

# BURROWING OWL

CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

DECEMBER 1983 - JANUARY 1984

## CALENDAR

Welcome! Central New Mexico Audubon Society meets the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 P.M., St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, Copper and Jefferson, N.E. Nonmembers are welcome at all meetings, field trips, and special events.

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15 - Regular Meeting

Four UNM graduate students in ornithology were recently given financial help by CNMAS to aid with expenses at the American Ornithological Union national meeting. The students (Janet Kyamyr, Luke George, Steve Zack, and Arch McCallum) will give brief reports on their research. Arch (our Conservation Chairman) will give the main program. 7:30 P.M. - St. Timothy's Lutheran Church.

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17 - Christmas Count

The counters for the Bosque Christmas Count will meet at 7 A.M. at Bosque del Apache NWF Headquarters. Call compiler Chuck Hundertmark at 897-2818 or 888-7009 for more information. \$2.00 fee.

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18 - Christmas Count

Sandia Mountain Christmas Bird Counters will meet at 6:30 A.M., San Antonito School (a little north of the junction of NM 14 and NM 44, Cedar Crest). Count leader Kay Anderson (821-1606), compiler Ross Teuber (265-8962). \$2.00 fee.

A pot luck supper will be held at the home of Ellen Raimer and Terence Sloan after the count. They live at 837 Jefferson NE. Please call them at 266-4408 or 883-2800 to find out what you can contribute to the supper.

### SATURDAY - DECEMBER 31

Albuquerque CBC will meet at 7:30 A.M. at Corrales Shopping Center. Jim Karo (294-2777) leader/compiler. \$2.00 fee.

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 5 - Board Meeting

Please give Vic a call (888-4661) if you could host the January meeting.

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 1983

Relieve the post-Christmas count blues by going on a field trip to Baca and Pino Canyons with Hart Schwarz. This excursion, involving several miles of cross-country hiking, will probably continue well into the afternoon, provided the weather cooperates. We should see an interesting variety of birds, including Golden Eagle, Canyon Wren, Crissal Thrasher, and Rufous-Crowned Sparrow. Bring a lunch if you have the tendency to get hungry. Rendezvous time is 8 A.M. near the Page One Newstand in El Dorado Shopping Center, southeast corner of Montgomery & Juan Tabo. For more details contact Hart at 266-1810.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 19 - Regular Meeting

"Watching Birds with Roger Tory Peterson" is the title of the exciting videotape to be shown this evening. Everyone interested in birds--from the backyard watcher to the pro--will find this of interest. Bring field guides if you have them. 7:30 P.M. - St. Timothy's Lutheran Church.

SATURDAY - SUNDAY, JANUARY 21 - 22  
New Mexico Audubon Council Meeting  
and Field Trip

NMAC will meet Saturday, Jan. 21 in Socorro at 1 P.M. at the Socorro Electric Co-op. Dinner at 6:30 at the Vagabond Restaurant. The field trip will convene at the Bosque del Apache NWR headquarters at 7 A.M. Call Darwin Miller at 265-6361 or Evelyn Price at 242-6604 for more information. Everyone is welcome to attend the meeting and/or the field trip.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 5 - Field Trip

This field trip will wander the back roads and ditch roads of the Valley as far as Bernardo. We will visit the Bernardo, Casa Colorado, and Belen State Refuges. The cranes should be staging at the Belen Refuge. We will also visit the Isleta marsh and a ditch road or two. Meet for breakfast/lunch/coffee at the Valley Cafe, 7715 Broadway, S.E., at 11 A.M. Call leaders Evelyn and George Price at 242-6604 for more information.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

A few weeks ago I had the pleasure to have lunch with Dr. Armentrout. We discussed many items, but the Randall Davey property was paramount. At that time the property transfer looked good, and from what I have been told, the transfer is now set for December of 1983. This property is and will be a great asset to Audubon and its friends. It is my hope to obtain a computer system for use at the Randall Davey. With the computer, I can visualize better membership records, an up-to-date collection of rare species sightings, a central information area for

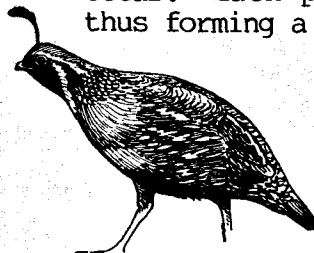
all New Mexico Audubon Societies, and most of all, an information source for all conservation groups in the state. I am sure I have mentioned just a few uses of the computer. If you have other ideas for a computer, please give me a call. We need your suggestions.

Several weeks ago I was talking with the people at OPTIMAL and they stated if any purchases were made from them, they would donate a percentage to CNMAS. Now, I am sure you want to know what OPTIMAL is. They are a small optical business selling the better brands of binoculars and telescopes, and that's important for us birders. They are located at 136 Jackson, N.E. If you do purchase from them, please show your Audubon membership card.

