

Burrowing Owl

April - May 2001 Issue

Volume 30 No. 3

Welcome to Central New Mexico Audubon Society! Come join us. All our meetings and field trips are open to the public.

Herps Success!

LEAPIN' LIZARDS! Everyone: Dance around the house. The Governor signed the Herp bill Friday, March 16, and it is now law. We did it!!! After six years, it's good to celebrate a victory for the protection of our state's natural resources. Thanks to ALL, and in particular to Rep. Ray Begaye and Sen. Michael Sanchez for their sponsorship and to the Department of Game and Fish for their endorsement. Thanks also to Dennis Miller, Professor at Western New Mexico University in Silver City, and to Charlie Painter, Herps expert with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, for making us aware of the problem and its significant extent.

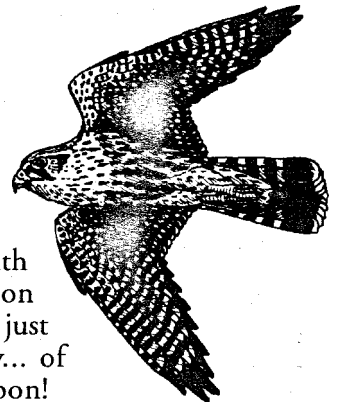
The bad news is that the bill was amended on the Senate floor by Senator Pat Lyons of Cuervo in eastern New Mexico. His amendment exempts Rattlesnake Roundups, Lizard Races and fish bait from the act. The concern is that "fish bait" is not defined and if interpreted broadly could really weaken the intent of the bill. Of course, what it meant to address is the use of Tiger Salamanders for fish bait.

Our present understanding from David Henderson, State Director for the National Audubon Society, is that the Department will be creating a committee to investigate how best to implement the law and what species are in most need of immediate attention. David will likely be on that committee, and we will keep you posted on its activities. But for now, hiss, hiss, hooray!

Birdathon 2001

Not Just Another Birding Trip!

Spring is here – it must be time to Birdathon! Not your ordinary birding trip, this is a chance to go in the field – in spring, in New Mexico, during the height of migration – with experienced birders, hone your identification skills, and apply all that new information you just learned at the Audubon Birding Academy... of course, it's fun! AND it's good for Audubon!



Drawing by Steven D'Amato

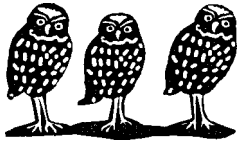
How? Because we ask you – ALL of you in CNMAS – to make a pledge to the team(s) of your choice, whether you can join us or not. Do you realize that if every member pledged just \$1, we'd have \$1500, just \$1,000 short of our goal! But since it hasn't worked that way – yet – we're requesting a **suggested minimum donation of \$10** for those who join us. Think of it this way: Sei and his co-leaders took us on about 24 FREE trips last year. Wow! The Thursday Birders offered about 48 FREE trips. And the point isn't whether you yourself went along on all or none, the point is that the **opportunity** to bird and learn is out there for one and all.

So this is the opportunity to encourage, support, rally, appreciate, and participate in fulfilling one of our prime missions here at Audubon – opening the minds of young people to the wonders of nature. Helen Haskell, our exuberant Environmental Education Chairperson, has said she believes she could have 50 – (50!!!) – classrooms enrolled in **Audubon Adventures** this fall. Well, folks, that's our goal: To raise the money for Helen to do that! Add to that the other ways we fulfill our mission – Science Fair awards, Youth Camp Scholarship Award, Junior Duck Stamp support, Bosque del Apache Bus Scholarships, and support of the model of Environmental Education in northern New Mexico, the Randall Davey Audubon Center – and you'll be complimenting yourselves for being so generous in your giving!

See BIRDATHON, page 7...

