

BURROWING OWL

Central New Mexico Audubon Society

December 1987-January 1988

WELCOME!

The Central New Mexico Audubon Society (CNMAS) meets on 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.

THE 87TH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

It was once a tradition to hunt birds on Christmas afternoon. In 1900, Frank M. Chapman, an ornithologist and early Audubon leader, persuaded 27 of his friends to go on a bird count instead. The Christmas Bird Count has been conducted every year since, even though the weather may be daunting.

Novice and experienced birders in the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, and Central and South America, cover designated 15-mile-diameter areas recording numbers and species. It is the largest single data-gathering event on Earth, and it has built perhaps the most extensive collection of ornithological information anywhere. The 86 years of count data provide ornithologists with priceless information on bird populations, migrations, range shifts, habitat loss, intraspecific competition, and changes in food supplies. But for the intrepid birders, the count usually means a day (and often a night) of pure fun!

All count areas are registered and approved in advance by National Audubon Society, and participants use standard forms. Survey teams travel by car, foot, air-boat, canoe, snowshoe, helicopter, horseback, and bicycle. Some teams are made up of lone birders, while other teams have 100 or more participants.

The information collected is sent to American Birds where results from all counters are totalled and published in a special edition later in the year. A fee of \$3.00 per participant, per count, is charged to cover the cost of this publication.



Everyone is invited to participate. You need not be an experienced/expert birder. Good birders will be leading all groups. Part day groups can be arranged, while the diehards can stay out as long as they like! Individuals with feeders in their yards can also participate. To join one or more of the counts sponsored by CNMAS, call the compilers listed below. If you are unable to reach a compiler, call Dave or Donna Brody (242-7108), Jean Davis (821-6815), or Claudia Gayheart at the UNM Biology Dept. (277-3411).

Sandia Mountains Count
---Saturday, December 19th

Compiler, Kay Anderson, 821-1606 Meet at "Pete's Home of the Halfbreed," 7:30 a.m.

Albuquerque Count
--Sunday, December 20th

Compiler, Hart Schwarz 266-1810

Meet at Corrales Shopping Center, NW corner Coors & Corrales Roads, 7:00 a.m.

Bosque del Apache Count
—Sunday, December 27th

Compiler, Steve Cox, 345-2385 Meet at Refuge Headquarters, 7:00 a.m.



UPCOMING PROGRAMS

by Dr. Celestyn Brozek

NO DECEMBER MEETING



AUDUBON CAMP REPORT --Thursday, January 21st

Each year CNMAS provides grants for local teachers to attend the Audubon Camp. Last summer's attendees, Amy Larson and Elaine Prairie, will show us how they have been using the contacts they made at the camp to enrich their classroom program in environmental education. For example, two of their students are doing research on acid rain using a kit from National Audubon and are comparing their results with students of other teachers who attended the camp. These students will share their results with us. Another upcoming project will measure the circumference of the earth using input from teachers in various locations across the United States. We look forward to meeting Amy, Elaine, and their students.

FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

BOSQUE DEL APACHE

--Sunday, January 10th

Join attendees of the New Mexico Audubon Council meeting at Refuge Headquarters, 7:00 a.m., for an enjoyable day at the Bosque. For more information, contact Lou Helm, 821-8586.

RIO GRANDE VALLEY

---Saturday, January 30th

Tour the backroads and State Refuges of the Rio Grande Valley from Albuquerque to South of Belen. Sandhill cranes, Whooping Cranes, geese and ducks will be staging at this time for their trek north. Meet at Valley Cafe & Auction, 7715 Broadway SE, 11:00 a.m., for breakfast/lunch/coffee. Call trip leaders Evelyn & George Price, 266-4028, for more details.

MORE ZUNI AREA TRIPS

--December 19-20th, Christmas Bird Count at Zuni and Bluewater Lake

Tentative dates, call Dave Cleary for firm dates. (782–4917)

—January 23rd, Black Rock Reservoir
This trip is designed to highlight a couple of Zuni's special winter residents: Bald Eagles and Canada Geese. Meet at the PHS hospital parking lot at 9:00 a.m. Bring lunch and water and maybe longjohns too!