At our last general meeting on Nov. 17, 1983, some possible bad news was mentioned. It seems there might be a new steel mill built very near Bosque del Apache. What Audubon fears most are the various poisonous gases that will be belched from the smoke stacks. From my source of information, the mill could exceed the sulphur dioxide emissions by 200%. This sure will not help the bird population. Any conservation-minded person interested in this possible future problem, please feel free to write to CNMAS and your representative. Let's nip this possible problem in the bud.

Some more bad news. It seems some people wish to erect power lines near Bosque del Apache in the flight path of the Whooping Cranes. As you can see, our feathered friend seems to be in jeopardy. If you wish to relay to CNMAS any information on the above bad news, please do so as soon as possible.

Well, believe it or not, your president finally completed the CNMAS display panels to be used in shopping malls, schools, etc. For those not familiar with the above-mentioned panels, let me explain. Each panel is two feet wide and six feet high and there are three panels total. Each panel bolts to the other, thus forming a vertical display looking



similar to a room divider. On each panel various Audubon photographs and information will be displayed. The purpose is an easy-to-assemble display which can be transported with ease from place to place. When the panels are set up at a populated area, Audubon members will be there to help explain and recruit new members to CNMAS. If you are interested in being a recruiter, please call or write. We need your help.

The next board meeting will be held in January on the first Thursday. If anyone would like to host this event, please contact me at 888-4661. Thank you.

J. V. Brown

#### CONSERVATION NOTES

by Arch McCallum

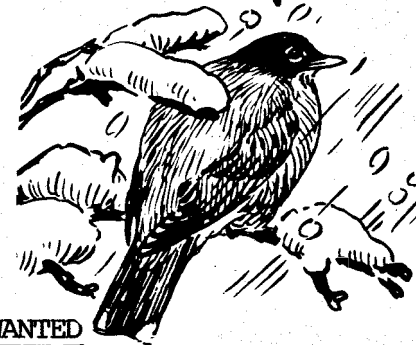
San Juan Basin Wilderness - Rep. Bill Richardson's San Juan Basin Wilderness Protection Act (HR3766) has passed its first subcommittee test intact, over the strong objections of Rep. Mo Udall (D-AZ), who wanted Ashislepah deleted. Udall is Chairman of the full House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, which now must report the bill to the floor. If possible, rite Udall (House Office Building, Wash. D.C., 20515) and tell him that Ashislepah is important to us. Also write Manuel Lujan and thank him for his willingness to consider protecting all four areas mentioned in Richardson's bill and urge him to make HR 3766 a bipartisan bill.

Most importantly, write Pete Domenici and urge him to get behind S 1740, Bingaman's four-unit bill. Let him know politely that we know he can make it happen if he wants to.

Mountain Lions - The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish is drafting a new management plan for the Mountain Lion. It is rumored that the new regulations will be more favorable than present ones to the survival of this species. There will be a public hearing on the proposed regulations in December or January, and

the Game and Fish Commission will decide whether to adopt the new regs at its February meeting. Friends of the Mountain Lion should plan now to attend both meetings. A good turnout will help counter the effect of the few but vociferous enemies of the lion. For a copy of proposed regs and background information on lion populations in the state, write Harold Olson, Director, NM Dept. of Game and Fish, Villagra Building, Santa Fe, NM 87503.

San Juan Basin Railroad - The state legislature convenes in January. In this "short session," the legislators may consider only items on the Governor's call, so we would seem to have a respite from Sen. Morgan's perennial San Juan Basin railroad schemes. It is rumored, however, that Governor Anaya will include funding for a railroad in his call. The timing is very bad, because if the State underwrites a railroad, industry's claim that the PRLAs are commercially exploitable will be greatly enhanced. If you are so inclined, you might ask the Governor to defer support for a railroad for a couple of years.



#### HELP WANTED

People interested in bringing the wonders of nature to others! We need someone to:

- help arrange programs to be shown at regular meetings;
- keep tabs on environmental issues;
- help bring nature information to schools and other groups;
- help plan and carry out new ideas for field trips;
- write articles for the newsletter, especially on environmental issues;
- help with refreshments;
- host a board meeting;
- help set up and put away chairs at regular meetings;
- greet newcomers at meetings;
- help with the Audubon Wildlife Film Series.

If you are interested, call any number in the CNMAS directory on Page 12.

### THE FACTS ARE CLEAR

MORE THAN 400,000,000 POUNDS OF TOXIC INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS END UP IN OUR PUBLIC SEWERS AND WATERWAYS EACH YEAR.

A bill by Senator Chafee, S. 431, would reduce industrial toxic pollution by continuing the present program that requires industries to pretreat their toxic wastes before releasing them into our sewers, and by tightening controls where there are "toxic hotspots" to make the waters in these heavily industrialized areas fishable and swimmable once again.

