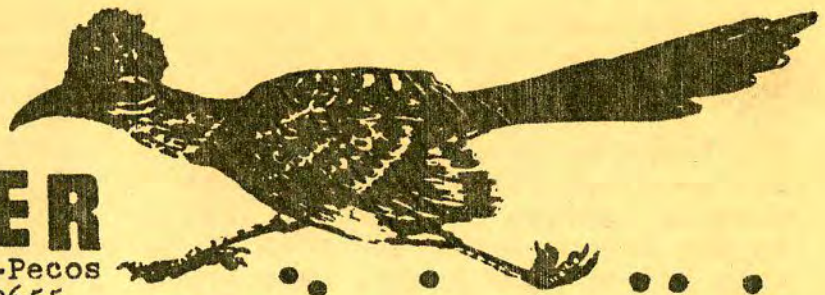


the ROADRUNNER

Newsletter of El Paso/Trans-Pecos
Audubon Society - P.O. Box 9655
El Paso, Texas 79986



Editors: Jane Fowler - Jo Nagel

Volume 16 (9)

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November 1986

GENERAL MEETING

MON., NOV. 17, 1986, 7:30 PM, Garden Center, 3105 Grant in Memorial Park. The program "Birds, Parasites and Africa" will be given by Dr. Albert Canaris, Chairman of the Dept. of Biology at UT El Paso. Dr. Canaris has made repeated trips to Africa to further his studies of the parasitology of birds. He has in past years given excellent programs to the society. It is with pleasure that we look forward to hearing Dr. Canaris again. Worthy of note, also, is the fact that Dr. Canaris' wife, Patti Canaris, graciously and generously gave of her time and talent in painting the picture which was the first place prize for sponsors in the 1986 Birdathon. El Paso/Trans-Pecos ranked second in the nation for money paid by sponsors to participants in the Birdathon.



FIELD TRIP CALENDAR

HUECO TANKS

SAT., NOV. 8. Meet at Bella Napoli, 10600 Montana, at 7:30 AM. Leader: Jean Coyle(778-7238).

NORTHEAST OXIDATION PONDS

SUN., NOV. 16. Meet at Farrow's parking lot, 4801 Fred Wilson at 2 PM. We will have a pleas-

ant afternoon looking for black-birds, egrets, ibis, ducks and pyrrhuloxia. Bring a friend. Leader: Bob Johnson(751-0125).

APACHE SPRINGS

SAT., DEC. 6. Meet at Wilderness Park Museum at 7:30 AM. Will look for sparrows and other wintering birds. Leader: Joe Guinn (566-8438).

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MON., NOV., 10, 1986 at 7:30 PM the Board will meet at the home of Gloria and Greg Woelfel, 615 Frontera, El Paso (833-7523). All members are welcome.



CHAPTER SLIDE PROGRAM

The EPTPAS slide show, "Birds of El Paso", will be presented at Memorial Park Library on Nov. 12, at 7:00 PM. New Audubon members may be interested in attending to learn about the varied bird population of the area. Members who are interested in learning to give the slide program to schools and local organizations are especially invited.

FIELD TRIPS FOLLOW-UP

Nine birders hiked up to West Cottonwood Springs on a fine Saturday morning. Total species seen was over 20. On our way back

down the canyon we did glimpse a Golden Eagle silently glide over behind us.

The trash at Interpretive Site 12 was no match for EP/TPAS's crack cleanup crew on its Oct. 11 visit to Rio Bosque Park. The team of 9, ably led by Mark Riede, made short work of this site, then proved equally industrious in cleaning a nearby site. In the process, the group found several artifacts of dubious value, which Bill Doebele is now curating. In addition to Mark and Bill, Helen Barto, Joyce Davis, Jeannie French, Peggy and Peter Riede, George Spozarsky and John Sproul deserve thanks for their efforts. As a reward, the group visited the Socorro Sewage Ponds after the cleanup.

WEST TEXAS RADIOACTIVE-WASTE COALITION

West Texas will become the radioactive dumping ground for the State of Texas if House Bill 449 continues on its course through the State Legislature. The coalition is concerned about the many possible consequences of having this site located so close to our city. The site will be radioactive for 350 years,

A symposium will be held in the UTEP Union Theater on November 8, bringing together environmental and nuclear specialists to discuss the pros and cons of this issue. EP/TP Audubon members who are concerned, would like more information or can help in any way, please call Tom Baker(877-3365) or John Hamilton(562-6360).