AUDUBON ADVENTURES--1987-88

You may have read the article in the last issue of the Burrowing Owl on our plan to attract sponsors for the "Audubon Adventures" Program in local area schools. We are please to announce that we now have the program in 15 schools as a result of five individual sponsors listed below —

Lillian Tenopyr Georgianna Costley Sarah Sharpton Gwen Brogden Philip & Adja Thacher

We would like very much to add other schools to the Program. You can help by sponsoring a school personally or by asking your club or organization to sponsor a school. A subscription for a school is \$25.00 and provides Adventures for one school-year. Both teachers and students enjoy and benefit from this outstanding science-nature oriented program. Help us to add to the number of children who are a part of this program for 1987-88. Call Marge Carrick, 266-0191 (or any CNMAS Board Member) if you can help.

BOSQUE DEL APACHE VOLUNTEERS

A meeting for interested volunteers was held on October 22nd. Following this meeting, Coordinators Jean Ann Olds and Sarah Sharpton scheduled a trip to the Bosque for an orientation session on October 29th. Four volunteers who attended this orientation were trained on "front desk operation" and participated in a short hike into the desert area south and west of refuge headquarters in preparation for leading tours into this area.

The bunkhouse for volunteers is still under construction and may not be ready until after the "rush season;" however, other volunteer activities are proceeding. Betty Balduc has received training in leading senior citizen bus tours, and recently completed her first assignment. Donna Brody also met with Bosque Volunteer Program Coordinator, Peggy Mitchusson, and discussed needs that volunteers could meet. One of the immediate needs is to get volunteer vests sewn. All materials will be furnished. If you would like to help with this project contact Donna (242-7108).

We (CNMAS and Refuge staff) are still in the "organizing stage" and will announce other volunteer opportunities as they arise. However, we would like to have your name and telephone number on our list if you are interested in being a volunteer. To obtain a copy of the "Skills Assessment Form" for volunteer work at the Bosque, contact coordinators Jean Ann Olds (265-0653) or Sarah Sharpton (897-2883).

CONSERVATION NOTES

by Lew Helm

CAN THE LOBO BE RESTORED?



This key question hangs in the balance. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has recently indicated that no suitable sites have been found for the release of the now captive Mexican Gray Wolf in its historical range in the southwest. Most of the opposition has come from livestock interests who are worried that there would be widespread depredations by any reintroduced populations. The one best remaining site is the White Sands Missile Range, but the Army has vetoed that possibility.

There are many people who believe the Federal government is not living up to its obligation under the Endangered Species Act to reintroduce the endangered wolf. Not only is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service not pushing hard enough, but the Army is not considering in any substantive way how it can assist.

An ad hoc group of representatives from environmental organizations has been meeting to pursue action to get Federal agencies off deadcenter on this question. The Audubon Society, through representation from the New Mexico Regional Office, and CNMAS are cooperating with and helping the ad hoc committee. Petitions are being circulated, an educational campaign is being mounted, and discussions with key governmental people are being held.

You can help-

- Learn more about the sorry plight of the Mexican Gray Wolf and the possibilities to save the species.
- o Sign the petition.
- o Write your State and Federal representatives. It will be only through concerted public action that the program for recovery of the Mexican Gray Wolf can succeed.



ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Late word from Washington, D.C. is encouraging. The vote of the Senate subcommittee to open the refuge to oil exploration and drilling has been delayed. We don't know for how long, however. Our own Senator Bingaman is a member of the Subcommittee. If you haven't done so already, please write or call Senator Bingaman to express your concern for the continued well-being of the refuge and for the protection of habitat for the wide array of wildlife in that part of Alaska.