WE HAVE ALREADY LOST HALF OF THE MARSHES, BOGS, WINDING CREEKS, SLOUGHS AND ESTUARIES THAT ORIGINALLY EXISTED IN THE LOWER 48 STATES, AND EACH YEAR WE AND THE WILDLIFE DEPENDENT ON THESE WETLANDS LOSE MORE.

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act has reduced the needless dredging and filling of wetlands, but even with this provision, over 450,000 acres of wetlands are being lost each year. Section 404's procedures for conserving wetlands must be strengthened.

EACH YEAR STORM WATERS WASH BILLIONS OF TONS OF SOIL, ANIMAL WASTE, BACTERIA, OIL, ACID, LEAD, PESTICIDES AND OTHER TOXIC CHEMICALS FROM OUR FARMS, CITIES, MINES AND CONSTRUCTION SITES INTO OUR WATERWAYS, CAUSING HARM TO THE WILDLIFE AND HUMANS THAT DEPEND ON THOSE WATERS FOR LIFE.

The existing Clean Water Act does nothing to control this "nonpoint" pollution, yet over half of our pollution comes from these sources. Senators Stafford, Chafee, and Durenberger have proposed amendments to begin a program to control nonpoint pollution.

Soon, your Senators will decide whether to weaken the Clean Water Act, keep it the same, or strengthen it. IF YOU WANT THE QUALITY OF OUR WATER TO IMPROVE IN THE 80'S, WRITE TO YOUR SENATORS TODAY.

\* Tell them why you care about clean water.

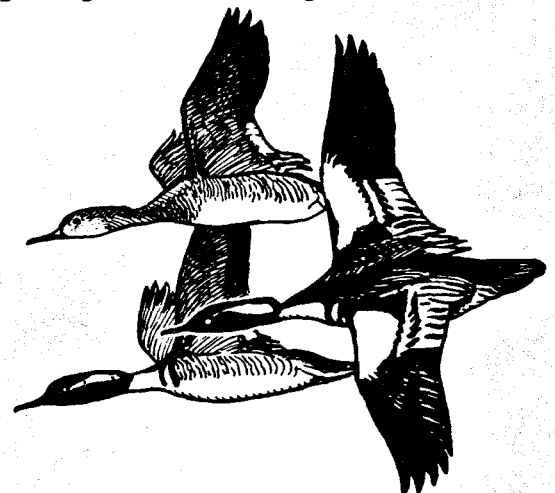
\* Urge them to vote for a strengthened Clean Water Act by supporting Senator Chafee's bill (S. 431), amendments to strengthen Section 404, and the Stafford-Chafee-Durenberger proposal to control nonpoint pollution.

Our Senators' addresses are listed on the back page.

### AUDUBON CALENDARS: AN EASY WAY TO DO YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EARLY

National Audubon has published two 1984 calendars--one for your wall and one for your desk--and both measure up to the unsurpassed standards for nature photography that are the hallmark of Audubon magazine. The wall calendar measures about 10 by 14 inches, and for the desk the engagement calendar, about 6 by 9, opens like a book. The 14 full-page photographs in the wall calendar are different from the 60 smaller ones in the desk model, so you'll want both. All the pictures are in full color. The subjects include wildlife, spectacular scenery, wildflowers, a little humor--there is a tree-climbing grizzly bear cub clinging to a shaky branch, and a pair of wrens nesting in an old felt hat--and such unclassifiable shots as a closeup of jewellike drops of dew on a spider web.

Christmas really isn't far away. An easy way to get a head start on your shopping is to buy some of these calendars. The price is the same for each, \$6.95. They are available by mail order from Marketing, National Audubon Society, 950 Third Avenue, New York, NY, 10022, but add a dollar for postage and handling.



## OUR OWN HAWK MOUNTAIN

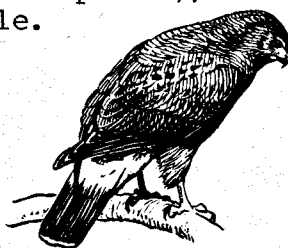
How would you like to see 160 Sharpies in one day? Or even 20? With some of them so close, it feels like you could reach out and touch them? Add in Coop's and Kestrels on a regular basis, Red-tails in the afternoon, occasional Golden's, and always the possibility of a rare hawk such as a Peregrine, Goshawk, or Zone-tail, and you have the formula for an excellent birding (hawking) day, and it's all available within two hours of your front door!

We are fortunate to have the Sandias and Manzanos practically in our backyard, and many of us hike and bird them regularly. But in fall these mountains have a special birding show for us to enjoy. Just as they beckon us, they attract migrating hawks, eagles, and falcons because they promise winds and updrafts that make the southward trip a "breeze."

Steve Hoffman, an addicted "hawk watcher," and a Wildlife Biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service here in Albuquerque, has been studying hawk migration in the intermountain west for several years. In early October I joined him and several others in the Manzanos for a day of hawk watching. At about 9 A.M. the first Sharp-shinned Hawk cruised by about 20 feet away, a beautiful adult male, and I was hooked! I saw 63 birds that day, mostly Sharpies and Coop's, but 7 species in all (including a Goshawk), with many spectacular views. I made several more trips to the lookout, seeing between 50 and 75 hawks a day, typical for the Manzanos in October, but the best was yet to come.

