

BURROUING OUL

CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

October - November 1981

CALENDAR

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10 and 11, NEW MEXICO AUDUBON COUNCIL MEETING.

Meeting: 12 noon in PNM's new solar energy building.

Dinner: 7:30 p.m. at Bella Vista in Cedar Crest. Installation of officers.

All members are <u>welcome</u> at the NMAC meetings. Balloon viewing and a short field trip will take place on Sunday, October 11. Call Evelyn or George Price for more information and to make dinner reservations.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11--PICNIC

There will be a picnic at 1:00 p.m. at the Rio Grande Zoo. Bring food for your family, and blanket to sit on. Drinks provided by your board of directors. Call the Prices (242-6604) for more information.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15 -- REGULAR MEETING

Regular meeting of the CNMAS, 7:30 p.m. at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church. The speaker will be Donna Cole who will give a slide accompanied talks "An Ornithologist in Kenya." Birds and wildlife of Kenya will be featured from Donna's first-hand experience.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17--FIELD TRIP

Work party to our adopted trail in the Sandias. Meet at 2:00 p.m. at the intersection of Tramway Blvd. and the Forest Service road to Juan Tabo picnic area (about one mile north of the turn-off to the tram). Bring a canteen, a snack, and

work gloves. PLEASE CONTACT Barbara Hussey (292-5626) by THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, if you plan to go so sufficient picks and shovels can be checked out from the ranger station.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25--FIELD TRIP

Meet at 8:00 a.m. in Edgewood, New Mexico, at Community Building for a potluck lunch. We will leave our dinners at the building and work to the south side of the highway where there is lots of birding. Olis and Evelyn Jones will furnish coffee and tea. We will also visit the Jones' homestead where there are birds and horny-toads galore. Hart Schwarz will lead us in the birding.

Directions: Go east from Albuquerque to Edgewood, take the right ramp at Edgewood, immediately turn left, go short distance to the stuffed house, and turn right. The Community Building is a short distance from TURNERS.

Call Hart (266-1810) or the Jones (298-9130) for more information.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7--BOARD MEETING

SATURDAY AFTERNOON: A board meeting at the home of Wade and Sally Douglas in Golden, New Mexico. Contact Kay Anderson (898-2968) for directions. Bring folding chairs. All CNMAS members are welcome at all board meetings.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16--DEADLINE FOR BORROWING OWL COPY. CALL THE PRICES (242-6604)

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19--REGULAR MEETING

The program will be on the Rio Grande Biological Inventory. Valorie Hink (and possibly others) who has been participating in the study of the biology of the Rio Grande from approximately Pilar to La Joya, will present the results of the study to date. 7:30 p.m., St. Timmothy's Lutheran Church.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21--FIELD TRIP

Work party to our adopted trail in the Sandias. See October 17 for details. Please contact Barbara by November 19.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3--BOARD MEETING

Board meeting at the home of Phyllis Schmidt, 6408 Pepperdine, N.E. (821-5790), at 7:30 p.m. All CNMAS members are welcome.

NOVEMBER BRINGS WILDLIFE FILMS

The Audubon Wildlife Film Series starts Tuesday, November 3, 1981. HAVE YOU PURCHASED YOUR SEASON TICKETS FROM US YET??? In "Superior - Land of the Woodland Drummer," speaker Tom Sterling follows the wolf, lion, grouse, and other creatures through four seasons of survival.

With your season ticket, you are entitled to see "Skiing Around the World" with John Jay. This humorous film will be enjoyed by skiiers and nonskiiers alike. This will be shown, Wednesday, November 18. All shows start at 7:30 p.m.

DID YOU KNOW???

With the proceeds of our wildlife film ticket sales, we have been awarding scholarships to teachers. We have been sending them to an ecology camp - camp Wood in Wyoming. Now we hope in the future to give awards to STUDENTS who have accomplished outstanding services or projects in the field of Audubon work.

We can only do this if you purchase your season tickets from Audubon. Help us get more young people involved in the Audubon cause.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

I wish to thank all the generous people who helped this year in putting on the first state organized Audubon booth. We had people helping in setting up the booth, watching the booth, and housing out-of-city Audubon members.

It has been very encouraging to see people work on maintaining our adopted trail in the Sandias. I hope that more members will go out and take care of our trail.

The New Mexico Audubon Council will be meeting in Albuquerque for their annual meeting. All Audubon members are welcome to attend. If you wish more information, contact George and Evelyn Price (242-6604).

There is a potluck field trip scheduled in October. Hope everyone can get out and share in this enjoyable event. Look in the calendar for more details. If you enjoy this, please let us know.