/Tom Baker/

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S EYRIE

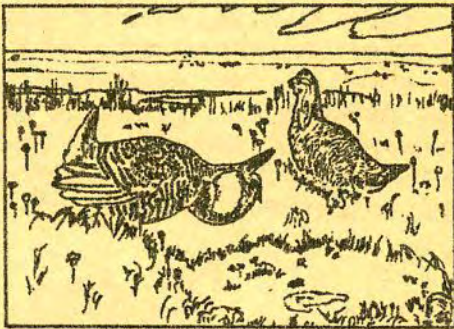
MUCHAS GRACIAS to all who helped with the display in Bassett Mall Oct. 25-26. It was a great success. Double the thanks to Sarah Jane Dodds for having the display panels in her den for 3 days as

it was being organized.

RUMMAGE Call us, we'll pick it up. The big sale is Sun. Nov. 9. Who to call? Bart Rumaker(544-6432), Tom Baker(877-3365) or me. FEATHER LAKE Work is progressing rapidly. Most of the growth has been removed from the basin which is now being deepened and expanded. Thanks again to those who came to the work day Sun. afternoon Nov. 2. We also saw a number of interesting birds. SLIDE SHOWS Our education committee needs a few volunteers to help give our slide program to various groups and schools. The next showing will take place Wed. Nov. 12 at 7 PM in Memorial Park Library. If interested in volunteering, call Gloria Woelfel (833-7523), Ginny Baker (877-3365) or me (751-0125).

TEXAS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY We will be hosting the spring meeting of TOS May 14-16, 1987. I will be asking for some help then so we can show them a great time. More on this after the first of the year.

/Bob Johnson/

Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept.		1986 Nongame Stamp \$5.00
YES, I want to help support the nongame wildlife and endangered species programs of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Please send me _____ 1986 Texas Nongame Stamp(s) at \$5 each. Amount enclosed: _____.		
Name _____		
Address _____		
Zip _____		
Please make checks payable to: El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society P.O. Box 9655, El Paso, TX 79986		

CONSERVATION

SPORTS COMPLEX, FRANKLIN MTS. ST. PARK DON'T MIX

Among the propositions El Pasoans approved at the polls Oct 11 was a \$6-million bond issue for a new baseball stadium/multisports complex. As friends of Franklin Mts. St. Park (FMSP) are well aware, proponents of the sports complex want it built on Castner Range land right below the Wilderness Park Museum. Not a good idea, says the Franklin Mts. Wilderness Coalition (FMWC), to which our group belongs. In fact, a terrible idea.

The FMWC has long sought inclusion of the Castner Range lands in FMSP and has viewed the land bordering Transmountain Rd. as particularly important. In its natural state, this land provides a beautiful entryway to the Park. The land in the vicinity of the Wilderness Park Museum is a logical location for future Park interpretive facilities and for other facilities in association with the museum. And, perhaps most important, the lower slopes bordering Transmountain Rd. support a unique floral assemblage that includes several plant species found nowhere else in Texas. The most conspicuous, of course, is the showy Mexican goldpoppy, which in good years blankets these lower slopes. The poppies north of Transmountain Rd. would be largely replaced by a parking lot if a 30-acre sports complex were built at this location.

The FMWC is working hard to convince local decision makers that a sports complex on Castner Range land next to Transmountain Rd. is unacceptable. There are a number of viable alternate sites where construction of a sports complex would not destroy a unique plant association and would not degrade what should become the beautiful eastern entryway to FMSP. If you agree, let Mayor Jonathan Rogers and your city representative (Suzie Azar, Alicia Chacon, Ed Elsey, Jimmy Goldman, Pat Haggerty or Tony Ponce) know. The address for all:

2 Civic Center Plaza, El Paso, TX 79999.
Jimmy Goldman, as one of the proponents of the Castner Range site, particularly needs to hear that it is unacceptable.
/John Sproul/

BLM DONA ANA COUNTY LANDS EIS FAVORS FRANKLINS

On Oct 1, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) released its final Southern Rio Grande Plan Amendment/Environmental Impact Statement (SRGPA/EIS) on land-tenure adjustments in Dona Ana Co., NM. This is the document in which BLM identifies those lands in Dona Ana Co. it wishes to retain in BLM ownership, those it believes are suitable for disposal from BLM ownership and those it would like to acquire (RR; May, Sep).

Relative to the draft SRGPA/EIS, the final document includes 3 significant changes involving the Franklin Mts.:

- It boosts the area to be retained in the Franklins from 8,710 to 9,831 acres and the area suitable for acquisition from 640 to 1,292 acres.
- It proposes retaining 4,675 acres and acquiring 680 acres for a 1-to-2-mile-wide recreation/wildlife corridor between the Organ and Franklin mountains.
- It identifies both the New Mexico portion of the Franklin Mts. and the Organ/Franklin Mts. Corridor as areas that might have potential for designation as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs). Further, it gives these areas special management protection until an ACEC decision is made.

