



BURROWING OWL

CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 1997

VOLUME 26 - No. 5

UPCOMING CHAPTER ACTIVITIES -- MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!!

PROGRAMS

Summer break continues through August, so you can get in that extra road trip or barbecue in the backyard. Our programs resume in September, at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, northwest corner of Copper and Jefferson. We hope to see you there!

Thursday, September 18, 7:30 p.m. Light refreshments served from 7:15. Bill Dummire will speak about his new book, Wild Plants and Native Peoples of the Four Corners, his second book collaboration with coauthor Gail Tierney. Bill will describe prehistoric and historic uses of plants in the Four Corners area, including Chaco Canyon and Mesa Verde, and will gladly sign his books for you, too!

AUDUBON FIELD TRIPS

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

TRIPS FOR AUGUST

Sat., August 9 - Jemez Falls. We'll be searching for the Black Swifts and Three-toed Woodpecker. Bring your lunch. Meet behind the Village Inn at Far North Shopping Center, Academy and San Mateo, at 7:00 a.m. We'll be back by mid afternoon.

Sat.-Sun., August 23-24 - Bitter Lake, Roswell. Great for shore birds this time of year. Call Charlotte (345-1271) or Sei (266-2480) for info on accommodations and transportation. Meet at Four Hills Shopping Center by the video store at 7:00 a.m.

TRIPS FOR SEPTEMBER

Sat.-Sun., Sept. 6-7 - Percha Dam and Caballo. Overnight or long day trip to look for migrating warblers and sparrows. Meet at 6:00 a.m. at the Physics Bldg. parking lot, Lomas and Yale. Bring your lunch. Call Charlotte (345-1271) or Sei (266-2480) for info on accommodations and transportation.

Sat.-Sun, Sept. 20-21 - Vermillion Cliffs. Good chance to see the California Condors that have been released in Arizona. It will be a 7-hour drive to the cliffs. Call Charlotte (345-1271) or Sei (266-2480) for info on accommodations and transportation.

Sat., Sept. 27 - HawkWatch & Quarai. Join us on our visit to the HawkWatch site in the Manzanos to see migrating hawks. It's an easy walk from the parking site to the HawkWatch site. Then we'll head down to Quarai. Bring a lunch and layer with warm clothes. It can be cold at the HawkWatch site. Meet at Four Hills Shopping Center near the video store at 7:30 a.m.

TRIPS FOR OCTOBER

Sat.-Sun, Oct. 4-5 - A day (or days) of volunteering and birding in one! Auduboners will join volunteers from New Mexico Volunteers for the Outdoors for work day at Bosque del Apache. Call Sei (266-2480) for more details.

THURSDAY MORNING BIRDING GROUP

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

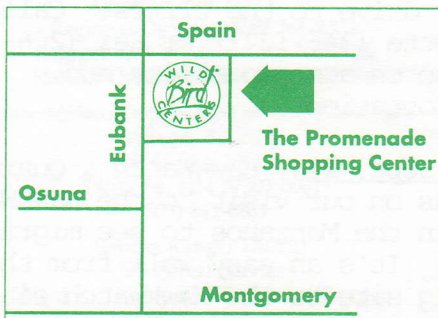
WILD BIRD CENTER - WOW!

Yes, "Wow!" was the first reaction President Jeff Myers had when Mike Clark, owner of The Wild Bird Center, presented Jeff with a check in the amount of \$505 on July 23.

Mike's generous contribution came as the result of The Wild Bird Center's Summer Benefit Seed Sale, proceeds from which benefited not only Central New Mexico Audubon Society, but New Mexico Volunteers for the Outdoors and Hawks Aloft, as well. Plus, our chapter gained two couples as new members!

Of course, Jeff's next reaction was "Thanks a million!" And we all thank you, Mike, both on behalf of Central New Mexico Audubon Society and on behalf of the birds, as well. To paraphrase: We speak for them, because they can only sing for themselves! Again, thank you.

How to find the Wild Bird Center



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 Loas Alamos is (505) 662-2101.

BAT IN TROUBLE?