November 3 starts our wildlife films. If you haven't bought your tickets yet, please be sure you buy them from us. We do <u>not</u> receive any money from the tickets sold at Popejoy. This series looks good so be sure not to miss them.

Kay Anderson



CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS COMING SOON

The time frame for future Christmas Bird Counts is as follows:

December 19, 1981-January 3, 1982 December 18, 1982-January 2, 1983 December 17, 1983-January 1, 1984

December 15, 1984-January 1, 1985

Each of these time periods includes three weekends. Exact dates for the 1981 Albuquerque Christmas counts will be in the next Owl, as well as, information on how you can help.

I WISH I'D SAID THAT

Everyone of us sometimes runs across something in print or orally that makes us say "I wish I'd said that." Such was an editorial in the Fort Worth Audubon Society. I have therefore pilfered President Tom Wood's editorial. Substituting "Bosque del Apache" for "Hagerman" will be easy for all of us. Thank you, Tom, for putting it so well.

"I have alway viewed the National Wildlife Refuges as a private treasure. Not many people realize the wildlife spectacle that is theirs for the viewing in the geese at Hagerman or Tishomingo, the whooping cranes at Aransas, the sandhill cranes at Muleshoe or the dense trails of Santa Anna with its tropical charms. I have read and reread Laura and William Riley's book on the refuges and dreamed of seeing manatees and otters in Florida, hundreds of bald eagles along the upper Mississippi or grizzly bears in an Alaskan refuge. For years, I have planned my trips and vacations to include as many refuges as possible, and I've rarely been disappointed.

My enjoyment and support of these refuges has been very passive but now they need our help. Our federal refuges as well as many other federal programs near and dear to our heart (Clean Air Act, Endangered Species Act, National Parks and Wilderness) are in serious trouble. In the past, I've been content to enjoy these areas and let others worry about politics. I was glad that the Sierra Club, Wilderness Society and, yes, our own National Audubon Society lobbied and fought political battles, but I didn't concern myself with them. The time for such apathy is past. The election of the new administration was not a mandate to ignore the environment and it is important that our representatives in government realize that our concern for the environment has not changed. Some of the problems have no quick solution. Mr. Watt is a disaster, but no clear method of removing an appointed position exists other than registering our disapproval of the policies of his department.

We all need to become aware of the battles to be fought and offer our help in fighting them. But every once in a while leave the letter writing and newspaper behind, and go up to Hagerman and watch the geese for a day just to remember why we must fight."

BIDS TO HALT TENN-TOM AND GARRISON FAIL

Attempts to kill funding for the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway and Garrison Diversion Unit were defeated last week in the House of Representatives, albeit by close votes. In the worst of the two defeats, a switch of ten votes could have made the difference.

By 208 to 198, the House voted down an amendment to the Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill that would have deleted the \$198 million budgeted for the coming year to continue construction of the \$3 billion water way to link the Tennessee River with the Gulf of Mexico. It is the biggest earth-moving project the Army Corps of Engineers has ever undertaken. The unsuccessful amendment was offered by Joel Pritchard of Washington state and Robert W. Edgar of Pennsylvania.

The proposal to stop funding for the partially completed Garrison Diversion Unit in North Dakota was defeated 206 to 188. Construction of this unnecessary irrigation project is currently blocked by the latest ruling in the protracted lawsuit being carried on by National Audubon Society, but a victory in Congress could have proved a welcome final blow. The amendment was offered by Silvio Conte of Massachusetts and James Weaver of Oregon.

Editor's Note: With further congressional budget cuts in store, now is the time to urge our congressmen to eliminate these "pork barrel" projects--WRITE NOW!!

FALCON COMEBACK

A pair of peregrine falcons nested this spring on a cliff in the White Mountains of New Hampshire and fledged two young, reports the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It was the first known nesting of peregrines there in 28 years. DDT was a major factor in wiping out this species as a breeding bird in the eastern United States, but now that the insecticide has been banned and its long-lasting effects are washing out of the environment, efforts are being made to reintroduce falcons. The female of the New Hampshire pair is believed to be a falcon release in the recovery program, but it is not known where the male came from.

A ROUND OF SETBACKS HITS THE WHOOPING CRANES

It has been a bad season for the whooping cranes. Setbacks have hit all three remaining populations of this endangered species: the wild flock that breeds in Canada, the whoopers raised in sandhill crane nests in Idaho, in the experimental attempt to start a new flock, and the captive birds at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Wildlife Research Center at Patuxent, Maryland.