In terms of securing lasting protection for the entire Franklin Mts. range, these are important changes, and BLM made them thanks largely to efforts of the Franklin Mts. Wilderness Coalition (FMWC), to which EP/TPAS belongs. Among the many groups giving much-appreciated support to the FMWC in this campaign:

the Mesilla Valley Audubon Society (Las Cruces), also an FMWC member; the Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. and The Nature Conservancy. Special thanks are due Dr. Fred Gehlbach of Baylor University for traveling to Las Cruces at the FMWC's request to discuss with BLM staff the important role corridors linking large natural areas play in preserving biological diversity.

Thanks are also due BLM for acting positively on the FMWC's recommendations. Copies of both the draft and final SRGPA/EIS are available from BLM, 1800 Marquess St., Las Cruces, NM 88005 (505/525-8228). The deadline for comments on the final SRGPA/EIS is Nov 10. /John Sproul/

SUPERFUND REAUTHORIZED AT 11TH HOUR

The issue was in doubt until the very end, but our national toxic-waste clean-up law, better known as Superfund, has been reauthorized. A chronology of recent events:

Oct 2 - The House-Senate conference committee deliberating on the funding mechanism for the program (RR, Sep) reached a compromise agreement and sent it back to the House and Senate for approval.

Oct 3 - Senior White House advisors announced they would urge Pres. Reagan to veto the measure. The administration objected to a provision that would raise some 30% of the Superfund monies via a broad-based tax on industry and also thought the \$8.5-billion-over-5-years price tag about \$3 billion too high. But immediately after the White House announcement, the Senate voted 88-8 to approve the conference committee's report, more than enough to override a veto. Sen. Bentsen voted for approval, Sen. Gramm against.

Oct 8 - The House approved the committee report 386-27, again more than enough to override a veto. Rep. Ron Coleman voted for approval.

Oct 9 - The Superfund reauthorization was sent to Pres. Reagan, who then had until Oct 21 to sign, veto or ignore the bill. If Congress stayed in session beyond that date and Pres. Reagan did not act on the bill, it would become law. But if Congress adjourned before Oct 21, presidential inaction would kill the bill via a "pocket veto".

Oct 17 - After Congress made clear that it would stay in session as long as needed to get the Superfund reauthorization enacted, Pres. Reagan knew the game was up; he signed the bill into law.

Oct 18 - The 99th U.S. Congress adjourned. /John Sproul/

SUPERFUND HIGHLIGHTS

Among its key provisions, the Superfund reauthorization:

- provides \$8.5 billion over 5 years for cleanup of hazardous-waste sites and \$500 million for cleanup of leaking underground storage tanks;
- requires that cleanups meet the standards and criteria of other federal environmental laws, with limited waivers;
- mandates that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) start at least 375 cleanups over the next 5 years;
- includes a "right-to-know" provision giving communities access to information on everyday releases of toxics to the environment;
- allows citizens to sue EPA or private parties to force compliance with Superfund; and
- prohibits moving Superfund wastes to leaking hazardous-waste disposal facilities.

CONSERVATION CAPSULES

TPWD FUNDING: The Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. (TPWD) emerged scratched but not gored from the recent special sessions of the Texas Legislature (RR, Sep). TPWD's share of General Fund

money for FY1987 was reduced 13% (\$2.4 million), a level the agency had already planned for in response to Gov. White's call for such cuts last fall. Also, the legislature "robbed" \$1.4 million in dedicated funds from TPWD's Game, Fish, and Water Safety Fund. The net result of these cuts? TPWD personnel will forego raises, some positions won't be filled, and some park maintenance and development will be postponed. It could have been worse, much worse. TPWD's supporters in the legislature deserve thanks for preventing more damaging cuts. Special thanks are due Sen. Tati Santiesteban, who, as Chair of the Senate Natural Resources Committee, refused to let bills to raid the Local Parks Fund see the light of day.

TEXAS AUDUBON LOBBYIST: The budget wars are by no means over, though. And, says Audubon's Southwest Regional Representative Murray Walton, "The activities of the Special Sessions and the continuing economic downturn make the need for an Audubon State lobbyist all the more apparent. The 1987 Regular Session of the Texas Legislature promises to be extremely difficult in regard to funding natural resources protection. Also, the preoccupation with funding may make passage of other legislation more difficult. Additional support of the Audubon Council of Texas in funding the Audubon State Lobbyist position [RR, Sep] is certainly warranted." Want to help? Contributions, payable to "El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society", may be sent to: Texas Audubon Lobbyist, P.O. Box 9655, El Paso, TX 79986.

