Dennis Freeman,
 Ann T. Hennig, William A. Lanz, LTC. & Mrs.
 J. E. Lawson, LT. Laura Jo MacMullen, John
 McClure, Mrs. M. G. McGee, M. J. Merrell,
 Emmitt Mikeska, Mary Raspberry, D. Ryan,
 Ramon Sarabia, Mary E. Smith, Lelia Stevens,
 and transfer George L. Moseley.

AUDUBON ADVENTURES

Our Audubon Adventures Program is off to a great start. Several enthusiastic teachers signed up for this year's program after learning about it at their Science Inservice which was provided by our local chapter on Aug. 30. Teachers learned about the variety of topics covered in the AA newspaper: birds, insects, snakes, etc., to rivers, forests, and tundra--all written in a very informative and appealing manner. Audubon Adventures also has games, prizes and illustrations that the students really enjoy. It is issued bimonthly and contains a teacher's guide with valuable information and suggestions on how to enrich the lesson.

Our education budget will enable us to sponsor 20 classes this year. Thanks are due to all the birdathon participants who raised the funds to make this possible. Also, special thanks to the following members for helping with their contributions: Joyce Davis, Jane Fowler, Anne Hussmann and Bart Rumaker. You too can contribute to this worthwhile project. It costs \$30.00 to sponsor a class - the kids will love you for it! Give me a call for more info on this.
 /Peggy Riede, Education Chair/ (833-4881)

BOARD MEETINGS

OCT. 9, 7:30 PM. The meeting will be held at Anne Hussmann's home, 533 Stonebluff (584-4081).

NOV. 13, 7:30 PM. The Board will meet at Helen Barto's home, 3312 Moonlight (755-4744).

Members are welcome.

RECYCLING

Want a chance to win fame and fortune? You may be the lucky person who contributes the millionth aluminum can to our chapter recycling efforts. Think of the glory, the accolades. Think of the stories you'll be able to tell your grandchildren. Think cans. Please save your empties, then bring them to an Audubon meeting or field trip, or have Bob Johnson (751-0125, 757-1876) or Bart Rumaker (544-6432) pick them up. Who knows? You may have the big Number 1,000,000 sitting in your refrigerator right now.

FEATHER LAKE NEWS

The chapter has purchased a used storage shed and has the necessary permit from the city; we're ready to move the portable building into place at the Sanctuary for use as a maintenance shed. Hopefully, this will be accomplished by Oct 7, our scheduled day to open for visitors.

The schedule remains the same as last year: 8 - 11 AM on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month and 3:30 PM to dusk every Sunday. Exceptions are holiday weekends when Feather Lake will be closed. Please call Jeannette Cole (565-1957) and volunteer to greet our visitors.

The next scheduled work days are Oct 7 and Nov 4. Your help is needed and appreciated. And while you're helping with the chores, you can check out the birds. We've had some exciting feathered visitors lately--a Least Bittern since Aug 20, and an Osprey since Aug 30. Also, duck numbers are picking up.

And, pardners, if you didn't saddle up and ride out to the Sanctuary Sept 16, you shore did miss a great breakfast whipped up by cowgirl chefs Anne Hussmann and Nancy Wilson. The grub was delicious; thank you, Anne and Nancy, for startin' this work day off in style. And thanks a heap

(FL News continued)

to these fine folks who came out a rarin' to help with the chores: Helen Barto, Betty and John Bowen, Jeannette Cole, Terese Garcia, Anne Hussmann, Bob Johnson, Betty Pagel, Bart Rumaker, John Sproul, Sid Shepperd, Madeline Vallari, Mary Ann Vernon and Nancy Wilson.
/Jane Fowler, Sanctuary Chair/

Audubon Computer Software Garners Rave Reviews

Elite Computing called it "wonderful"; *PC Resource* praised it and said, "young people might also be able to determine if they have a career interest in one of the wild-life sciences"; *InCider* magazine claimed "without a doubt 'Grizzly Bears' is one of the best educational packages I have seen"; *A+* magazine wrote, "Each of the (four) programs provided hours of intellectual challenge and unusually comprehensive information..."; and *The New York Times* said that it "is the very model of an educational program." What are these reviewers praising so highly? The Audubon Wildlife Adventures Grizzly Bears Software.

The computer software, titled "Grizzly Bears," introduces players to that magnificent animal through a series of four interactive stories. Additional software in the Audubon Adventures series includes "Whales," "Sharks," and "Poacher Patrol." Each title comes with a curriculum guide with expanded activities.

For more information, write: Audubon Television, 801 Pennsylvania Ave., S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003.



Pigeons and Hammocks: A Fruitful Relationship

by Reed Bowman and G. Thomas Bancroft,
Audubon Research Biologists

In ecology, the term mutualism means a relationship between two organisms that benefits both. Ecologists are increasingly finding evidence that in the tropics and sub-tropics, mutualism between plants and animals is an abundant and complex phenomenon. An understanding of the nature of mutual interactions may be critical if we are to save the rapidly disappearing flora and fauna of these regions.

We have been studying the role fruit plays in the reproductive ecology of the white-crowned pigeon in the Florida Keys. In the Keys, 70 percent of the native flora relies primarily upon birds for seed dispersal, and the white-crowned pigeon, a fruit eater, may be the most important avian seed-disperser there.

White-crowned pigeons feed almost exclusively in hammocks (rises in landscapes with West Indian hardwood plants). Early in the breeding season, the pigeons feed mainly on figs. By mid-July, however, poisonwood fruit accounts for nearly 80 percent of their diet. Timed with this shift in diet are a peak in nesting initiations and an increase in nesting success. It appears, moreover, that poisonwood is central to the survival of the pigeon brood. Before poisonwood ripens, as many as 90 percent of second-hatched chicks die, mostly of starvation. Once the poisonwood fruit is available, only 15 percent of these chicks perish.

