

Central New Mexico Audubon Society

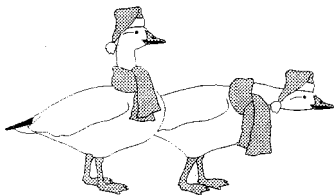
Burrowing Owl



December 2001 - January 2002 Issue

Volume 31 No. 1

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



102nd Annual Christmas Bird Count

A Christmas Poem (or)
A History of the Christmas
Bird Count in Verse

<http://www.birdsource.org/cbc/index.html>



By Beth Hurst-Waltz - November 2001

On the night before Christmas in 1901
Christmas Bird Count tradition had barely begun.
From a small publication known then as "Bird Lore"
The call was put forth to birders and more
To take to the fields and forests and glens
And count all the robins and sparrows and wrens.

The purpose behind this day's congregation
Was simply to show these folks' protestation
Of the killing of wildlife held as "sport" competition
That to birds and most creatures meant mass devastation.

The call of this fellow, whose name was Frank Chapman,
Was heeded by birders - in all, twenty-seven.
The species they counted, totaling 90 that day,
Almost all are recorded by counters today.
The 25 sites that they covered back then
Have increased through the years to almost two grand.

This founder, Frank Chapman, was a man with a vision
Whose standards and goals helped shape conservation.
No training in science nor college had he
Yet his main lifetime work was natural history.

To give you, dear reader, someone by comparison,
Today you might think of Roger T. Peterson.
A champion of art whose subject was birds
Chapman published their plight in pictures and words.

Of course there's more history, but let's switch to the present
And think of bird counts coming up in the desert.
Or maybe the mountains are your cup of tea -
Or the secretive birds along the bosque.

Wherever you are, grab coat, hat and field guide
Your favorite binoculars, a friend by your side.
Mark off all the dates for the month of December
When folks will be gathering to count and remember
That Audubon folks for more than a century
Have never yet counted a partridge in pear tree!

Come join us! Happy Christmas Bird Counting!
Happy Holidays to everyone!

4th Audubon Birding Academy
Coming in 2002:

➡ Save these dates! ⬅

February 21

March 21

April 18

Presented by Expert Birders

Details
on page
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Local Christmas Bird Counts

Bosque del Apache NWR - Saturday, Dec. 15, 7:00 am

Meet at the Bosque del Apache visitor center.

Compiler: Steve Cox, swcox@flash.net, 345-2385

Albuquerque - Sunday, Dec. 16, 7:15 am

Meet at Corrales Shopping Center, NW corner of Coors and Alameda.

Compiler: Hart Schwarz, hschwarz@fs.fed.us, 266-1810
Compilation party at 6:45 pm at the home of Beth and Ron, 898-8514. Bring your day's list and a dish to share!

Five Points (Eastside Sevilleta NWR) - Thursday, Dec. 20, 6:30 am

Meet at the Sevilleta Headquarters.

Compiler: Nancy Cox, sora@flash.net, 345-2385

Sevilleta NWR (Westside) - Saturday, Dec. 22, 6:30 am

Meet at the Sevilleta Headquarters.

Compiler: Steve Cox, swcox@flash.net, 345-2385

Sandia Mountains - Sunday, Dec. 30, 7:30 am

Meet outside of Dion's at Four Hills shopping center (Central and Tramway).

Compilers: Rebecca Gracey, mrgracey@earthlink.net, 242-3821, and Nick Vaughn, 265-1350

Meet back at Dion's in Four Hills for wrap-up party at 5:00 pm.

Statewide and Neighboring Christmas Bird Counts

Call the compiler for meeting times/places. There may be cancellations due to weather conditions. New Mexico area code is 505.

Friday December 14

Eagle Nest: David Cleary, 375-2971

Saturday, December 15

Carlsbad Caverns NP: Steve West, wthrs@carlsbadnm.com, 885-3636

Dixon: Bob Weber, 737-9439; Robert Templeton, cohntemp@newmexico.com, 579-4095

Farmington: Alan Nelson, 325-8619

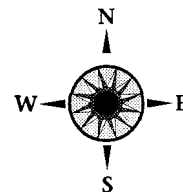
Las Cruces/Mesilla Valley: Tim Lawton, tlawton@nmsu.edu, 522-2056; Gordon Ewing, gewing@nmsu.edu, 522-3934

Roswell/Bitter Lake NWR: Sherry Bixler, bbixler@plateautel.net, 622-0597

Ruidoso/Lincoln County: Anita Powell, 257-5352

Silver City: Roland Shook, shookr@silver.wnmu.edu, 388-3441

Zuni: John Trochet, trochetj@cwnet.com, 916-736-3560 in Calif.