Late in the evening before Sunday, Oct. 16, Steve and I decided to go up to the lookout to take some pictures of the migrant hawks. We never got a chance.

\*Editor's note: To those of you who are not familiar with birding jargon, a Sharpie is a Sharp-shinned Hawk, a Coop is a Cooper's Hawk (both are Accipiters), and a Golden is a Golden Eagle.



We arrived the next morning to clear skies and light intermittent breezes, not a particularly great-looking day, but at about 9:30 the sky opened up and the hawks poured out. For the next 3 hours they passed us at a rate of better than one a minute, sometimes 5 or 6 in view at one time, and the great majority passed within 50 feet of our observation point. There was no time to pick up the camera! The majority were Accipiters, but other typical migrants were seen, and at about 11:30 a Zone-tailed Hawk crossed over. By noon we had counted more than 180 hawks, and after the usual midday lull, they continued to pass by regularly. A "kettle" of 8 Red-tails and a Turkey Vulture at 4:30 gave us 249, and after a long lull, a Prairie Falcon zipped by for hawk #250 for the day. We had seen 160 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 35 Cooper's Hawks, 35 Red-tailed Hawks, and the remainder was made up of Golden Eagles, Northern Harriers, American Kestrels (Sparrow Hawk), Prairie Falcons, and the Zone-tailed Hawk and Turkey Vulture.

For the season, over 800 hawks were counted in about 15 days of observation. Coverage in September, however, was very limited. Approximately 20 people, including Hart Schwarz, Darlene Moore, Ross Teuber, Susie Flannigan, Linda Baker, Wendy Sykora, George Coen, and Martha Coen, experienced the thrill of Sharpies (and others) filling their binoculars. Even when the flight was light, the view of fall colors was spectacular. How about you joining us next year?

Steve summed it up on the Big Day as we drove away from the point. "Just think," he said, "in 5 months they'll be heading back the other way."

—Dale Stahlecker

GIVE YOURSELF A SPECIAL CHRISTMAS GIFT - SPEND A DAY (OR THREE!!!) ON A LOCAL CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT!



### WHAT REAGAN POLICIES MEAN BACK HOME

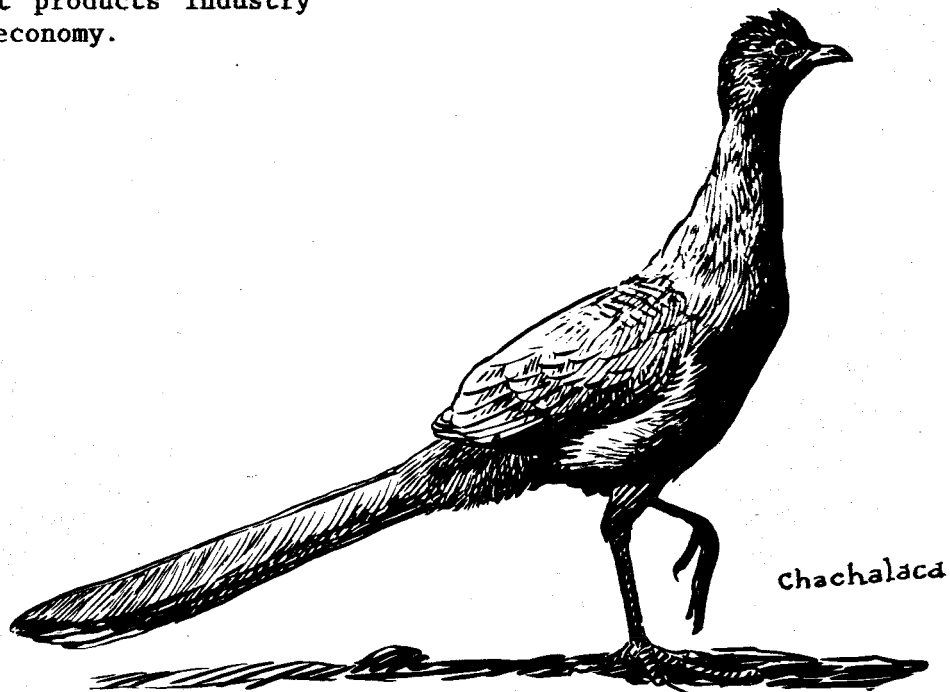
National Audubon Society and the other nine conservation organizations which published an "indictment" of the Reagan Administration's environmental policies last spring (see Leader, 4/16/82) have now published a grass roots followup of their charges. The new reports, "Hitting Home: The Effects of the Reagan Environmental Policies on Communities Across America," was announced at a press conference in Washington, D.C.