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Audubon Field Trip Schedule Spring and Summer 2001

Saturday, April 7 - Bosque del Apache

This is the first full weekend that the seasonal road at the refuge will be open to the public. The target birds will be the migrating shorebirds. This trip will be lead by Art Arenholz. Meet at 7a.m. at the UNM Physics Department parking lot on the corner of Lomas and Yale Blvd for a full day of birding. Bring lunch, water, sunscreen, etc. Call Art (298-1724) or Sei (266-2480).

Saturday - Sunday, April 21-22 - Fort Sumner, Roswell and Mescalero Sands(?)

Fort Sumner is noted for its presence of Red-headed Woodpeckers and Blue Jays. Bitter Lake near Roswell is noted for its shore birds. Upland Sandpipers are sometimes seen near the refuge. CNMAS has put a request with the personnel at the BLM office in Roswell for access to the Lesser Prairie Chicken booming grounds. The decision was not available at press time. We will overnight in Roswell. Meet at 7a.m. on Saturday, April 21, at the Four Hills Shopping Center parking lot, a bit east of Central SE and Tramway NE. Call Sei (266-2480) for details before April 10 and Beth (898-8514) after April 11 (this will also be a Birdathon trip).

Saturday, May 5 or Sunday, May 6 - Sandia Mountains

This will be a half-day trip to seek out the returning migrants in the Sandias. The exact site(s) will be determined on that. Bring comfortable dress for the unpredictable weather in the mountains. Meet at the Four Hills Shopping Center parking lot at 7a.m.. Call Sei for details.

Sunday, May 27 - Socorro, Water Canyon and Bosque del Apache

This is our annual 100-bird count day. It will be a full day of birding and will end at 5p.m. or whenever we record 100 species for the day. Meet at the UNM Physics Department parking lot at 6:30a.m.

Saturday, June 2 - Water Canyon

This is the date for the annual Water Canyon Bird Count conducted by Jim Black. Anyone wishing to participate in this count should be at the camp ground at 7a.m. Those wishing to camp out on Friday may want to join Jim for owling. Call Sei for details.

September 15-16 - Maxwell, Raton, Sugarite State Park
Plans are being made to meet with Dave Cleary for a full weekend of birding in the NE part of NM. Call Sei for details in late May or early June.

Audubon Programs

April - Audubon Birding Academy

Thursday, April 19, 7:15p.m.: The final class in **The Third Annual Audubon Birding Academy** features Bruce Neville, current Director of New Mexico Ornithological Society, teaching about Thrushes and Thrashers. We look forward to seeing all you who preregistered, and we certainly welcome walk-ins. There is a \$6 fee at the door if you haven't already signed up. Every participant gets a free raffle ticket, plus the opportunity to improve your odds by purchasing a gazillion more tickets! We've saved the best for the last prizes - just check out the list elsewhere in the newsletter!

May - Vultures and Science Fair Winners!

The May meeting is same time (7:15p.m.), same place (St. Timothy's), but different day: the third **Wednesday, May 16, 2001**. Free and open to all!

We'll start out the evening seeing and learning about our wonderful science fair winners. Afterwards, Helen Haskell, Audubon Adventures Chairperson, will be talking to us about vultures! We will delve in depth in to the lives of vultures, examining their biology, the ecosystems they live in, and the cultural beliefs surrounding these amazing creatures.




HawkWatch Observation



Join HawkWatch International at the Sandia Mountain Research Site for the spring raptor migration count. Observations take place daily until May 5, from 9a.m. to 5p.m, weather permitting. Call Bobbie Posey at 255-7622 for a map or more information.

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.