Unfavorable weather brought most of the trouble. In Canada, it was drought. Lack of rain dried up substantial areas that are normally feeding grounds, and provided predators with easier access through the wetlands to the nesting and feeding areas. Of the young hatched this year, only three survived the summer--and those three still have the dangerous fall migration to Texas ahead of them. Last year, six young returned with the flock from the Canadian breeding grounds, bringing the total to 78 birds--the highest since the effort to save the species began.

In Idaho, at Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge, where 12 whooping crane eggs were set this spring in sandhill crane nests, only five eggs hatched and none of the chicks survived this summer. The problem was unusally late snowstorms and midsummer freezes which stressed the chicks and curbed food supply, in part by killing off insects. In addition, two--or perhaps three--of the adult Grays Lake whoopers from earlier years of the experiment were lost, reducing the number of survivors to 15 or less.

At the Patuxent center, which among other things provides eggs for the Gray's Lake experiment, two breeding female cranes died and only one chick was raised.

SHORE BIRD BUFFS!

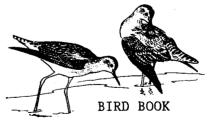
There is now a new aid available for the identification of shorebirds. It covers 89 species including accidentals. Its title is "A Dichotomous Key to the Shorebirds of North America." The price is \$2.95, published by Richard Mellon. This book can be ordered direct from Mellon Biological Services, Department B, Post Office Box 63, Morrisville, PA 19067.

ADMINISTRATION SWITCHES TACTICS ON CLEAN AIR

Instead of sending Congress a detailed legislative proposal for revising the Clean Air Act, the Reagan administration has announced a set of "principles" outlining a general approach for the legislature to follow. It was an unexpected strategy, most likely brought on by the criticism that came in June after a draft version of the proposed administration bill was leaked to Representative Henry A. Waxman of California. Waxman contended the bill was a proposal to "condemn millions of Americans to live indefinitely in dirty air" (see LEADER, 7/26/81).

There were some indications the shift in strategy means the administration is now willing to back off a little on a few issues. For example, one of the "principles" is that cost-benefit analysis "should not be included as statutory criteria" in setting health-based air quality standards. On the other hand, the principles for the most part are generalities which do not commit the administration to specific stands. Moreover, the administration has not ruled out the possibility of taking a more definite stand at some later date.

On balance, conservationists can take some encouragement from the shift in tactics, because it appears to indicate the administration is beginning to recognize the depth of public concern about the issue. But there is no reason to believe there has been any basic change in administration policy since Waxman's earlier assessment.



Los Angeles Audubon Society has published a 408-page hardcover book, BIRDS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, on the status and distribution of the more than 500 species found south of the Central Valley. The authors are Kimball Garrett and Jon Dunn. It is available from Los Angeles Audubon, 7377 Santa Monica Boulevard, Plummmer Park, Los Angeles, Çalifornia 90046, for \$20.20, including postage. Add \$1.14 sales tax if you are a California resident.

"OUTLOOK" NOW "ACTION ALERT"

The environmental action bulletin published by the society's Washington, D.C., office has a new name and a new look. Formerly, NATIONAL OUTLOOK, it has become AUDUBON ACTION ALERT, but it remains a bulletin issued whenever there is a special opportunity for National Audubon members to help environmental decisions influence Washington, if you are already on "outlook" mailing list you'll be getting "alert" from now on. If you aren't on the list, and want to know whom you should be writing or calling about what, send your name and address to Jeanne Gart, National Audubon Society, 645 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003; 547-9009. You will receive a brief questionnaire asking about your special environmental interests.

The telephone number of the Washington office's 24-hour recorded tape of environmental news from the capital remains unchanged: (202) 547-9017.

THE GRAND CANYON FACES NEW THREATS

Grand Canyon National Park, which would have been flooded if two proposed federal dams had been built a dozen years ago, needs saving again. This time the threat involves the existing Glen Canyon Dam twenty miles upstream from the park. The Bureau of Reclamation has proposed changes which could wipe out valuable trout fisheries, destroy camping grounds, and jeopardize the canyon's \$7 million-a-year float trip business.

Glen Canyon Dam controls the flow of Colorado River water into the Grand Canyon, and the fluctuations it causes between high and low water already have been destructive. Now BuRec wants to enlarge the dam and shift it to "peaking power" use--holding back the flow during hours when electricity demand is light, then opening up the turbine sluiceways during times of heaviest use. This could mean greater daily fluctuations in water levels, and flooding and erosion of the beaches where It would also upset the rafters camp. habitat of fish and plants, and leave some rapids with water too low for rafting during part of the day but running dangerously fast during maximum flow hours.