PUBLIC COMMENTS REQUESTED ON SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTING

The Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is requesting public comments on a draft supplemental environmental impact statement concerning migratory bird hunting. The document is entitled, "Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Issuance of Annual Regulations Permitting the Sport Hunting of Migratory Birds (SEIS 87)". It updates a 1975 final environmental impact statement on migratory bird hunting.

For many years, migratory bird hunting regulations were adjusted annually in response to changes in the status of bird populations. In recent years, however, there has been interest in "stabilizing" hunting regulations so that hunters and businesses will know what regulations to expect from year to year, and government agencies can devote less time to establishing regulations and more to important research and management issues. Under stabilized regulations, the "framework" regulations remain unchanged for a specific period of years unless there are significant changes in migratory bird populations. In an experimental program, duck hunting regulations in the United States were stabilized from 1980-1984.

Copies of the draft supplemental environmental impact statement may be obtained by writing to Director (FWS/MBMO), Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Room 536 Matomic Building, Washington, D.C., 20240. Written comments are requested by December 31, 1987, and should be sent to the same address.

FIELD SIGHTINGS

by Mary Lou Arthur and Bruce Halstead

-SEPTEMBER SIGHTINGS

The first two Sandhill Cranes showed up at Bosque del Apache on the 19th, three days earlier than last year. On the 20th, Hart Schwarz spotted an adult Bald Eagle in the Juan Tabo Canyon area. Hart says there were numerous American Robins, Evening Grosbeaks and Golden-Crowned Kinglets in the Canyon this fall. Larry Gorbet reports that a female Scarlet Tanager was netted and banded on the 26th at the Rio Grande Nature Center. Ross Teuber observed two Three-Towed Woodpeckers in the Sandias on the 30th and again on October 1st. Three Lewis' Woodpeckers were reported in La Madera Canyon during the middle of September.

--OCTOBER SIGHTINGS

At Bosque del Apache on the 2nd, a Merlin and a large flock of Chihuahuan Ravens were seen. An immature Bald Eagle was seen north of San Acacia on the 5th. Jean Davis had a Black-Throated Gray Warbler in her backyard from the 9th to the 12th and an immature Summer Tanager on the 10th. Two Pictoral Sandpipers were reported in the valley on the 8th. Larry Gorbet saw a Carolina Wren at Rattlesnake Springs near Carlsbad on the 15th. On the 16th, several Northern Bobwhites were reportedly at McMillan Lake, and on that same day, Hart Schwarz observed a Pygmy Owl in Juan Tabo Canyon. The first crane of the experimental flock of Whooping Cranes of the season showed up at Bosque del Apache Refuge on the 18th, according to Ross Teuber, and two more showed up at the Bernardo State Refuge on the 23rd. A Scissor-Tailed Flycatcher was observed along Ridgecrest Drive in Albuquerque on the 27th. Larry Gorbet saw an immature Peregrine Falcon at the Grasslands near Los Lunas on the 8th. He also reports observing a late push of migrating shorebirds during October. On October 25th, Hart Schwarz saw an immature Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker, Eastern species, in the Sandias. The Rocky Mt. species is the Red-Napped. He reports that these birds are commonly seen during this time. Ross Teuber reports more Brown Creepers than usual were seen in Albuquerque this month. He also saw an albino House Finch in the NE Heights.



-NOVEMBER SIGHTINGS

Larry Gorbet reports that a Swamp Sparrow was banded on the 1st at the Rio Grande Nature Center and a Rose-Breasted Grosbeak was banded on the 8th. A Wood Duck was also seen at the Nature Center this month. A Carolina Wren, two female Cardinals, a Brown Thrasher, and a flock of 15 Bob Whites were reported at Rattlesnake Springs on the 1st. A flock of 10 to 15 Lawrences' Goldfinches were seen at Cloverdale on the 4th and 5th. On the 8th, Ross Teuber photographed an American Woodcock in the SE Heights. Hart Schwarz discovered that the Rosy Finches had returned to the Sandias on the 8th. Reported at the Bosque del Apache Refuge on the 17th were two Harris Sparrows, an American Tree Sparrow, a Golden-Crowned Kinglet, a Red-phased Redtail Hawk, 7 Whooping Cranes and 7000 Sandhill Cranes.