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April - May 2001

NM Regional Science Fair Awards

Five volunteer judges from CNMAS chose five winners, who each receive \$50 savings bonds from our Chapter to support and encourage environmental education. The winners are:

Senior Division:

Sandra A. White, Manzano HS:

“Change in Vegetation Types Over the Last Century”
Teacher, Ellen Loenman

Nathan Tooker, Los Lunas HS:

“A River Runs Through It: A Study of the Riparian Ecosystem Along Rio Grande - III”
Teacher, Rick Cole

Junior Division:

Caitlin C. Davis, Menaul School:

“Rio Grande Water Quality”
Teacher, Beverly Morlock

John C. Davis, Roosevelt MS:

“Do Trees Affect Ground Water Recharge?”
Teacher, Mrs. Rudus

Ben C. Gutzler, Taft Middle School:

“Sources of Arsenic in Surface Water Along the Jemez River System”
Teacher, Pat McCachren

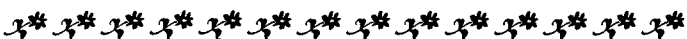
The teachers are also winners: They each receive a one-year subscription to National Audubon Society, compliments of CNMAS.

Congratulations from CNMAS to EVERY student who participated in this year’s Science Fair. We commend all of you for your creativity, your fellowship, and your excitement with learning. Special thanks to this year’s judges: Ron Waitz, Lannois Neely, Melissa Howard, and Bob and Joann Sheets. **And remember** – you can come meet these inspiring young people and view their exhibits at our May meeting, featuring Helen Haskell, who is herself so dedicated both to education and to young people! Hope to see you there!



Flowering Desert Garden Tour Placitas, Sunday, June 3

This year’s Tour will be from 10am to 3p.m.. Tickets will be \$15 (in advance) and will be available from Tickets.com after May 15th. The Tour is a benefit for Las Placitas Association, an open space preservation group in Placitas. If you have any questions, contact Carol Parker at 889-2826 (w) or 867-0778 (h).



Audubon Field Trip Reports

Saturday, February 3: Las Vegas NWR

Eight birders made this trip on a cold but clear day to Las Vegas, NM. The first bird seen was a beautiful Prairie Falcon off I-25 on the road to the refuge. It began to become better as we had beautiful sightings of Ferruginous, Bald and Rough Legged Hawks and a Merlin. Surprisingly, there were very few Kestrels and only 3 Horned Larks. The usual number of waterfowl were seen including the Common Goldeneye. The trip on to Maxwell NWR was cancelled because of snow packed roads on the refuge.

Saturday March 10: Monticello Point and points south

This trip was led and organized by Rebecca Gracey who provided a map and an approximate timetable for the day. There were 19 birders in all. Although it was windy, at least 50 species were seen. The most notable birds were the Bald Eagles, Herring Gulls, a White Pelican, and a Prairie Falcon.

Thanks For The Neat Stuff!

Great gifts from great friends made this year’s Raffle of Birding Gear fun and successful. We want to thank the following for their generosity:

A Birdwatcher’s Year: 2001 Desk Appointment Calendar

- Anonymous

Warblers of the Americas: Curson, Quinn, Beadle

- Lori and Joel Korngut, Cranes & Crows

The Stokes Video Guides: Attracting Birds I and II, Birding Hotspots, How To Begin Birdwatching

- Mike and Cindy Clark, Wild Bird Center - East

Peterson Field Guide to Western Birds, 1st Edition (1941)

- Marjorie Williams

Legends of the Crane: Folklore and Poems, by Pamela J. Jensen (autographed)

- Lynda Geron and Joseph Shumate, Wild Birds Unlimited - West

The Kaufman Field Guide, Kenn Kaufman

- Art Arenholz

National Audubon Society: The Sibley Guide to Birds

- Lee Hopwood and Nicki Love, Wild Bird Center - West

Four Audubon Wall Calendars

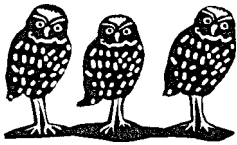
- Randall Davey Audubon Center

Golden Guide to Birds of North America & 20 pounds bird seed

- Geni and David Krolick, Wild Birds Unlimited - East

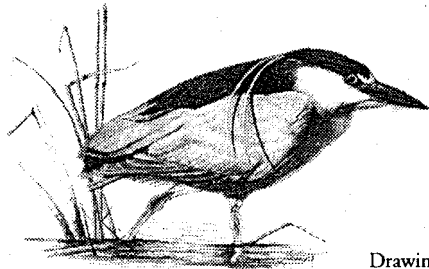
Thursday Morning Birding Group

Weekly birding outings every Thursday. Meeting time and location, as well as duration, vary. Call Margaret Wallen at 291-1595 for details of outings.