Call Talking Talons before you intervene.
281-1133 281-1515

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS:

- Evelyn G. Wilson
- Robert E. Huffman
- Susan L. DeGrand
- Stephen & Darlene Batson
- Dale & Becky Schaeffer

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511 AND COUNTING

The recent addition of three new national wildlife refuges brings the total to 511.

The new San Diego NWR in southern California protects 1,840 acres of critically endangered coastal scrub habitat, home to declining species such as the California gnatcatcher and the least Bell's vireo subspecies.

Mandalay NWR in Louisiana contains 4,415 acres of freshwater marshes and wetland, winter home to more than 75,000 ducks and geese.

The Rappahannock River Valley NWR in eastern Virginia is a 1,111-acre tract that is considered one of the most important waterfowl stopover and wintering sites in the East. It also has a winter bald eagle population of between 100 and 135 birds.

--Bird Watcher's Digest

The natural alternative

Backyard birding is an increasingly popular entertainment option. Share it with your friends and family, and enjoy **15% off** any bird feeder with this ad.





Wild Bird Center

The Promenade Shopping Center
 5200 Eubank NE (Eubank at Spain NE)
 (Just east of Marie Callendar's)
 332-4737

TRIP REPORTS - Charlotte Green

5/2/97 - Read about our Silver City Birdathon trip (along with all the other teams' reports) in the next Burrowing Owl!

5/10/97 - Bitter Lake, Rattlesnake Springs were full of interesting birds. We sat under the trees at the visitors center at Bitter Lake, and they came to us: Blue, Black-headed & Rosebreasted Grosbeaks, Indigo Bunting, Cedar Waxwing and Orioles. At Washington Ranch & Rattlesnake Springs, there were Painted Buntings, Orchard Orioles, Vermillion Flycatchers, Tanagers, Chats, Bell's Vireos and Brown Thrasher. The pond at Hueco Tanks was dry as a bone, so not many birds there. Of the ten people that went on this trip, several saw birds that they hadn't seen before.

5/31/97 - 100 Count Day was a big success for the second year now. 17 people showed up to find 109 birds by 4:00 p.m. We saw Warblers, including the Red-faced; Swallows, Swifts, Jays, Flycatchers (including a Hammond's), Woodpeckers and Vireos in Water Canyon. At the Bosque we saw lots of waterfowl, including a Virginia Rail and two Least Bitterns. What a great day!

6/14/97 - Zuni Mountains. Six of us made the trip to Ramah to meet Dave Cleary for a tour of the area. We visited Nutria Lakes and Canyon, where we saw a total of 53 birds, including Willow Flycatchers, Vireos (Solitary and Warbling), and Sparrows (Vesper, Chipping, Savannah and Brewer's). This is beautiful country, and we've been invited back next year to see more. Hope you'll join us then.

6/28/97 - Maxwell. It was a great day! We saw over 50 species, including many wonderful views of the Dickcissel, Eastern Kingbird, and Grasshopper Sparrow.

**Hummerfest!**

Rio Grande Nature Center
2901 Candelaria Road, N.W.
Saturday, August 9

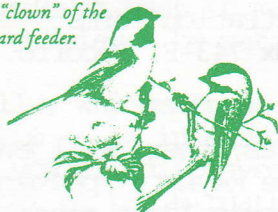
Keynote speaker Ethan Temeles, an ornithologist specializing in hummingbird research, will talk about "**Funny Things Happen on the Way to the Nectar: Tricks Flowers Play on Hummingbirds.**" Other speakers include well-known authorities such as Dan True on "**The Amazing Rufous Hummingbird**"; Joan Day-Martin on "**Banding Hummingbirds**"; and Penny Elliston on "**Raising Orphaned Hummingbirds.**"

There will be bird identification in the pond room by **Audubon Society** volunteers (call Jeff Myers, 268-8457, if you can help), bird walks beginning at 8:00 a.m., viewing hummingbirds up close and personal with Wildlife Rescue, hummingbird banding and releasing demonstrations, children's activities, and refreshments. Come join in the fun at New Mexico's only hummingbird festival! Admission is free.