The idea was to bring the indictment's broad generalities on clean air, toxic substances, parklands, and other issues down to specifics. "Hitting Home" doesn't pretend to be a complete report. Rather, it is a sampling, put together by volunteers from the ten organizations, showing what the Reagan policies have meant in terms of some real people in real places. Here are a few examples:

In Utah, the administration's plans to permit strip mining on private lands within National Park boundaries could open 19,200 acres within Capitol Reef National Park to the coal companies. In Maine, the problem of acid rain is taken a great deal more seriously than it is by the administration. Acid rain is killing trout and threatening forests in this state, where sport fishing is a \$32 million a year business and the forest products industry is the backbone of the economy.

In Texas, where the Environmental Protection Agency has been lax in overseeing enforcement of the laws on use of pesticides, a high percentage of farm workers is suffering from exposure to these poisons. The Texas problem is compounded because many of the farm workers are Spanish speaking Mexican-Americans who can't read the directions and warnings on the pesticide containers.

The administration's freeze on buying parklands, including acquisitions already approved by Congress, is hitting home in Georgia. This policy has halted completion of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area close to Atlanta, and it is now feared that much of remaining 3,000 acres will never become park--that either it will be developed and rendered unsuitable for park use, or that the price will rise far above the reach of the budget Congress authorized for the recreation area. Copies of "Hitting Home" are available at the less-than-cost price of \$2.50 each, including postage, from Natural Resources Defense Council, Suite 600, 1725 Eye Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.



NEW MEXICO AUDUBON COUNCIL  
ACCOMPLISHES MUCH

The NMAC was very active during the past year under the presidency of Darwin Miller. Following is an idea of what the Council has done:

1. A sanctuary fund was established.
2. We remained in active opposition to coal mining, power plants, and railroads in certain areas of the San Juan Basin (with special thanks to Arch McCallum). We worked closely with other environmental organizations on this. I believe all of them are with us, plus archaeologists, a union and others not generally associated with environmental causes. We were instrumental in helping defeat a railroad bill in Santa Fe (thanks to the good work of Rollie Goodman). We participated in a hearing in Santa Fe on the San Juan conducted by Rep. Weaver of Oregon and our Rep. Richardson. This was very favorable toward us. We hope our activities had some impact on Congress in banning mining on public lands.
3. We attended a State Game and Fish Commission meeting and were asked to attend all their meetings. This goes for all Chapters.
4. We dropped the State Fair exhibit principally due to the lack of volunteers to man the booth and also lack of a better space.
5. We sponsored a fund-raising workshop.
6. We are still working toward attaining tax-exempt status.
7. We have contributed some efforts toward National's acquiring the Randall Davey property.
8. President Miller has been issuing a series of informational letters to Chapter Presidents.
9. Our numerous activities in this past year have put us emphatically on the map. Not only have we gotten attention from our own National headquarters, but from news media and politically. And, we have been in a "David and Goliath" position.
10. We have developed a good rapport with all environmental organizations in N.M.

VISITING THE WHOOPERS AT HOME

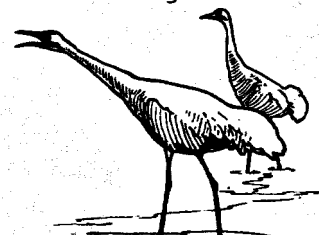
By Ross L. Teuber

Attending the Whooping Crane Conservation Association's annual meeting at Ft. Smith, N.W.T., Canada, was truly the experience of a lifetime. Fort Smith is situated just north of 60 degrees North Latitude, and the east boundary of Wood Buffalo National Park, and is the human settlement nearest to the breeding grounds of the natural flock of wild Whooping Cranes. It is also the home of the only river-nesting and northernmost nesting population of White Pelicans on the North American Continent, a fact of which the citizens of Ft. Smith are very proud.

The meeting was held during the last week of July, an excellent time to fly over and see the family groups of Whooping Cranes and their chicks on the nesting marshes. The weather was beautiful, but much warmer than we had been lead to expect. The people in Ft. Smith were very friendly; all seemed to know why we were there, and were interested in what we were doing. If you asked for directions, they were not only willing to tell you how to get to your destination, but would gladly accompany you to be sure you found it. The meeting room in the local museum was excellent, and the sleeping and eating arrangements, at a dormitory at Theba College, were very acceptable.

Ernie Kuyt of the Canadian Wildlife Service is the counterpart of Rod Drewien in the Whooping Crane foster parent experiment. Assisted by several of his colleagues, he did an outstanding job of planning, arranging, and carrying out all the details of the meeting. The result was one of the best-ever meetings of the WCCA. The papers were not only interesting, but very informative and well presented. The field trips were well organized and carried out, permitting us to see as much as possible in the limited time available. The logistics were carried out without a hitch.