FIELD SIGHTINGS 256-7359

Mary Lou Arthur



BULL MARKET? BEAR MARKET? PLAY IT SAFE BY INVESTING IN THE DUCK MARKET!

Even without Wall Street's blessing, the new \$10 Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp truly is one of the best investments a person can make toward the future health and well-being of the Nation's wildlife.

All of the \$16 million raised from the sale of this annual revenue stamp--known to most insiders as the Duck Stamp--buys land for the National Wildlife Refuge System. Duck Stamps buy wetlands--prime habitat for millions of ducks and geese. But wetlands are valuable to more than just waterfowl. They provide the habitat needed for other game and for many species of nongame wildlife and endangered species. They are the spawning and rearing areas for many commercially-important species of fish and provide popular recreation areas for people to forget their financial woes and enjoy another form of wealth--America's abundant natural resources.

How can a person get a piece of this action? Stop by the trading floor of your nearest U.S. Post Office or National Wildlife Refuge and bid \$10 for the 1987-88 Federal Duck Stamp. When you open an account at the firm of "Canvasback, Wigeon, Gadwall, and Teal," you're banking on a sure thing. So become bullish on wildlife. Jump into the Duck Stamp market!

NEWS FROM NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY (NAS)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS DECISION

by Peter A.A. Berle, President, National Audubon Society

The decision by the Board of Directors at their May meeting to reduce Audubon field staff in order to meet budget goals generated a lot of confusion and turmoil. This was understandable, because we did not at the time have a workable plan for maintaining chapter liaison services, and Audubon's work on a regional basis. In addition, we did not do a good job of communicating with chapter leaders. After a healthy internal debate, some positive results emerged:

First: The restructuring of the field offices, while still painful, has not been as drastic as it seemed at first. We lost some valuable people, but we still have nine regional offices and four state offices. In some areas, chapters are helping with the fundraising to keep offices open.

Second: A board committee and an advisory group made up of chapter leaders developed a plan by which chapters will directly elect nine of the 36 board members. This is an important and complicated process that must be accomplished quickly this year. Your chapter leaders have been fully briefed on the process, and we hope all of you will participate.

Third: Any consideration of changing the way members are assigned to chapters or the formula by which chapters and National share dues will be deferred and will only take place (if at all) after the election of chapter-selected board members. This election will take place at the annual meeting, December 4, 1987.

Fourth: we have resolved to improve communications within Audubon. This column, prepared especially for chapter newsletters, is one part of that effort.

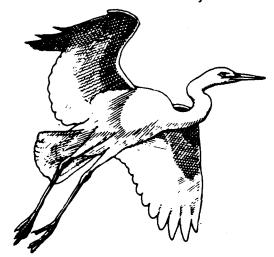
NAS PRIORITY ISSUES

National Audubon Society has identified five high priority issues for intense and immediate focus:

- o Safeguard the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, which is under threat of oil development.
- o Conserve ancient, virgin forests, especially in the Northwest, where they are rapidly disappearing.
- o Preserve wetlands, which this country continues to lose at a rate estimated to be 450,000 acres per year.
- o Fight the spread of toxics, including acid rain. o Protect the Platte River ecosystem in central Nebraska, home to many species and migratory habitat for sandhill and whooping cranes.

Of course, we will continue to work on the dozens of other important issues, but these five are being attacked in coordinated campaigns that involve every facet of the Society as well as the grassroots membership.

Chapters have their own priority issues and can draw on the huge reservoir of talent, energy, and expertise contained in National Audubon Society.



STUDENT INTERN OPPORTUNITIES AT NATIONAL AUDUBON SANCTUARIES

The National Audubon Society offers students and recent graduates an opportunity to gain training and experience in sanctuary management, while providing Audubon sanctuaries with much needed help.