Sunday, December 16

Loving: Craig Cranston, 885-8362

Questa: Bob Weber, 737-9439

Raton CBC: David Cleary, 375-2971

Santa Rosa: Bill West, wingswes@aol.com, 1-800-583-6928



Wednesday, December 19

Clayton: Christopher Rustay, chrustay@aol.com, 255-7786

Thursday, December 20

Lakes Avalon/Brantley: T.J. Hines, 885-1869

Maxwell NWR: Linda Mowbray, lgmow@swcp.com, 989-8295

Saturday, December 22

Santa Fe: Deanna Einspahr, deinspahr@audubon.org, 983-4609 at RDAC

Saturday, December 29

Gila River: Roland Shook, shookr@silver.wnmu.edu, 388-3441

Las Vegas: George Blanchard, rookery@cybermesa.com, 757-8828

Peloncillo Mts.: Alan Craig, narca@vrc.net, 520-558-2220

Sunday, December 30

Caballo Lake area: Barry Zimmer, brzimmer@aol.com, 915-821-6737 in El Paso

Saturday, January 5, 2002

Espanola: Bernie Foy, bdfoy@newmexico.com, 820-1658

West Texas/Guadalupe Mountains NP: Fred Armstrong, 887-3103

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



December 2001 - January 2002

Audubon Programs

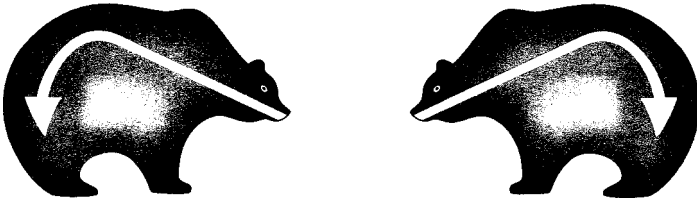
All Central New Mexico Audubon Society meetings and field trips are open to the public. Meetings are at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, NW corner of Copper and Jefferson NE, 7:15 p.m., usually the third Thursday of the month.

December: There is no scheduled meeting this month. Think about making a Christmas Bird Count part of your holiday tradition. Enjoy the season!

January 17:

Bears in the Doghouse!

Don MacCarter from the NM Game and Fish Department will tell us about the Department's "Dogloo" program that provides hibernation shelter for motherless young black bears. Many cubs that were left orphaned after the summer's unusual bear invasion of northern New Mexico towns and villages were cared for by the Española-based Wildlife Center, Inc., and will survive the winter in the wild thanks to the "Dogloo" program. Come enjoy Don's lively presentation and his renowned photography.



CNMA Field Trip Reports

By Sei Tokuda

Sunday, October 7: *Otero Canyon and Cedro*

There were 10 birders on this trip led by Nick Vaughn. It was a beautiful day to have been out birding. Over thirty species were seen, and some of the most exciting findings were a flock of 30-40 Red Crossbills, Williamson's and Red-naped Sapsuckers, Orange-crowned and Townsend's Warblers, Lincoln's Sparrow and Cassin's Finch.

Saturday, October 20: *Bosque del Apache*

Art Arenholz led this trip. The seven participants saw close to 50 species of birds on a beautiful New Mexico autumn day. Some of the notable findings included 3 different morphs of the Red-tail Hawk, a Ferruginous Hawk, a Prairie Falcon, and a dozen adult Clark's Grebes with four of their hatch-year offsprings. The highlight of the day was to be able to see a Snow Goose and a Ross' Goose in the same field of a spotting scope.

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.

CNMA Field Trip Schedule

Saturday, December 8 - Bosque del Apache

This all day trip will be led by Art Arenholz. The Sandhill Cranes, ducks and geese should be at their peak numbers. Bald Eagles should be in large numbers at this time of the year and it would not be surprising to see quite a number of other species of raptors. Dress warmly, bring food, etc. Meet at 8 AM in the UNM Physics Department parking lot on the NE corner of Yale and Lomas Blvd. Call Art at 298-1724 or Sei at 266-2480 for details.