It was arranged for those of us coming by plane that we travel together on the same



flight out of Edmonton early Tuesday morning, July 26. We arrived at Ft. Smith about 8:40 A.M. Transportation was waiting to take us and our luggage to Thebaca College, where we registered and received our room assignments. We had plenty of time to get checked in, settled, and do a little exploring of Ft. Smith before lunch. The population of Ft. Smith is only about 3,000 people, so it didn't take long to get oriented. There were two major stores: The Hudson's Bay Company, of which I had read as a boy in some of Jack London's books; and a competitor called Paul Kaeser's Stores Ltd. Both were quite large and carried a great diversity of merchandise.

One of the most interesting sights in Ft. Smith was the large number of unusually shaped martin houses in almost every direction you traveled from Thebaca College. Most of them were only one-storied and circular, or many-sided polygons and quite large. There were no purple martins in Ft. Smith, but many Cliff and Barn Swallows. It seems that someone who knew more about keeping buildings neat than about swallows got the bright idea if they put up martin houses, the swallows would move into them and not clutter up the eaves of the public and private buildings with their mud-plastered nests. Of course, it didn't work, but provided many attractive apartments for house sparrows, which are now even more numerous than the swallows.

Our meetings were held in a meeting room at Ft. Smith's Northern Life Museum, a very interesting place in its own right. We could easily have spent the rest of the week right there, and not have exhausted our interest in the fascinating exhibits. The first afternoon was devoted to welcoming speeches and background information from various local and territorial dignitaries, and representatives of Wood Buffalo National Park and the Canadian Wildlife Service. All really seemed glad to have us there, and went out of their way to make us feel welcome. Ernie Kuyt gave us an update on the overall Whooping Crane population

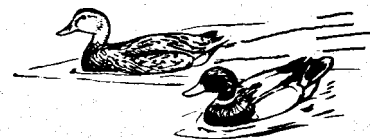
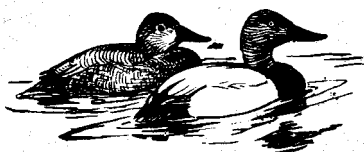
figures.

Wednesday morning we started off with an early morning birding trip--before breakfast! Incidentally, in late July at that latitude there are only about two hours of darkness. We did not see anything unusual, but it was interesting to see and recognize birds in their breeding territory.

After breakfast there was a short business meeting. The rest of the morning was devoted to two new whooping crane movies, either of which would be appropriate for a program at one of our Audubon meetings. The first was filmed and produced by Tom Mangleson, a wildlife photographer from Moose, Wyoming, under the sponsorship of the Platte River Whooping Crane Habitat Maintenance Trust. The other was produced by Karvonen Films, Ltd., of Sherwood Park, Alberta, and is entitled "The Double Life of the Whooping Crane." Both films were excellent.

After lunch we took a field trip to Pine Lake in Wood Buffalo National Park. The field trip was followed by a barbeque and a park naturalist program. Besides the beautiful scenery and gulls and waterfowl on the lake, we were fortunate to get some quick looks at bison, and on the way back to Ft. Smith a good look at a yearling black bear.

All day Thursday was devoted to ground and aerial trips to various parts of Wood Buffalo N.P. and especially over the Whooping Crane summer range. The aerial trips were made in groups of eight in a single-engine, pontoon-equipped Otter airplane. To show the attention paid to details, each of us received in the material handed out at registration a pair of ear plugs to protect us from the engine noise on the flight. We needed them! Each group saw from 12 to 18 adult Whooping Cranes and from 3 to 5 chicks, as well as a small herd of bison in the course of the two-hour flight. On the ground, the unique geological formations made the trip fascinating: accumulations of vast salt piles from the salt springs;





permanent ice no more than two or three feet below the surface in the karst sinkholes; and best of all, collecting and eating handfuls of the ripe, sweet, dark-purple Saskatoon berries (June berries or service berries), which grew in profusion in many of the areas we visited. We also explored on the ground some shallow marsh areas typical of those used for nesting by the Whooping Cranes.

Friday was devoted to papers related to Whooping Crane management activities. Two were concerned with radio tracking of migrating whoopers. One reported a study on pre-pair-bonding activities of sub-adult whooping cranes; one concerned a new technique for determining the sex of whooping crane checks by electron microscopic analysis of genetic material in blood cells; another reported on the status of the foster parent experiment--the activity responsible for our whooping cranes; and there was an update on the activities of the whooping crane recovery team.

All of these papers were well presented and of sufficient interest to strongly hold our attention. All of the speakers were highly optimistic about the prospects for the Whooping Cranes in the immediate future. The one paper on the projected future of the White Pelican flock mentioned above was far less optimistic.

The official activities were concluded with a banquet at The Winerack, the only local establishment where such an affair could be staged, or where one could sample the quality of the locally dispensed libations. The speaker was Dr. William Fuller of the University of Alberta at Edmonton. He is the man who first confirmed the finding of the nesting area of the Whooping Cranes in 1957. His subject, "Whooping Cranes and Lawn Mowers," was not only challenging, but erudite and thought-provoking. If one allowed his thought to stray, an important point would be missed.