You Can Help New Mexico's Wildlife

Share with Wildlife!



Drawing by Daniel S. Kilby

You can help endangered species research and recovery, raptor migration counts, wildlife rehabilitation, and other wildlife projects.

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Please complete this form below and mail to:

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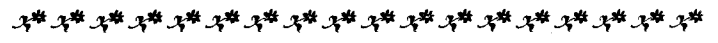
More Field Trips

International Migratory Bird Day

Saturday, May 12: International Migratory Bird Day at Quarai, part of Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument Hart Schwarz and Nick Vaughn will lead the major bird walk from 8a.m. to 11a.m., a leisurely walk of only 2 miles, with several teaching sessions on bird identification by sight, by sound, by behavior. Last year's count produced almost 70 species, which included 10 species of warblers! There will be "mini" walks in the afternoon, as well as an afternoon program. Quarai is 45 miles south of Tijeras. Call Hart (266-1810) for a flier with details and directions.

National Park Service Heritage Preservation Week

Sunday, May 20: Hart Schwarz will lead a trip from Petroglyph National Monument up Rinconada Canyon as part of the observances celebrating the National Park Service Heritage Preservation Week. The trip is from 9:00 to 1:00. There is no fee, but you need to preregister by calling Cheryl Ford at Petroglyph, 899-0205 ext. 337.



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When: Saturday and Sunday, May 12 and 13

How Much: Free!

This is a Friends of the Rio Grande fund-raiser. For more information call the Nature Center, 344-7240.

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April - May 2001

President's Ponderings

By Beth Hurst-Waitz

WHAT A DIFFERENCE EXPERIENCE MAKES! When I first became a member of Audubon, it was because I liked birds. When I first became active with this chapter way back in 1983, it was because, well, I liked being active. Now that I enter my fourth term as chapter president, I've awakened to a startling revelation: I'm now in Audubon because I like the people!

I've heard that many people feel that reading a long list of volunteers' names and contributions is pleasurable only to those mentioned. May I offer the gentle reminder that **we would not exist** without the enthusiastic activities of our volunteers. They deserve to be thanked and recognized for their commitment – not just to Audubon, the cause, but to Audubon, the people. Think about it: That means YOU, too!

So thanks, Ron, Sei, Art, Dianne, Ed, Helen, Turtle-Bear, Jonalyn, Christopher, Andrew, Bobbie, Celestyn, Hart, Mary Lou, Les, Jeff, Ruth, Rebecca, Tom Jervis, Dave Henderson – and those who, though unnamed, are not overlooked or forgotten. I cherish you all.

Now for the plea: That list may seem long, but it's not long enough – we need YOUR name on it! We need a Vice-President – Art graciously filled in, pro tem. We can tell you that in the last 12 years or more, the vice president has never become president, so don't let president-phobia stop you from joining our board! Also, Ron is stepping down (sob!) after eight years as Treasurer. **If you know accounting/bookkeeping and can keep a set of QuickBooks®, please step forward!** Call me at 898-8514 or email at brave_e@juno.com. You won't know what a sense of friendship, support, and family you're missing if you don't.


Thank You

NMOS Meeting and Field Trip


The 39th Annual Meeting of the New Mexico Ornithological Society will be held **Saturday, May 5, 2001** at Western New Mexico University in Silver City. There will be a reception on **Friday** evening, sponsored by the Biology Club of WNMU followed by the meeting of the Southwestern NM Audubon Society; Tom Wood will speak on the Southwestern Arizona Bird Observatory.