Sunday, January 13 - West side of Albuquerque

This will be a half-day trip and the final destination will be determined by the current birding reports. The West Mesa should be good for Sage and Brewer's Sparrows while the Corrales bosque will have Song and occasional Swamp Sparrows. Dress warmly and meet at 8 AM at the parking lot of the shopping center on the NE corner of Alameda and Coors Blvd. Call Sei at 266-2480 for details.

Saturday, January 26 - Bernardo and La Joya WR

Rebecca Gracey will lead this trip. It will focus on the wintering birds of the middle Rio Grande. Dress warmly and meet at 8 AM in the UNM Physics Department parking lot on the NE corner of Yale and Lomas Blvd. Call Rebecca at 242-3821 for details.

Saturday, February 9 - Las Vegas NWR

This will be a day trip and the target birds are the wintering raptors of northern New Mexico such as the Rough-legged and Ferruginous Hawks, falcons and Bald Eagles. The possibility of finding Tree Sparrows is good. There should be a number of interesting waterfowl such as Common Goldeneye and Merganser, the four species of grebes, etc. Dress warmly, bring lunch and meet at 7 AM behind Winchell's Donut Shop in the Far North Shopping Center (NE corner of San Mateo and Academy Blvd). Call Art at 298-1724 for details.

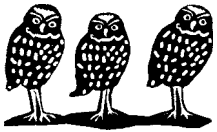
Thursday Morning Birding Group

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

To the Volunteers

Many thanks to the Thursday Birders who so willingly and cheerfully volunteer to lead the field trips. Also thanks to Margaret Wallen who does such a good job fielding the telephone calls. Les Hawkins and his assistant, Melissa Howard, keep the members up-to-date on the coming events by sending out numerous email messages. Thanks, Les and Melissa. This is appreciated by all!





Report On This Year's Festival Of the Cranes By Beth Hurst-Waitz

Like the discarded feather in my field guide or the pressed leaf in my birding journal, I'm saving a few impressions of this year's festival, already anticipating the nostalgia they'll stir as my senses rediscover them, maybe next year, maybe next decade.

There was the not-quite-pink frosty fog in the morning, deliciously clingy and damp. There was the desert's miracle of dry golden suspended dust - that same afternoon! The sky's rinse tub of bluing made sure every snow goose shone white as - well, snow. But that night the sky retreated to become as invisible and depthless as infinity, passively witnessing the signing of their wills by countless dying meteors.

There were the gurgling cranes led in free-form straggly groups by their tour guides to gape at the migrating humans ("My goodness, what LONG eyes they have!") There were the smiling faces of friends and strangers, kids and kids-at-heart, and then there were all those volunteers to thank: Thank you, Jeff Myers, Charlotte Green, Sei Tokuda, Patricia Folsom, Andrew Rominger, Judy Rominger, Margaret Wallen, Sally Burke, Rebecca Gracey, Tim Parker, Jo Osterhouse, Linda Mowbray, Guy Powers, Carol Shirrefs, Les Hawkins, Melissa Howard, Lannois Neely, Mary Lou Arthur, Cindy Harris, Tamie Bulow, Tom Jervis, Carlyn Jervis, Ron Waitz, and Lorraine Schulte. And thank you to Sylvia Chattin, who came forward at the Festival and volunteered to be Publicity Coordinator for CNMAS. Maybe next time you can join us and create a memory of your own.



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The Fourth Annual Audubon Birding Academy

February 21: Shorebirds



Art Arenholz, volunteer extraordinaire and an excellent instructor, will present this beginner-intermediate level class that covers the 24 shorebirds most likely to be seen in New Mexico, when to see them, and where.

March 21: Hummingbirds



Hummingbird identification is often much more difficult than it may first appear. Even adult male hummingbirds of some species are not easy to identify. Joan Day-Martin will delight and educate us about the family Trochilidae, found only in North America, from the tiny Calliope Hummingbird (our smallest bird), to the Magnificent and Blue-Throated - all of which may be seen in New Mexico!

April 18: Raptors: Hawks and Allies



Confused by color phases, morphs, plumage of those magnificent raptors? Still hung up on distinguishing a female Sharp-Shinned from a male Cooper's? John DeLong, raptor specialist from HawkWatch International, will en"raptor" us with sound, scientific, sensible clues to recognizing the pole sitters, sky skimmers, and feeder raiders.

