



BURROWING OWL

CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY
DECEMBER 1996 - JANUARY 1997
VOLUME 26 - No. 1

Welcome, and greetings of the season! Central New Mexico Audubon Society invites you to join us. All our meetings and field trips are free and open to the public.

'Tis the Season To Be Counting . . . Birds!

We've wrapped up an array of packages for you to give to yourself, and each one of them is packed with special surprises you'll delight in. We're talking about the Christmas Bird Counts, of course. How many presents you give to yourself (and to the birds) is up to you, but you're welcome to partake in any or all of them. This is the 97th year that Auduboners celebrate counting birds instead of shooting them, while contributing to the collection of scientific data and having a good time. Amateur birders are welcomed; expert birders will be leading all groups. Our compiled information is sent to National Audubon Society and published next fall in National Audubon Field Notes. A fee of \$5 per participant is charged to cover cost of publication. So grab your field guides, dress warmly, bring food and hot cocoa, and come celebrate Christmas the Audubon way!

Saturday, December 21 - Albuquerque

Contact Hart Schwarz, 266-1810

Meet at Corrales Shopping Center, NW corner of Coors and Alameda, 7:15 a.m.

Compilation Party around 6:00 p.m. at the home of Roger Hoppe for Green Chile stew. Desserts and drink are welcome, but not required. Maps given out that morning, or phone 856-1263 for directions to 1526 Eagle Ridge Drive, NE, in Sandia Heights.

Sunday, December 22 - Bosque del Apache NWR, Socorro

Contact Steve Cox, 345-2385

Meet at refuge headquarters, 7:00 a.m.

Sunday, January 5, 1997 - Sandia Mountains

Contact Jonalyn Yancey - 286-2949

Meet at Pete's Mexican Restaurant (north Hwy. 14, 1/2 mile north of Sandia Crest Road turnoff) at 7:30 a.m. Compilation Party immediately following at the home of Hardy & Christy Brothers for Soup Buffet. Snack/dessert to share and drinks again welcome, but not required. Maps given out that morning, or phone 281-7776 for directions to their home in Sandia Park.

OTHER NEW MEXICO CHRISTMAS COUNTS

Silver City - Saturday, December 21, 1996

Contact Ralph Fisher, (505) 535-2320

Zuni Count - Saturday, December 21, 1996

Contact John Trochet, (916) 736-3560

Clayton - Thursday, December 26 (Alternate date, Dec. 30)

Contact Lois Herrmann, (505) 983-6036

Peloncillo Mountains - Sunday, December 29, 1996

Contact Alan Craig, (520) 558-2220

Espanola - Saturday, January 4, 1997

Contact Bernie Foy, (505) 466-1587

Gila River - Saturday, January 4, 1997

Contact Ralph Fisher, (505) 535-2320



PROGRAMS

FOR DECEMBER

December offers multiple choice: Join any one of our Christmas Count Compilation parties (if not the Christmas Counts themselves) for a fun evening of socializing, sharing, and story-telling. If you've never done it before, you'll be educated and entertained by the amount of information and knowledge exchanged -- as well as the good food! See the front page for names and numbers of our generous hosts and hostess.

FOR JANUARY

Thursday, January 16
Botanic Garden and the Aquarium

Join us for an insider's view of some of the flora and fauna of the City's newest attraction. The grand opening on December 5 was just the beginning! Come meet and learn as we get a personal tour through slides and stories from the dynamic people who are so dedicated to this project.

7:30 p.m. - Program
Light Refreshments Provided
St. Timothy's Lutheran Church
Northwest corner of Copper and
Jefferson

AUDUBON TRIPS

Everyone is welcome on field trips: Audubon members and nonmembers, novice and experienced birders.

TRIPS FOR DECEMBER

Sat., Dec. 7: **Bosque del Apache.** Join us for the best birding in New Mexico. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Physics Bldg. parking lot (Yale and Lomas). Bring your lunch and dress warmly. If the weather is bad, we'll try it again next Saturday, Dec. 14. Call Charlotte (345-1271) or Sei (266-2480) if not sure.

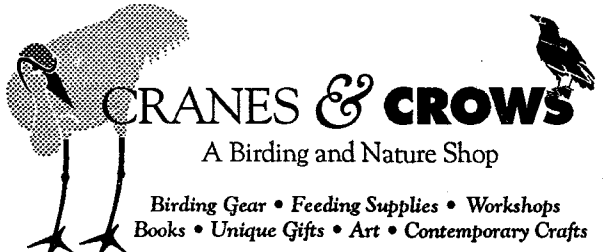
Sat., Dec. 14: See December 7.