On **Saturday** there will be papers presented from 10a.m. to 5p.m. at WNMU, chaired by Dr. Roland Shook. The banquet (\$18) Saturday night and speaker will be at WNMU, with Dr. Dale Zimmerman speaking on the birds and plants of Mexico's Chihuahuan Desert.

On **Sunday**, participation is invited on the **Annual Gila River May Count**. For more information, contact Dr. Roland Shook, Biology, WNMU, Silver City, NM 88061, or email to shookr@silver.wnmu.edu.



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Enter my one year membership in National Audubon Society at the special rate of \$20. That's \$15 off the regular \$35 membership dues. Includes subscription to Audubon Magazine.

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Use the above form for new subscriptions only. Contact Membership Chairperson for changes of address or correction 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-Waitz, 804 Guadalupe Circle, N.W., Albuquerque, NM 87114-1710

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.

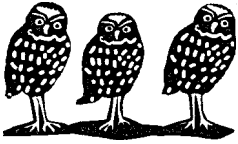



332-4731

The Promenade Shopping Center, 500 Eubank
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Burrowing Owl Deadline

Information and articles to be included in the June - July 2001 issue of the Burrowing Owl must be received by **May 15**. Contact Turtle-Bear at 265-6094 or turtlebear@jensenbear.com. For advertisement inquiries, please contact Beth Hurst-Waitz, 898-8514 or brave_e@juno.com.



Hummingbird Connection ...

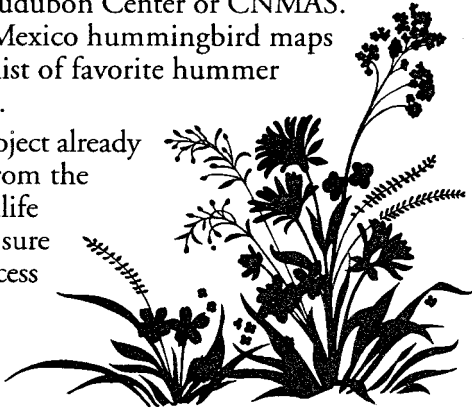


is humming under the guidance of our new statewide coordinator, **Dolores Varela-Phillips**. Welcome and thank you, Dolores!

The New Mexico Hummingbird Connection began in 1994 as a five-year project of the New Mexico Audubon Council and Randall Davey Audubon Center. Phase I concluded in 2000 and was a stunning success. Eleanor Wootten was the project's dedicated volunteer coordinator for those five years. She and the project's many volunteers shared the enthusiasm and hard work to fulfill the Mission Goal of the study to learn when, where, and which hummingbirds occur in New Mexico; to encourage people interested in the biology of these and other migratory birds to learn more about their feeding, nesting, and habitat requirements; and to promote appreciation, understanding, and conservation of hummingbirds in New Mexico.

The project's 26-page cumulative report is itself a New Mexico treasure and can be obtained from Randall Davey Audubon Center or CNMAS. It features New Mexico hummingbird maps and hot spots, a list of favorite hummer plants, and more.

Phase II of the project already enjoys funding from the Share With Wildlife program – and is sure to be another success story under Dolores' wings!



The Hummers Are Here!

Hummingbirds return to the Albuquerque area as early as late March – so be prepared! The safest, purest nectar you can make is 1 part table sugar to 4 parts water. Bring the water to a boil, add the sugar, and boil for 3-5 minutes. Cool before serving. Store excess nectar in the fridge up to 2 weeks. Remember to clean the feeder with soapy hot water at each refill and to rinse well. Never offer honey, artificial sweeteners, or red food coloring!