The cost is \$6.00 per class payable in advance or at the door. Pre-register for all three classes and the price is only \$15.00. Mark your calendars and register early.

Raffle of one *Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior* at each of the three classes.

Registration forms will be available after January 1st at birding stores and the Rio Grande Nature Center. Or send your check *now*, noting which classes you are registering for, payable to CNMAS, to Birding Academy, c/o CNMAS Treasurer, 804 Guadalupe Circle, N.W., Albuquerque, NM 87114-1710.

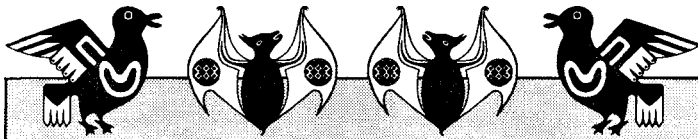
Classes take place the 3rd Thursday in February, March and April, at 7:15 p.m., St. Timothy's Lutheran Church (Copper and Jefferson).

And the Winners Are . . .

Jo Mason and John Morton! They each have their own copy of the new *Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior*, thanks to our Chapter and to all of you who supported our raffle. The first winner was chosen from tickets purchased at our October and November meetings. The second book was funded by tickets sold by CNMAS volunteers staffing the Phil Norton Photography Blind during Festival of the Cranes. Thanks to one and all - and good luck next time!



December 2001 - January 2002



Winter Bird and Bat Festival!

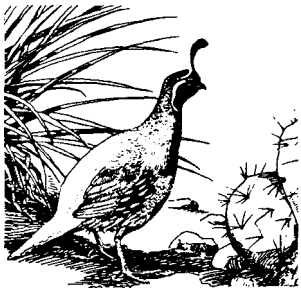
When: Saturday, January 19, 2002, 10:00 AM

Where: Rio Grande Nature Center State Park
2901 Candelaria NW, Phone: 344-7240

Come join the festivities, featuring bird and nature walks, speakers' program, and demonstrations by Hawks Aloft, Talking Talons, Wildlife Rescue, and the New Mexico Audubon Society

Introduction to Ornithology

Celestyn Brozek will again be teaching his favored and popular biology topics class, "Introduction to Ornithology", at the Albuquerque Technical-Vocational Institute (T-VI) in the Spring 2002 semester.



Time and place: January 7 - April 24, 2002; Mondays and Wednesdays, 7:30-8:45 PM at the T-VI Main Campus, Coal and University Blvd.

This class can be taken for credit or audited. The course will discuss some of the most fascinating topics in bird biology such as

migration, flight, nesting, and foraging techniques. Survey of New Mexican avifauna will also be presented. Several field trips, including one to Bosque del Apache will be a part of the course. Lectures will be illustrated by numerous slides. Celestyn has a life-long passion for birds and has led numerous birding seminars, field trips, and classes in New Mexico. He can be reached at 925-8611 or e-mailed at cbrozek@unm.edu.

Cranes: The Noblest Flyers: Author

Auduboners, come meet Alice Lindsay Price, author of *Cranes: The Noblest Flyers In Natural History and Cultural Lore*, which Art Arenholz reviewed for us in the last issue. Alice will be the luncheon speaker at the Friends of the Bosque Annual Meeting on Saturday, January 26, 2002. It's a good opportunity to meet Alice and a good excuse to join the Friends group (just go to <http://friendsofthebosque.org> to join.) The subject of Alice's talk, "The Cranes As a Symbol of Wildness," will be Whooper Restoration from the 1940's-2001.

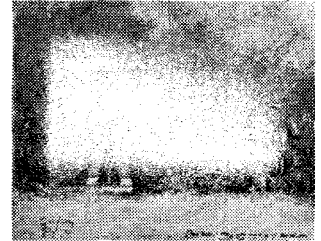
Alice will also be a featured speaker at the Winter Bird and Bat Festival at Rio Grande Nature Center on Saturday, January 19, where she will give a talk entitled "Early Migration, Historical Overview," outlining some of the first knowledge of flyways and migration patterns specifically for American Cranes reported by British Naturalists in the 1700's, on through the centuries, ending with the work done with Ultralight planes for migration routes in recent years. You can also meet her at a book signing at Bookworks, 4022 Rio Grande Blvd. NW, on Saturday, January 19, at 2:30 pm.