FIELD TRIP REPORT

On July 18, nine people took picks, shovels, and trash bags to our adopted trail in the Sandias. The congenial group repaired about 12 water bars and constructed three new ones. Little by little, our chapter is making progress on maintaining our trail. The Forest Service arranged for a sign bearing the CNMAS logo to be made; it will be placed at the beginning of the trail. We will be having more work parties now that the weather is cooler. Watch the calendar for the next one. These trips are a lot of fun--you're really missing something if you don't try it!

ZOO OFFERS SPECIAL PROGRAM

Miss Joan Embery, of the San Dieo Zoo, and frequent guest on Johnny Carson's TONIGHT Show, will be in Albuquerque for the Annual Meeting of the NM Zoological Society on Wednesday, November 11, 1981. A reception with a no-host bar, and hot and cold hors d'oeuvres will begin at 6:30 p.m. in the Mercado area at the Sheraton Old Town. Embery's program will begin 8:00 p.m. in the Rio Grande Ballroom. Tickets are \$5 per person, regardless of age, and must be purchased ahead of time, unless otherwise stated in later information. At this writing, you will have to call the zoo business office, 766-7823, to find out at what stores you may purchase the tickets. Only 400 may be sold, so it is a first come, first serve basis.



INDUSTRIAL KNOW-HOW

The Sunohio Company was organized five years ago to tap what looked like a lucrative field: repairing big electrical transformers and reclaiming the expensive cooling oil used in them. But in 1979, the Environmental Protection Agency banned PCBs, a chemical used in the cooling systems and found to be linked with birth defects, cancer, and other ills. No one at that time knew how to get PCBs out of transformer oil, but Sunohio conducted a crash program and developed an economically feasible process. The company already has its first detoxification unit in action, and -- with a big jump on the competition--has every expectation of doing a thriving business.

SOCIETY BLASTS PROPOSAL TO POISON COYOTES

At two hearings this summer, one in Denver and one in Washington, D.C., National Audubon Society marshaled an impressive array of expert witnesses to refute the claims of ranchers who want to bring back Compound 1080 as a coyote poison. The hearings had been called by the Environmental Protection Agency to determine whether there is new evidence that would justify a full-scale review of the ban that has been in effect since 1972 (see LEADER, 7/31/81).

Testifying for the society were: Nathaniel P. Reed, a National Audubon director who was an assistant Secretary of the Interior and played a major role instituting the ban during the Nixon administration; William A. Butler, the society's vice president for government relations and counsel, who ripped into the legal shortcomings of the ranchers' case; and three regional vice presidents, Bob Turner, whose work in 1971 led to a Congressional investigation of eagle deaths from shooting and predator poisons; Ron Klataske, wildlife biologist who grew up on a Kansas farm; and Dede Armentrout, who has become one of the society's leading experts on the predator control issue.

The Audubon witnesses contended there is no valid evidence that the 1080 ban has caused increased losses of sheep to coyotes. The industry has been in decline since the ban, but it was in decline for more than 30 years before that. The statistics the ranchers cite as "government figures' are based on questionnaires mailed to ranchers and accepted without any attempt at verification. Armentrout commented although ranchers know their total losses at the year's end, it is not easy for them determine how many to "accidents injuries, disease, old age, or a myriad of other causes." The government's system of gathering information on losses to predators, she declared, "is about as valid as sending out a questionnaire asking people how many quarters they lost in soft drink machines last year."

EPA banned 1080 for predator control after years of hearings and studies which determined that poisoned baits--pieces of meat set out to kill predators--pose unreasonable risks to other species of wildlife which might take the bait, and to humans as

well. Conservationists object to the old frontier philosophy that all predators are "varmints" and should be killed. In truth, say the conservationists, coyotes are beneficial to ranchers because they keep populations of grass-eating rabbits and rodents in check. National Audubon supports control methods aimed only at predators that threaten livestock.

Klataske discussed alternative, nonlethal methods of protecting livestock from predation, including conventional and electric fences, use of guard dogs, and selection of the safest pastures during the lambing season. He reported a Kansas study which showed that such methods had kept sheep and lamb losses to predators down to less then one percent; the study was made in 1976 and 1977, well after the 1080 ban went into effect.

EPA has not yet announced its decision on whether there will be further hearings on the issue.



IRONIC COVER PHOTO

The May issue of EPA JOURNAL, the Environmental Protection Agency magazine, has a picture of a beautiful lake on the cover and includes an article about recreational fishing, stressing the economic value of the sport and its reliance on clean, healthy waters. The cover shows Twitchell Lake. It happens that at this lake the first--and perhaps last--trout of the current season was not caught until the summer was more than half over. Twitchell is one of hundreds of lakes in York State's New Adirondack Mountains being rendered sterile by acid rain caused by polluted air carried by the wind from powerplants and other sources hundreds of miles away. course, is the agency responsible for establishing national air quality standards.