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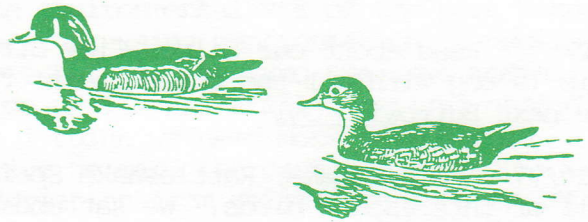
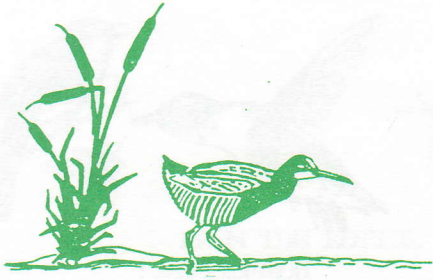
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"Let Nature Do the Work - Wild Gardens" is a course taught by Jim Lewis through UNM Continuing Ed. The class runs Aug. 28 through Oct. 16 this fall, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Thursdays. The class emphasizes the design of natural gardens and the use of native edible plants, along with how to avoid spading, cultivating, weeding, spraying, fertilizing, and lawn mowing. Jim also discusses automatic creation of topsoil and availability of free mulch and ground cover materials. To register, call UNM at 277-0077.



TAKE REFUGE

On a hot summer day toward the end of July, think of Bosque del Apache, and your mind conjures up images of . . . shimmering heat. Swarming mosquitoes. Secluded birds.

But wait. Let's change the focus of the picture just a bit. Remember a year ago at the end of June, when many of us were mourning the devastation caused by "the fire"? The one that took expert fire fighters four days to quell? The one that torched 4,000 acres of Bosque refuge land? And now -- a year later -- there's a different story to tell.

I read that story recently in the publication of **Friends of Bosque del Apache**. I've gotten permission from Martha Hatch, the newsletter editor, to retell some of it here using her article, but I would urge any of you interested in Bosque del Apache to do two things: One, become a member of Friends of Bosque del Apache yourselves; and two, when you do, ask them to send you a copy of their July-August newsletter. Membership in Friends of Bosque del Apache costs a scant \$15/year per family. Their address is P.O. Box 340, San Antonio, NM 87832.

The rehabilitation of the refuge is not an overnight accomplishment, but an ongoing evolution of funds appropriation, hard work, research necessary for plan development, hard work, implementation of those plans, and hard work. The Bosque has always been an intensively managed refuge, requiring the moving around of lots of dirt and lots of water. Only one short year after the fire devastation, progress is visible and results tangible.

Of course, those results are there to be enjoyed by all of us. Participation being a key ingredient of enjoyment, here are some more suggestions, guaranteed to enhance both Bosque del Apache and your experience of it at the same time!

One, mark your calendars to join Auduboners and other volunteers at Bosque del Apache for a day or a **weekend of work and rehabilitation on October 4 and 5**. Call Sei Tokuda @ 266-2480 for more info.

Two, gather up your friends, mark your calendars, and plan on attending the October meeting of Audubon. We're expecting **Phil Norton**, manager of Bosque del Apache National Wildlife, to be our guest speaker!

And three, be sure to attend the **Tenth Annual Festival of the Cranes** this year, November 13 through 16. I've already received my flier announcement in the mail, and you, too, can get on the list for a catalog of events and preregistration forms. Just send your name and address to Festival of the Cranes, P.O. Box 743-F, Socorro, NM 87801, and ask to be put on the mailing list.

I can give you a clue: This year's festival will be GREAT! And yes, there will even be whooping cranes on the refuge this year! Kent Clegg, one of the keynote speakers, will be returning to Bosque del Apache by ultralight airplane from his Idaho ranch. Accompanying him on the journey will be a flock of seven whooping cranes, newly hatched in May at the Patuxent Wildlife Center in Maryland. The chicks were flown from Maryland to Clegg's Idaho ranch in a Lear jet, but they'll have to use their own wings in October when they migrate to New Mexico -- with a little help from their friends!