Every evening was spent in socializing

with fellow members of the WCCA from various places in Canada, the United States, and even one from England and one from Germany. In my opinion, either Thursday or Friday alone would have been well worth the modest cost of the membership dues! When you can have all of these things, plus periodic newsletters, and the fellowship that goes with it, it is a great bargain. If I have aroused your interest, see me. I do have a few membership applications on hand.

To complete the story, we were free on Saturday morning to pack our gear, do any last-minute shopping, or do some impromptu birding on our own. As always, the logistics of getting to the airport were well planned and executed. We all arrived in plenty of time to check our luggage through and get our seats on the plane to Edmonton. In all, we saw 39 species of birds in the Ft. Smith area, and a couple more in Edmonton.

Next year our annual meeting will be at Grand Island, Nebraska, where we will see on the ground some of the whooping crane activities we got a taste of in Tom Mangelsen's film. I'm planning on being there. Wouldn't you like to go along, too?!!!!



STEEL AERIES



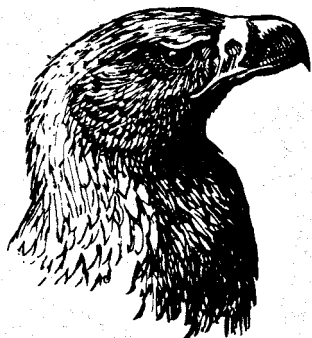
Eight pairs of endangered peregrine falcons--in Maryland, New Jersey, New York, and Virginia--fledged 23 young this summer. In a prodigious display of adaptability, two pairs nested on girders of two of New York City's heavily trafficked bridges, making their nesting "scrapes" of soot and cinders. Even after a run-in with BB gun toting vandals, the city-wise birds managed to hack four young between them into the wilds of Manhattan. The Peregrine Fund of Ithaca, N.Y., a group specializing in raptor preservation, asks birders throughout the East to watch for and report peregrines loitering near bridges.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE IN AUDUBON'S  
NEW BOOKLET ON FEEDING WILD BIRD

ROSS' RAVIN'S

You may think you have no more to learn about feeding birds, after years you've had a squirrel-proofed set of feeders hanging or sitting on poles in your backyard, but chances are you can pick up at least a few new ideas from National Audubon's latest booklet, "Banquets for Birds: Suggestions for Supplementary Feeding." And if you are a relative beginner, the new booklet is a must.

Ever think of leaving part of your lawn unmowed, letting it go to seed and develop into a meadow? Even a mini-meadow only a few feet in diameter could add substantially to your property's attractiveness to birds, according to the booklet. Warblers won't come to feeders, but they are attracted by running water; the booklet tells how to do it by means of a milk container with a pinhole punched through the bottom. Another suggestion: Keep a diary of dates and arrivals and departures of migratory species, weather conditions, and other data. The booklet is available for \$1.60, including postage, from Information Services, National Audubon Society, 950 Third Avenue, New York, New York, 10022.



EAGLE COUNT

The National Wildlife Federation's annual bald eagle survey, taken in January, indicates that the national symbol is still on the rebound after years of decline due to pesticides, habitat loss, and shooting. Bald eagles are officially endangered in 43 states and plentiful only in Alaska. The 1983 survey of 46 states (excluding Alaska) found 12,098 eagles; fewer than last year, but significantly more than in 1979, when NWF began counting. Missouri, Utah, and Washington had the most eagles.

Hi, Folks. The time for the Audubon Christmas Bird Counts has arrived. Unfortunately, the count period includes only three weekends, and Christmas Eve, Christmas, New Year's Eve, and New Year's fall on Saturday and Sunday. That made it difficult to find a time for the three counts which would cause the least conflict with your personal holiday plans. Details are as follows: The Bosque del Apache Count will be on Saturday, Dec. 17. Meet at the Refuge Headquarters at 7 A.M. Compiler Chuck Hundertmark can be contacted at home (897-2818) evenings for further details. The Sandia Mountain Count will be on Sunday, Dec. 18. Meet across the road from the San Antonito School (NM 14 North) at 6:30 A.M. Compiler Kay Anderson may be contacted at home (821-1606) or at work (881-4545) for further details. The Albuquerque Count will be on Saturday, Dec. 31. Meet at the Corrales Shopping Center, west of the Bank, at 7:30 A.M. Compiler Jim Karo can be contacted at home (294-2777) for further details. Count rules require that count activities be carried on for at least 8 hours between midnight and midnight on the count day. Not every participant must be there the full 8 hours, but someone must be present and counting during that much time. If you live within a count area and feed birds in your back yard, you may participate as a feeder watcher. Arrange it with your compiler, and get instructions from him/her. Also, if you wish to count in a particular part of the count area, arrange it in advance with your compiler. Again this year participation fees are \$2 for each participant for each count in which he participates. Compilers are required to collect this fee in advance from each person, including children and spouses who "just drive," but are not active birders. These participation fees are necessary to help defray the cost of compiling and printing the official count reports. These reports will be published in the July 1981 issue of American Birds. Participants may purchase single copies of that issue from their compiler at

\$9.50 each. However, compilers will not be accepting annual subscriptions to American Birds this year.