BIRD SIGHTINGS

The late summer and the beginning of fall migration has brought some interesting bird sightings. Since a few intrepid birders have been hiking over from the Tram, Sandia Crest has been the source of excitement. On August 30, Hart Schwarz and Gary Parker found a flock of at least five WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS in a spruce tree along the abandoned road north of Kiwanis Meadow. These birds are only casually seen in the state with one other record for the Sandias. Ross Teuber found them again on September 3 just south of the crest parking lot. This time, six were counted. times the birds were seen along with a flock of about 15 RED CROSSBILLS. also spotted a GOSHAWK while he was up there. Another GOSHAWK was seen flying along the crest ridge on July 26. crest road closure may have been responsible for the beautiful abundance of wildflowers at Kiwanis Meadow; obviously appreciated by the CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD seen there on July 26.

Other birds of interest were a MISSISSIPPI KITE reported by Les Hawkins on August 13 seen at the Sunport Golf Course. A MIS-SISSIPPI KITE was also seen by Dave Clausen at Candelaria Farms nature center site on August 14. Ross Teuber found both COMMON and LESSER NIGHTHAWKS at Candelaria Farms on August 22. A REDEYED VIREO on September 6 and a SAGE THRASHER on September 12 were caught in mist nets along with over 100 other birds each weekend by the Rio Grande Bird Research doing banding in the area. Construction crews are progressing on the new nature center there. Work began State park officials say the in May. opening date will be in February 1982, with the pond and marsh areas completed next spring.

From Shady Lakes, Joanne Phillips reported an EASTERN KINGBIRD in the tops of her cottonwoods in the first weekend in September. She also spotted OLIVE-SIDED FLY-CATCHERS, WESTERN WOOD PEEWEES, and a lone CEDAR WAXWING.

On September 6, Wayne Prentice discovered a LONG-BILLED CURLEW, a WHITE-FACED IBIS and a MERLIN near Willard, New Mexico.

The CNMAS field trip led by Dustin and Sue Huntington to Bosque del Apache on September 12 yielded 60 species including OSPREY and TURKEY.

Mrs. Bob Patterson reported an amazing incident in mid August. She saw a praying mantis perched on her hummingbird feeder. The real surprise came when a RUFOUS HUM-MINGBIRD approached and somehow the mantis caught the bird for a moment. Just as the Pattersons rushed towards it, the bird managed to escape on its own!

Don't forget the Christmas counts coming up in December. And please keep calling in your sightings to me at 292-5626.



AN UNUSUAL MEMBER

A special welcome to one of our new members, Walter L. Kraus, of Sunderland, Maryland! Maryland? That's right. Mr. Kraus is an avid birder and belongs to two bird clubs in his own area as well as National Audubon. His local groups are independent organizations, and he wanted an NAS chapter to gain the financial benefit of his affiliation.

Mr. Kraus travels in his work and spends only one week each year in Albuquerque. He selected our chapter for affiliation because members have been so helpful--"undoubtedly more helpful than memberships of other organizations I visit throughout the country. A major plus for yours is Mr. Ross L. Teuber with whom I have had several friendly birding conversations (telephone) and from whom I have received just super birding tips. In fact, leads provided by Mr. Teuber and others have allowed me to compile a list of over one half of the birds on your state list. These tips are invaluable since I can bird only for short periods-unfortunately, my job often takes priority over birding!"

Mr. Kraus has been trying to affiliate with CNMAS for three years, but the computer at NAS would not accept the fact. When NAS finally accepted it, the CNMAS membership chairmen wrote an inquiry to Mr. Kraus. He wrote a long letter in explanation. We are most appreciative of his thoughtfulness and of his persistence.

Dot DeLollis

APPLICATION FOR JOINT MEMBERSHIP IN THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY AND THE CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY

Joint membership offers you full membership in both the National Audubon Society and the Central New Mexico Audubon chapter at the **same** rate as membership in the national organization only.

With one annual dues payment, you may enjoy the privileges of membership in, and the satisfaction of supporting, the local and national organizations. You will then receive bimonthly issues of the *Burrowing Owl* and the bimonthly *Audubon*, the most beautiful nature magazine in the world. A portion of your dues payment will be allocated to the Central New Mexico Audubon Society.

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RARE BIRD ALERT—Report sightings to: 265-8962, 292-5626, or 898-2568

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