"Sounds great," you say, "but it's still only August." Aha! We've got a solution for that, too: Visit the Bosque (and other refuges) from the comfort of your own home. Try these for a start:

Friends of Bosque del Apache:

<http://sturgeon.irm1.r2.fws.gov/u2/refuges/newmex/bosque.html> (that's im ONE (1) and html (el). Or type in <http://sturgeon.irm1.r2.fws.gov> then click on "National Wildlife Refuges," then click on "Bosque del Apache," which is under New Mexico.)

Festival of the Cranes: <http://www.rmt.edu/mainpage/festival>

Other pages featuring Bosque del Apache NWR are:

Blue Goose Server (Washington Office):

<http://bluegoose.arw.r9.fws.gov/NWRSFiles/RefugeSystemLeaflets/R2/NewMexico/BosqueNWR/BosqueNWR.html>

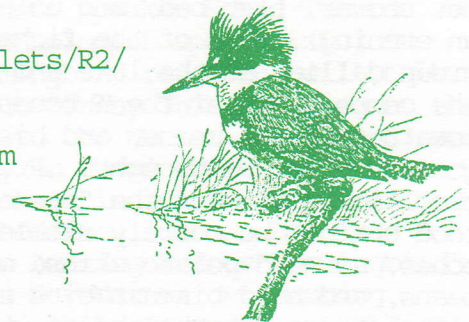
Refuge Net (Karen Hollingsworth): <http://www.refugenet.com>

Great Outdoor Recreation Pages (GORP):

http://www.gorp.com/gorp/resource/us_nwr/rm_bosqu.htm

Other sites (from Yahoo search):

<http://hanksville.phast.umass.edu/misc/bosque.html>
http://www.rmt.edu/mainpage/festival/bosque_tours.html
<http://www.rmt.edu/~rmt/rmt/litegeology/lg003.html>
<http://griffy.rmt.edu/Geol/Structure/Ralser/bosque.html>
<http://hanksville.phast.umass.edu/poems/bosque.html>



BIRDATHON . . . AND ON AND ON

For those of you waiting with bated breath to hear the final results and tallies -- you'd better breathe, or you're going to turn blue!

You might also turn green -- with envy, that is -- when you find out that our Birdathon Pledge Coordinator is on a month-long safari in Africa. When she gets back, we're going to be making our list and checking it twice, so we'll be sure to contact all of you who made pledges and to publish everyone's name in our litany of thanks and recognition. We wouldn't want to miss any one of you, so please be patient with us!

Finally, why don't we add purple to our palette -- as in passion for the birds that you all displayed in your generous support of the Birdathon this year. Why, with such a resplendent coloration of blue, green, and purple, you might be mistaken for some tropical hummingbird, and we'll all be flocking to add you to our life lists! Thanks, everybody!



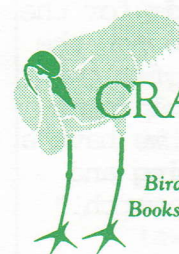
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FROM THE EDITOR

One fine weekend in July, I was out in the woods with a bunch of "real" campers who good-naturedly put up with Ron's and my pseudo roughing it (we retired to our hot shower, flat bed, and unleaky roof of an evening). One of the fishermen in our group dallied at the lake and got back to the campsite after the T-bones, baked potatoes, green beans, and biscuits were gone -- or so we thought. Proudly proclaiming himself the "hyena in this food chain," he merrily nibbled off steak bones, scraped potato skins, multiplied beans, and held biscuit bits together with butter. At the end of what was unmistakably an altogether satisfying meal, he reiterated the rewards of being the scavenger of the group.

Well, friends, the following words of wisdom and quotable quotes are what I have "scavenged" from the flurry of reading which inevitably precedes my preparation for producing a Burrowing Owl. Just like being with those folks on the mountainside did, it feels good to be among such thoughtful, insightful, wise, and dedicated people who devote their thoughts, deeds, and words to doing a little good here and now.

"It is staggering to think of the impact 63 million birders could have in this country and throughout the planet if we dedicated ourselves to even the smallest conservation effort. We are a political force that could restore lost wetlands for waterfowl, protect riparian forests for migrating birds, encourage proper management to restore grasslands for the Lesser Prairie Chicken, and protect the last of the old growth forests for owls and goshawks. We are a powerful force when committed to a cause, and we have a good one: protecting, recovering and enhancing the birds we love to watch."