Here's the latest word on the WHOOPING CRANES. Nineteen chicks were hatched and fledged at Gray's Lake. All but one of these were color-code banded. Because of the heavy snow pack and very favorable high water conditions on the nesting area, none of the chicks was lost to predators! A total of 32 WHOOPERS arrived at Monte Vista NWR in Colorado this fall. Dr. Rod Drewien arrived in New Mexico on Tuesday, Nov. 15. On that day he and his assistant counted 19 WHOOPING CRANES between Belen and Bosque del Apache. On Wednesday, Nov. 16, there were 12 at Bosque del Apache, and three chicks at Bernardo. At the same time, there were 20,000 SNOW GEESE, with a good number of ROSS' GEESE mixed in, and a few CANADA GEESE. The goose hunt at the Bosque started the next day.

Other bird reports have been rather sparse. As I sit here typing these notes on a cold, gray, showery afternoon, I can look out and see a late YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER hopping around in the bare twigs of my peach tree. On Nov. 9 there was a pair of HOODED MERGANSERS in the north display pond at Bosque del Apache. There were also several EARED GREBES in the marsh near the first lookout tower. MARSH HAWKS are back in good numbers.

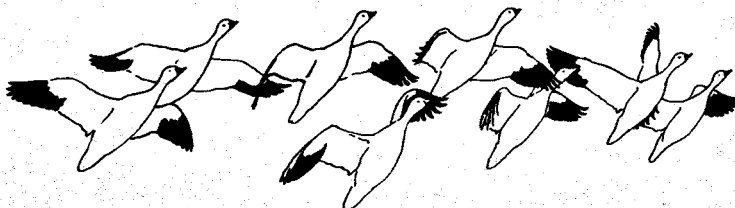
The middle week of October was apparently the peak period for hawk migration in the Manzanos. Dale Stahlecker, Steve Hoffman, et al, observed 180 on October 15, and 250 including 200 Accipiters on October 16. SHARP-SHINNED HAWKS outnumbered COOPER'S HAWKS by approximately 3 to 1. Of special interest were a PEREGRINE FALCON and two GOSHAWKS. Dale and I also observed two PRAIRIE FALCONS and four GOLDEN EAGLES from the same location on 10/13, and I found 3 PRAIRIE FALCONS in the Estancia Valley on Oct. 15.

Pat Basham had a LINCOLN'S SPARROW in her yard at Socorro on October 12. There was a flock of about 100 WHITE-FACED IBIS at

Bosque del Apache on September 19. John Durrie had a male AMERICAN REDSTART in his yard on September 24, and the Dilleys saw, among other things, two LONG-BILLED CURLEWS at Bosque del Apache.

The first weekend of November I had occasion to be in Tucson. Since I was that close, I took advantage of the opportunity to drop down to Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. The Monument is always and interesting and scenic place to visit, but this time of the year is the off-season for birds; the nesting birds and early migrants have left, and many of the winter birds have not arrived. The COSTA'S HUMMINGBIRDS, which are really the piece de resistance for that area, had not yet arrived. Although not too many species of birds were seen, we found some in good numbers. Most abundant were PHAINOPEPLAS, NORTHERN (Gilded race) FLICKERS, GILA WOODPECKERS, CACTUS WRENS, GAMBEL'S QUAIL, CURVED-BILLED THRASHERS, BLACK-THROATED SPARROWS, and WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS. VERDIN are common, but not easy to see. More unusual were WHITE-THROATED SWIFT, GREAT BLUE HERON, COMMON MOORHEN, LADDER-BACKED WOODPECKER and CRISSAL THRASHER. It was surprising not to find WHITE-WINGED DOVE, CARDINALS, and PYRRHULOXIA. Probably the most exciting thing on the whole trip was a group of five, presumably a family, of HARRIS' HAWKS, all perched on the two crossarms of a single power pole, not far out of Sells, Arizona. Also of personal interest were RUFOUS-WINGED SPARROWS, my first, and BOTTERI'S SPARROWS. If you have never been to Organ Pipe National Monument and Quitobaquito, I would highly recommend it. The peak tourist and camper season is the last of December, January, and February, but I find late March or early April a better time for birding. This late November weather should be bringing interesting visits to your feeders. How about giving me a call (265-8962) so your sightings can be shared with others? That's it for now, good birding, and good luck on the Christmas Bird Counts.

--R.L.T.



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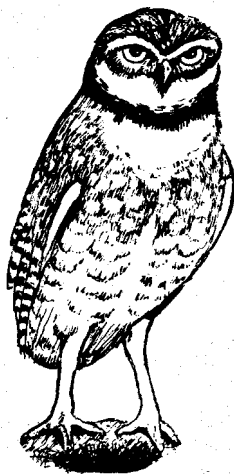
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