Santuario Del Río by Dan Godfrey

These are the first of a series of fine art limited edition prints for sale to support the environmental education programs of CNMAS. Ten percent (10%) of proceeds will be donated to CNMAS for these purposes. Each print is signed, dated and numbered and sells for only \$25.00 each. Call or write for a free color brochure.

(505) 822-5034
FAX & phone

Great River Heritage
8804 Desert Willow CT NE
Albuquerque, NM 87113



BirdingPal.com - A Global Birding Club

Thanks to Teresa Christian, writing for the newsletter of the Audubon Society of Greater Denver, for referring us to this web site. www.birdingpal.com is an international site that lists e-mail addresses of birders worldwide (by country, state, town), who are willing to show out-of-towners the birding hot spots in their area. A Birding Pal is not a paid guide. They usually take visitors birdwatching for some gas money and lunch. A Birding Pal is someone who likes to share the adventures of birding in their area with visitors.

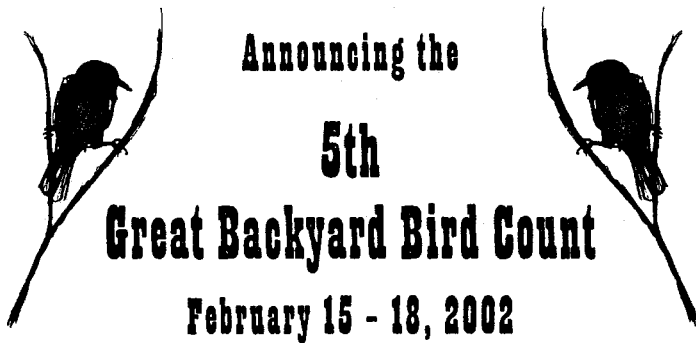
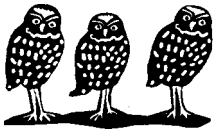
Wherever you are planning on traveling in the world, you can probably find a birder listed at this web site who will be more than happy to e-mail you about the best birding spots in the area, or take you out birding when you visit. This web site is from the United Kingdom, but its information is international. It also has links to other bird-related web sites worldwide and a newsletter section where travelers can share their stories. If you are interested in becoming a Birding Pal, the web site also has a sign-up form.



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Announcing the
5th
Great Backyard Bird Count
February 15 - 18, 2002

That's right, it's time to start planning for the next Great Backyard Bird Count. Last year's event gathered over 50,000 reports from every U.S. state and Canadian province.

Once again, National Audubon would like to invite our state Chapters to help "take a picture" of our winter bird distributions. In the past few years, many Chapters have found the GBBC to be a great opportunity to work with youth groups and schools in their communities, and to recruit new members through interest in the GBBC.

Visit the Cornell Lab of Ornithology web site for more details (<http://www.birdsource.org>).

Drawing by Kirsten Munson



Why count backyard birds?

Scientists and bird enthusiasts can learn a lot by knowing where the birds are. Now that winter has gripped much of the continent, what are our birds doing? Bird populations are dynamic, they are constantly in flux. We want to take a snapshot of North American bird populations and YOU can help us. Everyone's contribution is important. It doesn't matter whether you identify, count, and report the 5 species coming to your backyard feeder or the 75 species you see during a day's outing to a wildlife refuge. Your data can help us answer many questions:

- How will this winter's snow and cold temperatures influence bird populations?
- Where are the winter finches and other irruptive species?
- Will late winter movements of many songbird and waterfowl species be as far north as they were last year?

The data that you collect will be combined with Christmas Bird Count and Project FeederWatch data to give us an immense picture of our winter birds. Each year that these data are collected makes them more important and meaningful. So as we see patterns, discover new questions and insights, we'll update you. And we'll ask for your help again.

(Article from www.birdsource.org.)

Council Corner - October 20, 2001

By Jeff Myers

The October New Mexico Audubon Council meeting was held in Roswell. The officers elected were: Tom Jervis (Sangre de Cristo), President; Ed Mayfield (Mesilla Valley), Vice President; Christopher Rustay (Central), Secretary; and Jeff Myers (Central), Treasurer.

The major topics of discussion were as follows:

- (1) After long deliberation, the southeastern chapter has decided to disband.
- (2) The Council is funding provision of a video of Bosque del Apache for every Audubon Adventures school for this school year, and will seek funding for a printed supplement to be developed and distributed next school year.
- (3) Endangered/threatened species discussed were Rio Grande Silvery Minnow, Lesser Prairie Chicken, Peregrine Falcon, and Southwest Willow Flycatcher.
- (4) Grand opening of new state office will be May 3-4, 2002.