December: Join us for the Christmas Count(s)!

TRIPS FOR JANUARY

Sun., Jan. 12: **Kit Carson Park and Breakfast.** Meet at 7:30 at the Village Inn, 2437 Central NW, for breakfast. If you don't want to get up that early, meet us at Kit Carson Park at 8:30. To get to the park, take Laguna Blvd. south off Central. We'll move on to the Nature Center or Corrales Bosque and be back around noon.

Jan. 25-26: Weekend. **Las Vegas and Maxwell National Wildlife Refuges.** Bring your lunch and lots of warm clothing; it can get pretty cold. This can be a day trip, or stay overnight in Springer. This trip is a must to see Hawks and Eagles! Call Sei (266-2480) or Charlotte (345-1271) to let us know who is going and for information on car pooling and accommodations. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at Far North Shopping Center behind Village Inn, San Mateo and Academy.



CRANES & CROWS
A Birding and Nature Shop

Birding Gear • Feeding Supplies • Workshops
Books • Unique Gifts • Art • Contemporary Crafts

Rio Grande Plaza
901 Rio Grande Blvd. NW #120
Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87104

Lori Korngut
Joel Korngut
505-243-0800

President's Progress
By Jeff Myers

For the past several issues, our intrepid newsletter editor, Beth Hurst-Waitz, has run columns on "herps" (reptiles and amphibians) written by Tom Jervis of the Sangre de Cristo Audubon Society. It is a goal of the New Mexico Audubon Council, which includes all five chapters in the state, to see a law passed by the legislature protecting our herps from commercial exploitation. The enclosed brochure explains briefly why such a law is essential and how you can get more information and contact State lawmakers. Please share it as widely as possible.

The brochure is printed on 100% tree-free, chlorine-free, acid-free kenaf paper. Kenaf is an annual crop grown in New Mexico and provides a rapidly renewable source of paper pulp made from the stems of the plant. Kenaf may, one day, help permit return of our National Forests to a more natural state from their present status as a massive, government-subsidized tree farm. The local source of kenaf paper (in quantity) is Desert Paper in Albuquerque.

The Burrowing Owl only comes to us six times a year and so does not provide the best way to track fast-moving legislative issues. For those of you with access to the World Wide Web, please check the following address frequently: <http://www.rt66.com/peacmyer/herps>. That site will provide the text of the bill, talking points concerning it, the current status of the bill, and other items of interest. If that is not satisfactory, please feel free to call me or the Randall Davey Audubon Center.

Our chapter's Web site, <http://www.rt66.com/peacmyer/cnmas>, now contains a list of upcoming events, including membership meetings and field trips. In the future, we expect to have an electronic version of the Burrowing Owl available so that Auduboners from out of state may more easily keep tabs on us. We will also likely add information on birding areas such as Bosque del Apache and the Rio Grande Nature Center to help visitors plan their birding trips. Let me know what else you would like to see. Have a great New Year.

TRIP REPORT

By Charlotte Green

Silver City (in early October) was fantastic as usual. However, according to Ralph Fisher, there weren't very many birds at Mangas Springs this fall compared to other years, even though we saw 25 species, including Cedar Waxwings, Western Tanager, Rufous morph Redtail Hawk, Western and Olive-sided Flycatchers, and Wilson's Warblers. We also got views of the Black Hawk and an Osprey.

October 26: Bosque del Apache in the snow. It snowed most of the day south of Albuquerque. Five of us were the only ones out in it. The birds certainly weren't.

The Burrowing Owl Newsletter is published six times a year, February, April, June, August, October and December by Central New Mexico Audubon Society, P.O. Box 30002, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87190-0002. Subscription is free to National Audubon Society members, \$12 to nonmembers.



GIVE THE ULTIMATE HOLIDAY GIFT

to yourself, your family, and generations to come . . .

Vote "Yes" for Parks and Open Space!

There will be a special election this winter to decide whether to raise the gross receipts tax by one-quarter of one percent (5 cents on \$20) for a period of two years only.

The money raised would be used to:

- *Purchase 21 unique and wonderful open space properties.
- *Develop 25 neighborhood parks.
- *Purchase land for parks.

Open space lands to be purchased include Trés Pistoles (Three Gun Springs) Canyon, the San Antonio Oxbow, the north and south sand dunes, historic Sanchez Farm, the Northern Geologic Windows, the Rio Puerco escarpment, Tijeras Arroyo east of Four Hills, the Hubbell Oxbow, the southwest mesa escarpment, and others. Parks lands to be purchased include an expansion of the Balloon Fiesta Park and Anderson Field.