EMERGENCY WETLANDS RESOURCES ACT: This bill to boost federal wetland-protection efforts (RR, Sep) was one of the winners in the crush of business before Congress adjourned for the year. At press time, it was awaiting Pres. Reagan's expected signature. Among other things, its passage means the price of a federal duck stamp will go from \$7.50 this year to \$10 next year and will rise to \$15 over a 5-year period. Also, selected national wildlife refuges (NWRs) are now authorized to charge entry fees. Bosque

del Apache NWR near Socorro, NM, is one refuge definitely considering such fees, perhaps to be implemented as early as winter 1987-88.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT: Among the legislative losers was the bill to reauthorize the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Give a black mark to Sen. Lloyd Bentsen for his role in preventing the bill from coming to a vote in the Senate (RR, Sep). Now, ESA reauthorization efforts must start from scratch next year. In the meantime, federal endangered species programs will be funded in FY1987 at the same level as FY1986 under the omnibus appropriations bill Congress passed just prior to its adjournment.



Snowy Plover

MVAS ADOPTS LAKE HOLLOMAN

The Mesilla Valley Audubon Society (MVAS), our sister chapter in Las Cruces, has "adopted" Lake Holloman, the 165-acre water body along U.S. Highway 70/82 near Alamogordo, NM. Most of the lake is on land administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and MVAS has signed a cooperative management agreement (CMA) with BLM to assume a variety of responsibilities at Lake Holloman consistent with the National Audubon Society's "Adopt-a-Refuge" program.

Under the CMA, MVAS agrees to:

- monitor bird species numbers seasonally at the lake;
- develop objectives for a habitat management plan;
- discuss proposals with BLM, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and New Mexico Dept. of Game and Fish; and

- provide manpower for small projects identified in the management plan.

MVAS is to be commended for this worthwhile undertaking. Lake Holloman is important: as a migratory stopover for a wide variety of waterbirds, particularly shorebirds; as a wintering area; and as a breeding area for species such as Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet and Snowy Plover. You can help MVAS by visiting the lake and sending any bird records to: Eleanor Wootten, P.O. Box 3574, Las Cruces, NM 88003. Your records will help MVAS both monitor bird populations at Lake Holloman and document that the lake is getting recreational use. /John Sproul/



Project WILD

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

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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

ATTENTION EDUCATORS!

Do you wish to incorporate wildlife studies in your curricula? Plan to attend the Project WILD Workshop. When: Sat., Nov. 22 9 AM to 3 PM Where: UTEP Education Bldg.

Contact Gloria Woelfel (833-7523 -- after 6 PM) for more info if you want to attend.

* * * * *

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, PO Box 9655, El Paso, TX 79986. Please send any changes or corrections in name, address, or telephone # to this address.



HAVE A HAPPY
THANKSGIVING

OBSERVATIONS
September 21 - October 19

Some unusual species were sighted during this period, and our common fall migrants turned up.

CP - Crossroads Pond
EPCC - El Paso Country Club
FH - Fort Hancock HT - Hueco Tanks
RP - Randel's Pool RB - Rio Bosque
SSP - Socorro Sewage Ponds
T - Tornillo V - Vado

LOONS - FALCONS

A Pied-billed Grebe was at CP 10/3 (JoD). Two Eared Grebes were seen at the SSP 10/5 (JS). Great Blue Herons were found at several locations (V, FH, SSP, T, RP) during this reporting period. A Great Egret was at FH 10/12 (BJ,RW). Snowy Egrets were seen at V 10/4 (JoD) and FH 10/12 (BJ,RW). Flocks of Cattle Egrets were at V 10/4 and 10/18 (JoD,AS) and 7 were spotted at SSP 10/5 (JS). White-faced Ibis were reported at SSP 10/5 (JS) and T 10/12 (BJ,RW). A Ross' Goose was at SSP 10/5 (JS). Two N. Pintails were at CP 10/12 (JoD). An early sighting of a Canvasback was made at SSP 10/5 (JS). Two Redheads were seen at CP 10/17 and 10/19 (JoD). A Ring-necked Duck was at T 10/12 (BJ,RW). The last report of a Turkey Vulture was at RB 10/11 (JS). An Osprey was perched in a cottonwood tree on Country Club Rd. 10/11 (PgR,PR). A Sharp-shinned Hawk was at T 10/12 (BJ,RW). A Cooper's Hawk was seen feasting on a roadrunner in the upper valley 10/5 (TB); another was seen at RB 10/5 (JS). A Golden Eagle was seen over the Franklin Mountains 9/27 (TB,et al.).