-- David Henderson, Randall Davey
Audubon Center

"The environmentalists of the past became expert at using confrontation, lawsuits, protests, boycotts and the news media. Those skills are still sometimes needed, but I think we need more. We should strive to make the best use of technical information from scientific inquiry into complex environmental problems. I believe we must view federal and state agencies as partners rather than enemies: they possess the tools to a deeper understanding of ecosystem integrity and the mechanisms for accomplishing policy change. The 'old guard' still gets in the way, but every agency has new people with new ideas and a broader view of the issues. Their voices will be heard if we give their agencies the right kind of encouragement (or prodding).

"We need to learn how to work with people who abuse natural resources, and instead of 'shutting them down,' convince them to change their ways for the benefit of society at large. Historically, that kind of change has been realized gradually, not suddenly. We need to help those who have become economically dependent on damaging land-use practices to find new ways to make a living while preserving their dignity. It will be far more valuable to gain new friends than it will be to do battle with the old enemies."

--Bernie Foy, Sangre de Cristo
Audubon Society

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COUNCIL CORNER

Mark your calendars for the next Audubon Council meeting in **Ruidoso** on **Saturday, September 6**. It will be held at 10:00 a.m. at the Swiss Chalet Motel on Hwy. 48. Audubon members are welcome to attend, to strategize on critical issues, and to go birding. The upcoming agenda includes planning for the development and implementation of Important Birding Areas here in New Mexico.

The Audubon Council is made up of two delegates from each member chapter. Our delegates are Jeff Myers and Jonalyn Yancey. Meetings are held two to three times a year around the state; locations are frequently determined by a current project or need in an area. The April meeting was held in Roswell for three reasons: to communicate with the Roswell Chapter, which is the only New Mexico Audubon Chapter not included in the Council; to discuss the status of the Lesser Prairie Chicken with the Bureau of Land Management, which has management authority over much of the New Mexico habitat of this bird; and lastly, because Roswell is also the home of Bitter Lake Wildlife Preserve, one of the most important refuges in New Mexico for waterfowl.

A report on the Lesser Prairie Chicken was given by Dan Baggao, an Audubon member and wildlife biologist from the local BLM office. Dan has been trying to monitor numbers of birds on BLM land near Roswell. While there was some discussion about techniques used, Dan's figures indicated a decline in numbers from 2500 birds in 1988 to an estimated 324 birds in 1996. While hunting has probably had some effect on the bird population, there is strong suspicion that the herbicide program carried on by BLM until recently had a disastrous impact on the bird's habitat. Currently BLM is under a self-imposed moratorium on its shinnery oak eradication or reduction program. The Council voted unanimously to direct the Audubon State Director, Dave Henderson, to petition the NM Game and Fish Department to initiate procedures to determine whether the bird should be listed under the New Mexico Wildlife Protection Act.

We also had a brief report from Jim Bailey of the Conservation Services Division of NM Game and Fish, including the announcement that their publication Partners Conserving Wildlife had won a prestigious award. This is an excellent publication, distributed free of charge, and is highly recommended for anyone interested in New Mexico wildlife.

The afternoon session included discussion of "The Hummingbird Connection," where response has been overwhelming this year. Deanna Einspahr at Randall Davey is handling this project and has asked for help with the workload from individual chapters. If you could offer some help, such as answering telephone questions about hummingbirds or storing the database, please call Deanna at (505) 982-4609.

(From the Editor: Thanks to Tom Wootten, whose article I've quoted with abandon.)



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Randall Davey Audubon Center
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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
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CALENDAR RECAP

- Aug. 9: Field trip, Jemez Falls
Aug. 9: Hummerfest, Rio Grande Nature Center
Aug. 23-24: Field trip, Bitter Lake, Roswell
Sept. 6-7: Field trip, Percha Dam & Caballo
Sept. 18: General Meeting, Bill Dummire, presenter
Sep. 20-21: Field trip, Vermillion Cliffs
Sept. 27: Field trip, HawkWatch & Quarai
Oct. 4-5: Work day/field trip, Bosque del Apache
Nov. 13-16: 10th Annual Festival of the Cranes



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