The vote will be by Mail-In Ballot for City residents only. Ballots will be mailed to registered voters in late December. Ballots must be returned no later than January 14, 1997.

RETURN YOUR BALLOT MARKED "YES" IN THE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE MAIL-IN ELECTION.

Spread the word in your neighborhood. Tell your friends at work, school, church, and other organizations. Call Richard Barish for information and fliers, 247-8079.

A Great Uplifting of Spirits

With the Festival of the Cranes behind us, and the memory of the magnificent full moon over Bosque del Apache still imprinted on our senses from Sunday night's broadcast on PBS of **Heading South: Wild Wings**, we can settle into winter as contentedly as the cranes and geese have settled into Bosque del Apache.

The scarlet-crowned sandhill cranes, standing four feet tall with wing spans of greater than six feet, have inhabited the planet longer than any other living vertebrate. Fossil evidence indicates they have been here for 26-27 million years. Both sandhill and whoopers travel 850 miles along the crest of the Rocky Mountains on the way to Bosque, where their return has been a triumph of conservation and habitat preservation.

Across the globe, at the Welney Wildfowl and Wetlands Center in the Fens region of eastern England, the Bewick's swans rest, feed and socialize after their flight from the Siberian tundra. Endowed with bright yellow bills tipped with black, the Bewick's swans can be identified as individuals by variations in the bill pattern. Many have been given individual names by the scientists and amateur ornithologists who follow their yearly migration. This year, there have been two noteworthy christenings: "Bosque" and "Apache."

We are all one, after all, and ultimately interdependent. We must come to understand that these safe havens are as essential to our continued existence as that of any other species.

Peace and beauty to you in 1997 from all of us at Central New Mexico Audubon Society.

THURSDAY MORNING BIRDING GROUP

For information on Thursday morning outings to nearby areas, call Julie Goodding at 255-9366.

Think Of Your Backyard As A Stage

(Nature provides the characters.)

The popular Chickadee is the "clown" of the backyard feeder.



Attracting nature to your backyard is fun and rewarding for the whole family. Let the Certified Birdfeeding Specialists at Wild Birds Unlimited® help you attract one of nature's greatest and most colorful casts of characters - wild birds.

SUPPORTING NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SINCE 1991

Wild Birds Unlimited®

We Bring People and Nature Together®

7200 Montgomery Blvd. NE • (505) 883-0324

BIRDSEED • FEEDERS • BIRDBATHS • NATURE GIFTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

NM Dept. of Game & Fish
Conservation Services Division
(505) 841-8881

Randall Davey Audubon Center
(505) 983-4609

The Amphibians and Reptiles of NM
University of New Mexico Press

*Snakes, Lizards, Turtles, Frogs,
Toads, and Salamanders of NM*
Sunstone Press

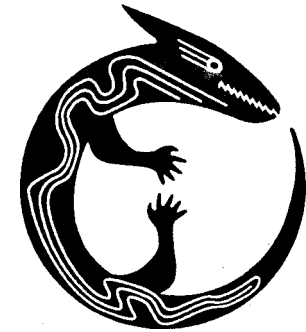
TO TAKE ACTION:

Ask for an end to commercial
exploitation of native N.M. reptiles
and amphibians (your calls and
letters do make a difference):

Governor Gary Johnson
Capitol Bldg., 4th Floor
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87503
(505) 827-3000
email: gov@gov.state.nm.us

Your State Senator or
Representative
State Capitol Building
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87503
(505) 986-4300

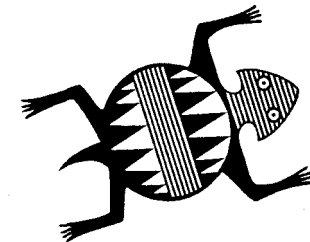
SEE <http://www.rt66.com/peacmyer/herps>



NEW MEXICO'S

**REPTILES and
AMPHIBIANS:**

WORTH SAVING?



Prepared by the New Mexico Audubon Council
Please copy and distribute widely!
100% Tree-Free, Chlorine-Free Kenaf Paper

WHO ARE THE HERPS?

For most people, "herpetology", or the study of reptiles and amphibians, begins at an early age. Whether the interest begins with horned lizards, tadpoles, or even snakes, most children engage in the study of "herps" at a level seemingly out of proportion to their importance. Many, if not most, adults lose the interest they had as children as the need to focus on commercially successful activities grows.

POIKILOTHERMY

We tend to think of cold-blooded creatures like the herps as primitive, not possessing the advanced technology of homeothermy (warm-bloodedness) that makes our lives so comfortable. Cold-bloodedness, or poikilothermy, is in fact a particularly useful property in many environments, particular those as harsh as New Mexico. In the desert, where water or food may be a feast or famine proposition, the ability to survive for long periods without either can be particularly adaptive.