QUAIL - WOODPECKERS

A Black-bellied Plover in breeding plumage was spotted at SSP 10/10 (JS) and 5 in winter plumage were seen there 10/12 (BV). There was a late sighting of a Black-necked Stilt at SSP 10/5 (JS). Six Am. Avocets were also spotted at SSP 10/5 (JS). Lesser Yellowlegs were at SSP 10/5 and 10/11 (JS). Ring-billed Gulls were seen at SSP 10/5 (JS) and T 10/12 (BJ,RW). A Herring Gull (2nd winter) was at SSP 10/12 (BV). Forster's Terns were reported at SSP 10/5 (JS) and 10/12 (BV). Belted Kingfishers were

seen at CP, RP, and at an irrigation ditch near Canutillo 10/5 (JoD,TB).

FLYCATCHERS - VIREOS

Black Phoebes were at RP, RB, HT 10/5 (JS,JoD,BV) and at T 10/12 (BJ,RW). Two Cassin's Kingbirds were seen at HT 10/5 (BV). Two Red-breasted Nuthatches and a House Wren were also at HT 10/5 (BV). Am. Robins were reported at EPCC 10/3 and V 10/4 & 10/17 (JoD).

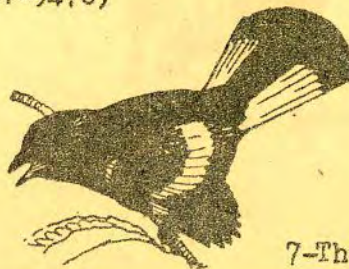
WARBLERS - WEAVER FINCHES

A Townsend's Warbler was at HT 10/5 (BV). The airport is not the usual place for birding, but an unexpected Am. Redstart was spotted in the patio 10/10 (TB). Black-chinned and Lincoln's sparrows were reported at HT 10/5 (BV). The first fall White-crowned Sparrows and Dark-eyed Juncos were seen at HT 10/5 (BV). Yellow-headed Blackbirds were reported from various locations: V, T, and RP (BJ, JoD,RW,JS). Scott's Orioles were reported at a Mountain Park feeder 9/29 and 10/2 (JB). Lesser Goldfinches were seen at W. Cottonwood Spring 9/25 (TB,et al.).

Exotic (escaped cage) Birds

Two species of the parrot family have been seen recently in the upper valley. Three to 4 Green Parakeets were seen around EPCC 7/27 (JoD,et al.). Five Black-hooded Conures (from S. Am.) were spotted in a yard at Tennis West (PgR,PR). Also a flock of parrots was seen in the lower valley in the same general area where some were reported last year.

OBSERVERS: Tom Baker, Janet Brockmoller, Joyce Davis, Bob Johnson, Peggy & Peter Riede, Ann Schultis, John Sproul, Brad Vaughn, Ray Waite. /Joyce Davis, Observations Editor/ (581-9470)



7-The Roadrunner

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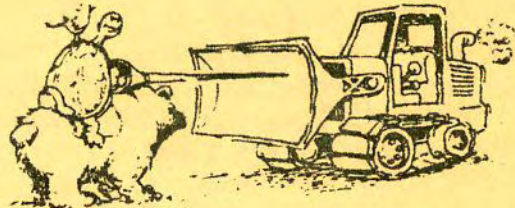
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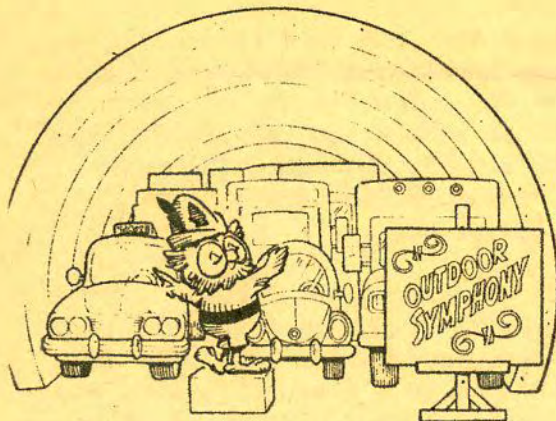
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KEEP UP THE CRUSADE!



Pick up your lance and stay with those crusading to protect wildlife and the environment. Audubon Action (NAS newsjournal) has been replaced by our new national newsletter, the *Audubon Activist*, to give you all the information you need to slay the dragons. Sign up for the "Activist" corps today. Use the subscription envelope enclosed in the June (final) issue of NAS newsjournal, or send six dollars (for one year) to the *Audubon Activist*, 950 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022.

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