"Interns do everything from leading nature walks to running visitor centers; from collecting biological data for the sanctuary monitoring program to original ecological research; and from manual labor to building displays," says Frank Dunstan, Director of Audubon Sanctuaries. Program benefits for participants include:

- o Career enhancing "hands on" experience in all phases of wildlife sanctuary work.
- o Valuable references and a stronger resume.
- o College credit can be arranged.
- o Personal instruction.
- o Housing, utilities, and uniforms are provided.
- o Eligibility for scholarships to attend one of four Audubon Ecology Camps.

Internships, usually for three-month periods, are available throughout the year at participating sanctuaries in Maine, South Carolina, Florida, Kentucky, Connecticut, Arizona, and California.

For additional program details and information write:
National Audubon Society
Sanctuary Department
93 West Cornwall Road
Sharon, CT 06069

THIS THANKSGIVING, LET'S HEAR A WORD...ABOUT THE COMEBACK OF OUR SPECIAL BIRD

The first Thanksgiving would have been meager without it. Benjamin Franklin preferred it over the bald eagle as the national bird. "It" is the wild turkey, of course—an integral part of our Nation's wildlife and cultural heritage.

Yet by the early 1900's, Americans had almost wiped out the wild turkey. Where once seven to 10 million turkeys had roamed throughout the United States, in many places there remained only memories of the turkey preserved in names like "Turkey Creek" and "Gobbler's Knob."

In the west, wild populations had fared somewhat better. Native populations had survived and were increasing in some areas. The really bright spot: introduced populations of turkeys were increasing. Fifteen turkeys trapped in New Mexico were released in Wyoming in 1935. The 15 birds multiplied to an estimated 10,000 by 1958. South Dakota successfully introduced turkeys from New Mexico and Colorado into the Black Hills in 1948-51. The population increased from the original 29 to an estimated 5,000 to 7,000 birds by 1960. Similar success was accomplished in Montana and several other western States.

The spectacular results that had been attained in live trapping western turkeys had yet to be duplicated in the East. Finally, a breakthrough in trapping technology, development of a cannon-projected net trap, made it possible to capture sufficient numbers of eastern and Florida Turkeys for large-scale restoration programs.

Restoration programs were also aided by changes in forest management that improved turkey habitat, better law enforcement, and greater public support for conservation. These factors, plus the wild turkey's unforeseen ability to adapt to habitats previously thought unsuited, made it possible to expand the turkey's range across ecological barriers.

By 1959, the financial support provided by "Pittman-Robertson" had enabled 30 States to participate in an active turkey management and research program. Wild turkey populations had been reestablished in several States within their ancestral range and had been successfully established in a few States beyond that range.

Today the turkey is making a strong comeback and can even be found within the boundaries of large metropolitan areas like Kansas City, Missouri and Washington, D.C. The Nation's wild turkey population is conservatively estimated at two to three million, and hunting seasons are permitted in 45 States, including Hawaii.



In many ways the turkey's story is the story of wildlife in America: after going from abundance to scarcity through abuse, the turkey has been restored through a little-known cooperative Federal-State program known as "Federal Aid to Wildlife Restoration."

Originally, the turkey's range included all or parts of 39 States and extended into Ontario, Mexico, and Central America. As the frontier moved westward and more and more land was cleared, wild turkeys vanished. Game preserves were established during the 1900's, but were largely ineffective in halting the decline in wildlife populations. Then, in the 1930's, two events set a new course for wildlife management—the creation of the Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit Program in 1935 and the passage of the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration ("Pittman-Robertson") Act in 1937.

The two programs produced results almost immediately. States began conducting wild turkey research projects. These early studies established the basis for setting hunting seasons, selecting areas for restocking, and identifying additional research needs.