HERPS HELP US...

By surviving in the wild, herps not only help themselves, they help us as well. As with their relatives the birds, reptiles and amphibians help control pests and disease-carrying organisms. For example, the smaller herps help control populations of undesirable insects such as mosquitos and

flies. Snakes eat mice, prairie dogs, and other animals that carry plague, hantavirus, and other diseases. As veterinarian and State Land Commissioner Ray Powell has pointed out, "[r]attlesnakes are important predators in arid land ecology."

NEW MEXICO HERPS ARE LEGALLY UNPROTECTED

Although every other state in the Southwest protects its herps against commercial exploitations of various kinds, New Mexico does not. With its unique geographical position and diverse natural heritage, New Mexico is home to 122 species of native amphibians and reptiles. According to a 1995 study by the N.M. Department of Game and Fish, enormous



numbers of these animals are collected yearly and shipped out of state, primarily to pet trade markets in the northeast United States. This is apparently done with little understanding or concern regarding the impact these commercial

activities have on herp populations. To get an idea of the scale of the problem, consider the following items discovered in the 1995 study:

- In Silver City, collectors are shipping between 200 and 300 live lizards and snakes each month to pet stores in New York.
- Two to three boxes of live reptiles are shipped each week from Grant County Airport to pet store suppliers in Nevada and Colorado.
- One mid-morning in Deming, collectors had collected over 100 lizards for resale.

HELP THE HERPS...

Legislation is needed to prevent our native reptiles and amphibians from becoming threatened, endangered, or extinct species, due to commercial exploitation. Please investigate the problem through the resources on the back and contact your legislators and the governor to request passage and signature of a bill to regulate commercial exploitation.



Graphics © RT Computer Graphics

WILDLIFE RESCUE

If you find a sick or injured bird, call
344-2500.

RARE BIRD ALERT

To learn about sightings all over the
state or to report a rare sighting, the
number in Los Alamos is 662-2101.

BAT IN TROUBLE?

Call Talking Talons before you
intervene.

294-5188 281-1133

WINTER BIRD FESTIVAL

Rio Grande Nature Center State Park is
sponsoring this all-day event on **Saturday,
January 25**, to focus on winter birds of the
bosque and their habitats, as well as early
migration. There will be guest speakers
from Wildlife Rescue, Bosque del Apache,
and others. Stop by anytime between 10 and
4 and join the festivities.

Free seed...
with our
Frequent Feeder
program. Each
10th bag is free
when you
purchase nine.

**Wild Bird
Center**
5200 Eubank Blvd., N.E.
Albuquerque, NM
Mon.-Sat. 10-6, Sun. 12-5
332-4737

GET WILD ON THE WEB

National Wildlife Refuges . . . wildlife
certainly knows about them. Do you?

<http://www.refugenet.com>

Unique gift items, featured refuges,
beautiful photographs, information on
volunteer opportunities, "wild happening"
updates -- the only nationwide listing of
exciting refuge events!

BIRDS ARE ON THE MOVE!

Come see them at the **Oscuro High Desert
Hostel**- a 240 acre ranch in a sublime desert
setting. 15 miles south of Carrizozo, NM.
\$12-\$14 shared rooms/\$26 private rooms,
all food included. **CALL 648-4007**

CNMAS DIRECTORY

CNMAS Phone Number: 255-7622

CNMAS Home Page: <http://www.rt66.com/peacmyer/cnmas.htm>

PRESIDENT

Jeffrey Myers, 2200 Cutler NE, 87106; 242-9677(W); 268-8457(H)

VICE-PRESIDENT, CONSERVATION AND MEMBERSHIP CHAIRPERSON

Christy Brothers, PO Box 148, Sandia Park, NM 87047
Home: 281-7776 Fax: 281-7778 E-mail: christy@rt66.com
Compuserve: 72446,1565

PROGRAM CHAIRPERSON/PUBLICITY

Patrice Johnson, 726-33 Tramway Vista Drive, NE, 87122
Home: 856-7443 E-mail: dmjuffda@aol.com

RECORDING SECRETARY

Suzanne Graham, 2909 Sol de Vida, NW, 87120; 831-9401

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Jean Dillely, 13 Mill Road, NW, 87120; 897-0854