Some neat hummingbird facts:

- * The "humming" in their name comes not from the bird's voice, but from the whirl of its wings as they beat 70 to 80 times a second and up to 200 times during a dive.
- * Those fast wingbeats enable them to reach speeds up to 60 miles an hour.
- * That's not the only fast thing about them – a hummer's heart beats about 1,260 times per minute.
- * They can fly forward, backward, shift sideways, and stop in mid-air.
- * They are the world's smallest bird, with an egg about the size of a pea.
- * 15 species of hummingbirds have been verified in New Mexico!



Save Those Stamps

Don't forget to save your stamps for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). Help RSPB preserve wetlands by trimming 1/8 inch around canceled stamps and sending your collections to Allison Leon, 283 El Conejo, Los Alamos, NM 87544. She'll deliver them to England on her annual trip. Take your own trip by visiting www.RSPB.org.uk.

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April - May 2001

Birdathon 2001



Drawing by Kirsten Munson

How does it work? It's simple and fun. If you JOIN any of the following teams, we ask you to pledge, then and there. If you can't join us, pledge anyway! Make it a flat amount, a per-species pledge, or a tithe of your children's inheritance – we'll put it all to good use, for people, for the environment, and for New Mexico!

If you pledge per species, you'll receive a postcard with the pledge amount calculated or the team(s) you sponsored. If you bird with a group, pay the suggested minimum of \$10 up front, or send your pledge with the form below by May 15. If you're making a tax-deductible donation, **please do it now!**

Team 1: Sei Tokuda's Roswell Ramblers, Saturday - Sunday, April 21-22, 2001 - *Fort Sumner, Roswell and Mescalero Sands(?)*. Fort Sumner is noted for its presence of Red-headed Woodpeckers and Blue Jays. Bitter Lake near Roswell is noted for its shore birds. Upland Sandpipers are sometimes seen near the refuge. CNMAS has put a request with the personnel at the BLM office in Roswell for access to the Lesser Prairie Chicken booming grounds. The decision was not available at press time. We will overnight in Roswell. Meet at 7a.m. on Saturday, April 21, at the Four Hills Shopping Center parking lot, a bit east of Central SE and Tramway NE. Call Sei (266-2480) for details before April 10 and Beth (898-8514) after April 11.

Team 2: Celestyn's Sandia Seekers, April 28, Saturday - *Three Gun Spring • Sandia Mountains*. Meet at 7:30a.m. at Three Gun Spring trailhead (Carnuel exit from I-40, Monticello subdivision). After birding there, we will go to other places, including Doc Long Picnic Ground. Call Celestyn at 925-8611 for info or arrangements to meet later somewhere on the mountain.

Team 3: Thursday Birders Bosque Trekkers, May 3, Thursday - *Bosque del Apache NWR*. Sondra Williamson and Karen Boettcher, nmkestrel@aol.com, will lead this popular trip to Bosque del Apache, meeting at 7:00a.m. at the south parking lot of the Plaza Inn (far sw corner). Bring lunch. Goal: 100 species for the day. Even better, maybe we'll break last year's high of 111 species! We'll even try to have more fun!

Team 0: Hart's Ghostly Gadabouts, because he'll be invisible! Gadabout, because that's just what Hart Schwarz be busy doing – conducting **Breeding Bird Surveys** all over! But he'll be with us in spirit and has offered to lead a field trip in the fall (one of those free ones) since he, regrettably, can't help this spring. But he'd love your support!

cut along line

**To make a pledge or to make your tax-deductible donation,
return this form by May 15, 2001.**



- I will sponsor Team # _____ for _____ per species (75 species at 10¢ each is a \$7.50 donation).
- I would like to make a flat contribution of \$ _____ for Team # _____.
- I am part of a birding group, Team# _____. I will sponsor myself for a minimum of \$10.00.
- I will collect pledges and send them all in together. The pledges total \$ _____ for Team # _____.

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Wildlife Rescue

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

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Bat in Trouble! (Talking Talons)

Call before you intervene: 281-1133 or 281-1515

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Junior Duck Stamp Program
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Sharon Ingram, volunteer

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of Game and Fish**
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