In 1949, a report on the status of the eastern and Florida wild turkeys found that they survived on only about 12 percent of their ancestral range. The report suggested that live-trapping native wild turkeys and restocking them offered some hope of halting the decline.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUPPORT THE WESTERN FOUNDATION FOR RAPTOR CONSERVATION

---ADOPT-A-HAWK

The Sandia Mountains spring migration raptor count will be starting soon, and you can make a difference in the conservation of these magnificent birds in the West. By contributing \$20 to \$150, depending on the relative rarity of the raptor, you can adopt one of the Western Foundation for Raptor Conservation (WFRC) Project's banded birds. You will receive an 8-inch by 10-inch certificate with information such as weight, sex and size of the hawk you adopted, plus the date it was banded.

This is a special gift to raptors and a unique idea for Christmas giving--for yourself or a friend! Orders received by December 15th will be sent in time for Christmas. All donations are tax-deductible. The time to start working on preservation of Western raptors is now, before their numbers are reduced to dangerously low levels. The Foundation invites you to join in its commitment to this goal. For more information, call Steve Hoffman at 291-9224. Send orders to: Western Foundation for Raptor Conservation, Inc., P.O. Box 304, Albuquerque, NM 87103.

-BUY BIRD BOOKS AT A DISCOUNT

Allen and Mary Hale, Owners of POWER RIDGE BOOKS, are offering a discount to WFRC members on a select list of books, with profits from the sale of these books to be donated to WFRC. Allen was a principal observer in the Manzano Mountains for two weeks in 1985 and in the Wellsville Mountains of Utah this past October.

Bent, Arthur C. <u>Life Histories of North American Birds of Prey.</u> 1961. Two volumes, paperback, \$17.00 (WFRC members \$15.00). Other volumes also available.

Clark, Wm. S. <u>A Field Guide to Hawks of North America.</u> 1987. #35 in Peterson Series. Cloth \$19.95 (WFRC-\$17.50), Paper \$13.95 (WFRC-\$12.50).

Godfrey, Michael A. <u>The Birds of Canada.</u> 1986. \$39.95 (WFRC-\$35.00).

National Geographic Society. Field Guide to the Birds of North America. 1987. \$19.95 (WFRC-\$17.45).

Newton, Ian. <u>Population Ecology of Raptors.</u> 1979. \$35.00 (WFRC-\$31.50).

Orders should be sent to POWDER RIDGE BOOKS, Route 1 Box 242, Shipman, VA 22971. Please add \$1.00 for the first and \$0.50 for each additional book to cover postage and handling.

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New Mexico Audubon Council Directory

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NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY		
Membership Application Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and of my local chapter, Central New Mexico Audubon Society. Please send Audubon magazine, Burrowing Owl newsletter, and my membership card to the address below.		
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Local Chapter Central New Mexico Audubon Society Q51 7XCH8		

Please make checks payable to National Audubon Society, but send your check with the application form to:

C Society C Chair

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Send renewals directly to National Audubon Society. All dues and contributions are tax deductible. Send all changes in name, address, or telephone number to Claudia Gayheart.

Who to contact:

The **President**The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Honorable Pete V. Domenici Honorable Jeff Bingaman United States Senate Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Manuel Lujan, Jr. Honorable Joe Skeen Honorable Bill Richardson House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
500 Gold Ave., SW
Albuquerque, NM 87102
Mr. Michael Spear, Regional Director
Mr. James Johnson, Endangered Species Chief
Mr. James Lewis, Whooping Crane Coordinator

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

Villagra Building
Santa Fe, NM 97503
Mr. Harold Olson, Director
Mr. Wain Evans, Asst. Director
Mr. John Hubbard, Endangered Species

State Game Commission Mr. Gerald Maestas, Chairman Unit 1, Box 15 La Puebla Road Espanola, NM 87532 Dr. Thomas Arvas, Member 9204 Menaul, NE Albuquerque, NM 87112

Randali Davey Audubon Center Mr. David Henderson P.O. Box 9314 Santa Fe, NM 87504 983-4609

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