TREASURER

Ronald Waitz, 804 Guadalupe Circle NW, 87114; 898-8514

DIRECTORS

Donna Thatcher-Broudy, 1128 Girard Blvd., NE, 87106; 255-1546
Darwin Miller, 6343 Dona Linda Place NW, 87120; 836-7297
Marian Washburn, 609 Encino Place, NE, #115, 87102; 246-8402

AUDUBON ADVENTURES CHAIRPERSON

Julie Gooding, 4907 Royene NE, 87110; 255-9366

FIELD TRIP CHAIRPEOPLE

Sei Tokuda, 3008 Marble Avenue NE, 87106; 266-2480
Charlotte Green, 808 Freeman Avenue NW, 87107

NEW MEXICO COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

Jonalyn Yancey, PO Box 1543, Cedar Crest, NM 87008-1543
884-6807(W); 286-2949(H)

EDITOR, BURROWING OWL

Beth Hurst-Waitz, 804 Guadalupe Circle NW, 87114-1710
898-8514(H); 243-7029(W)

CIRCULATION, BURROWING OWL

Rebecca Gracey, 2400 Plaza Vizcaya NW, 87104; 242-3821

NEW MEXICO AUDUBON COUNCIL DIRECTORY

PRESIDENT - Linda Mowbray

1122 S. Plata Circle

Santa Fe, NM 87501 (505)989-8295

VICE-PRESIDENT - Tom Jervis, Santa Fe

TREASURER - Earl Harvey, Silver City

SECRETARY - Jeff Myers, Albuquerque

Whom to Contact:

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500
(202) 456-1111

email: President@WhiteHouse.GOV.

Hon. Pete Domenici
(202) 224-6621
(505) 766-3481

email: senator_domenici@domenici.senate.gov

Hon. Bruce Babbitt
Secretary of the Interior
18th & C Streets, N.W., Rm. 6151
Washington, DC 20240
(202) 208-7351

Hon. Jeff Bingaman
(202) 224-5521
(505) 766-3636

U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Hon. Steve Schiff — (505) 766-2538
Hon. Joe Skeen — (202) 225-2365
Hon. Bill Richardson — (202) 225-6190
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

National Audubon Society

Membership Hotline
(800) 274-4201

Activist Hotline
(800) 659-2622

New Mexico Office
David Henderson
Randall Davey Audubon Center
PO Box 9314
Santa Fe, NM 87504
(505) 983-4609

US Fish and Wildlife Service
500 Gold Avenue, SW
Albuquerque, NM 87102
Regional Director-(505) 766-2321
Refuges and Wildlife-(505) 766-2036
Habitat Conservation-(505) 766-2914

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Villagra Building
P.O. Box 25112
Santa Fe, NM 87503-0001
(505) 841-8881
Sandia Ranger District
US Forest Service
Floyd A. Thompson III, District Ranger
11776 Highway 337
Tijeras, NM 87059
(505) 281-3304

The *Burrowing Owl* is printed on recycled paper.

Central New Mexico Audubon Society assumes no responsibility for injuries, personal or otherwise, incurred while attending society-sponsored activities and will not be held liable for such accidents. You attend at your own risk.

Central New Mexico Audubon Society
Post Office Box 30002
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87190-0002



National Audubon Society

Chapter Membership Application

Yes, I'd like to join.

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and of my local chapter. Please send AUDUBON magazine and my membership card to the address below.

My check for \$20 is enclosed

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Please make all checks payable to the national Audubon Society



Send this application and your check to:
National Audubon Society

CNMAS Chapter

P.O. Box 30002 • Albuquerque, NM 87190-0002

LOCAL CHAPTER

Central New Mexico Audubon Society

Local Chapter Code — Q51

7XCH8

Use the above form for new subscriptions only. Contact Membership Chairperson for changes of address or corrections in your Burrowing Owl label. Nonmembers can receive the Burrowing Owl by sending your name and address with \$12 to CNMAS, c/o Beth Hurst, 804 Guadalupe Circle, N.W., 87114-1710.

CALENDAR RECAP

- Dec. 7: Birding trip, Bosque del Apache
- Dec. 21: Albuquerque Christmas Bird Count
- Dec. 22 - Bosque del Apache Christmas Bird Count
- Jan. 5 - Sandia Mtns. Christmas Bird Count
- Jan. 12 - Birding & Breakfast, Kit Carson Park
- Jan. 14 - Deadline for returning your "Yes!" Ballot in the Parks and Open Space Special Election
- Jan. 16 - General Meeting featuring the Botanic Garden and Aquarium
- Jan. 25 - Winter Bird Festival, Rio Grande Nature Center
- Jan. 25-26 - Birding trip to Las Vegas & Maxwell National Wildlife Refuges

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 43
Albuquerque, NM