The next meeting will be at the Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 26, 2002. One item of discussion will be the publication of a statewide Audubon newsletter. All chapters' newsletter editors and contributors, as well as all Auduboners, are encouraged to attend.

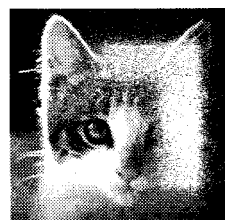
Enhance Your Photography Skills

Jerry Goffe, established and recognized photographer and instructor, is opening his class on wildlife photography for the benefit of three groups. Members of the ELCC (*Enchanted Lens Camera Club*), the CNMAS (*Central NM Audubon Society*) and the *Friends of the Bosque* are all invited.

A minimal tuition will be charged, but donated back to the Friends of the Bosque and/or CNMAS. Subject matter to be covered includes: Basics (camera, lens & film), Priorities, Depth-of-field, Minimum shutter speed, Proper shooting technique, Different perspectives. The class is geared toward individuals who have some experience in wildlife photography but want to sharpen their skills.

Lessons may be by individual or by class and are given at Bosque del Apache NWR. Questions may be answered by calling Jerry at 346-4220 during the day or 345-3100 at night.

Don't Let Buttons Be A Butcher



Each year, thousands of cats die on the roads or are injured in fights outdoors, and hundreds of millions of birds and small mammals are killed by free-roaming cats. Cats live happier, healthier, longer lives indoors.



For more information: www.abcbirds.org

December 2001 - January 2002



Great Fund Raiser! New BIRD WATCHER'S DIGEST Subscriptions

With your paid, online subscription to America's leading magazine for bird watchers, *Bird Watcher's Digest*, CNMAS will receive 50% of the subscription cost. That's \$10 that goes to our Chapter for each one year subscription! This offer is valid for U.S. subscriptions only; all other subscriptions call 1-800-879-2473. Go to <http://www.birdwatchersdigest.com/> and click on "Bird Club Finder" under the left hand side heading "Special Sections". Then click on the magazine cover on that page and the next. Enter *Central New Mexico Audubon Society* as your club and you are good to go!

Bird Banding at RGNC

Rio Grande Bird Research (RGRB) will be banding birds and conducting its winter census starting on January 19. RGRB has been collecting data on the winter bird residents at Rio Grande Nature Center for over twenty years. If you are interested in the winter birds of the middle Rio Grande Valley and think you would like to help this all-volunteer project, please contact Steve Cox at 345-2385.

Conservation Is Patriotic

"I believe that homeland security includes wildland protection. The clean air and water, biological diversity and inspiration that our national parks, wilderness and other natural reserves provide are of vital importance. The truly patriotic course of action is not to plunder the lands we have inherited, but to protect them. Taken together, these wild places comprise 'America the Beautiful.'"

- Michael J. Carroll, *The Wilderness Society*

Audubon Mailing Options

Did you know that several membership mailing options are available to Audubon Chapter members? Members may request that:

- * Their name and contact information not be shared with outside organizations (note that the locally maintained CNMAS list is NEVER shared outside)
- * No NAS mailings other than the magazine and one renewal notice be sent
- * No phone calls from NAS to solicit donations be made to them
- * No magazine be included with their membership

You may request any or all of these options by contacting the Membership Dept., National Audubon Society, 700 Broadway, NY, NY 10003, or chadd@audubon.org

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\$10 of dues is for AUDUBON magazine.
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Use this 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

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Burrowing Owl Deadline

Information and articles to be included in February - March 2002 issue of the Burrowing Owl must be received by **Jan. 15**. Contact Turtle-Bear at 265-6094 or turtlebear@jensenbear.com. For advertising inquiries, please contact Beth Hurst-Waitz, 898-8514 or brave_e@juno.com.

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NAS Chapter Code Q51

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WHOM TO CONTACT

National Audubon Society
Membership Hotline
(800)274-4201, chadd@audubon.org
Activist Hotline
(800)659-2622

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

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500
(202)456-1111
President@WhiteHouse.gov

Hon. Gale Norton
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Call before you intervene: 281-1133 or 281-1515

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