The problem for wildlife managers is that Florida's hammocks, because they occupy high ground, are under intense development pressure. In addition, poisonwood, because it causes a poison-ivy-like rash in humans, is one of the first plant species to go. The implications of this are clear for both pigeons and hammocks: Without poisonwood, the population of the white-crowned pigeon could be severely limited. Without the seed-dispersing birds, the health of the hammocks' plant communities will suffer. We are in the process of adding our data on the pigeons to a larger model that will help us predict the effects of environmental changes on the South Florida ecosystem and, with luck, help us manage it for a healthy future.

AUDUBON ACTIVIST

Newsjournal of the National Audubon Society

Simply put, there's no better source of information for individuals concerned about the fate of the natural world. Each issue gives you the straight news on important conservation issues and the contacts you need to take effective action.

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CN2

OBSERVATIONS

(uncommon, rare & casual sightings)

August 12 - September 9

DP - Doniphan Pool
 FB - Ft. Bliss Ponds
 FL - Feather Lake
 LA - Lombardy Ave.

Sightings by a field trip member are noted by "+" after the leader's initials. Sightings in an observer's yard are indicated by an "*" before his/her initials.

LOONS - WOODPECKERS

Pied-billed Grebes, Green-backed Herons & Black-crowned Night-Herons were seen at FL from 8/20 to 9/3 (JS,JF,PR). The first August sighting of a Least Bittern was reported 8/20 at FL (JS). It was also seen 8/26 to 9/3 (JS,JF,PR). Ospreys were found at FL 8/30 and 9/3 (JS) and FB 9/9 (BJ+). A Willet was spotted at FB 8/27 (BJ). A Red-necked Phalarope and a Yellow-billed Cuckoo were seen at FB 9/4 (BJ). Belted Kingfishers returned to FL 8/20 (JS) and LA 9/3 (JD). Single Acorn Woodpeckers were reported at HT 9/1 (DT) and FB 9/4 (BJ).

FLYCATCHERS - WEAVER FINCHES

Scrub Jays were seen at HT (DT) and in e. El Paso (*AA) on 8/19 and in Sunset Heights (*JS) from 8/26 to 9/7. A Towns-end's Warbler was found at FB 9/4 (BJ). An Am. Redstart was spotted at HT 8/19 (DT) and a Painted Redstart was seen in Rim Rd. area (*JM) 8/27. Lazuli Buntings were reported at DP 8/12 (JD) and FB 8/27 (BJ). A Painted Bunting was seen at FB 8/13 (BJ).

OBSERVERS: Joyce Davis, Jane Fowler, Bob Johnson, Jack McDaniel, Peggy Riede, John Sproul and Dennis Taylor.
 /Joyce Davis, Observations Editor/
 (h 581-9470, w 544-6772)



New Audubon Wildlife Report Examines Corps' Wetland Role

For the fifth year in a row, the **AUDUBON WILDLIFE REPORT** dives into the heart of a federal agency and emerges with a well-written and balanced analysis. The 1989/1990 volume features the often-controversial U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Wetlands champions will be familiar with the Corps, an agency whose conflicting mandates to be both wetlands protector and developer often put it at odds with itself and with those who would protect precious wetlands.

But there's more. The sections on conservation challenges are a must-read for all environmental activists. The Report contains some of the most comprehensive and incisive discussions of important and timely conservation issues—destruction of our ancient forests, battles over water rights in the West, global warming and its implications for wildlife and humans, the often federally subsidized overgrazing of our public lands, and many other topics.

A longstanding and popular component of the series, the species case histories, cover a diversity of wildlife species, both abundant and endangered. Some of the species featured: monarch butterfly, western North Atlantic swordfish, humpback whale, roseate tern, marbled murrelet, and ocelot.

The appendices are invaluable for their addresses and phone numbers of key personnel in the major federal natural resource agencies.

The **AUDUBON WILDLIFE REPORT 1989/1990** is an indispensable part of any conservationist's bookshelf. The report will be available beginning in August. All four earlier volumes, 1985 to 1988/1989, are still available from Academic Press, Inc., which copublishes the book with National Audubon. To order, call: 1-800-321-5068 (In Missouri, Alaska, or Hawaii: 1-314-528-8110).

THE ROADRUNNER

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 Publications Chair - Helen Barto
 Publisher - Helen Barto
 Editor -

When you join the National Audubon Soc., you automatically become a member of the chapter in your area. El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society meets on the 3rd Monday of each month (Sept - May) in the Garden Center, 3105 Grant. THE ROADRUNNER is published at least 6 times per year and sent to all chapter members. Nonmembers can subscribe for \$4 per year. Make checks payable to EPTPAS and mail to RR Editor at the address above. Also, please send us any changes or corrections in your name or address.

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How your support for the natural world simply by writing a check: A National Audubon Society Message Check. Introduced by Message!Check Corporation, this one-of-a-kind bank check has an elegant full-color reproduction of J.J. Audubon's "Painted Buntings," with the words, "National Audubon Society, Protecting Habitats." Susan Martin, senior vice-president for National Audubon, encourages environmentalists to purchase the checks: "Every time you write an Audubon check you will help us spread our message and generate money to continue our important work."

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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 _____

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Please make all checks payable to the National Audubon Society.



Send this application and your check to:

National Audubon Society

Chapter Membership Data Center

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