

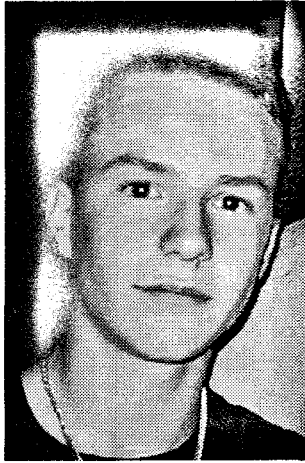


Burrowing Owl

September, October, November 2005 Issue

Volume 34 No. 4

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



Raymond VanBuskirk: To the miracle of your spirit, your life, and your future – we know you will carry on.

Let's go birding together soon.

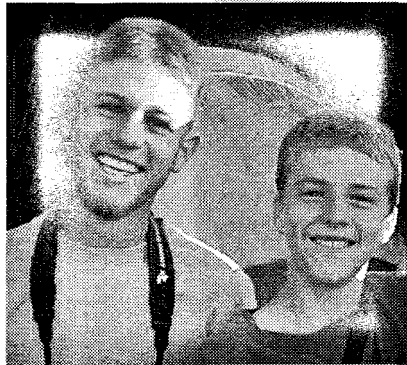


To your love, friendship, and awesomeness, Ryan David Beaulieu,

9/21/87 - 8/27/05

Fall Audubon Programs

Ryan Beaulieu, a youth birder and contributor to the *Burrowing Owl*, was killed in a car crash near Roswell, NM when the car in which he and Raymond VanBuskirk were driving swerved to avoid a deer. Raymond is recovering from the injuries he sustained. Both Ryan and Raymond spearheaded the Rosy-finch Research Project which has given the Sandia Mountains world reknown. Please visit <http://www.rosyfinch.com/RyanBeaulieu.html> for more information and tributes.



Ryan and Raymond birding in SE Arizona, summer 2004



100 YEARS OF CONSERVATION

Come join us as we celebrate and honor a Century of Conservation, with the 100th anniversary of National Audubon Society and the 34th birthday of Central New Mexico Audubon Society! Our fall meetings will be held on the third Thursday of September and October, and second Thursday of November (the week before Festival of the Cranes: see info elsewhere in this issue).

Photos courtesy of P. Turtle-Bear Guillermo

Fall Programs... continued on page 2

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Our Fall Audubon Programs will be held at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, NW corner of Copper and Jefferson NE, 7:15 PM and remember, these meetings and programs are FREE! For info, call Beth, 898-8514. All are welcome – todos bienvenidos.

September 15

**“John James Audubon, American Icon”
presented by Melanie Keithley**

Melanie Keithley, past educator with HawkWatch International, will bring to life “the American Woodsman,” John James Audubon. A skilled and entertaining speaker, Melanie will help us connect with Audubon, the man. We'll make an emotional connection as she tells us of the enduring love between him and Lucy Bakewell; an adventurer's connection as we explore the wilderness of birds with him; an artistic connection as we experience the evolution of his legacy of inspired observation. Melanie herself is a graduate of two fall seasons at the Grand Canyon HawkWatch site as educator/observer. You won't want to miss her gifted story-telling program that brings alive John James Audubon.

October 20

**“Green on Brown: Waterways in Deserts”
presented by Dave Kruper**

Rivers are oases in our desert landscape. Join us to learn about the resources and the management issues of the San Pedro River in southern Arizona. Our guest speaker is Dave Krueper, a former BLM avian biologist who worked on the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area for 15 years before relocating to Albuquerque, where he now works with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as Assistant Nongame Migratory Bird Coordinator. Dave will be discussing the history of the river, its riparian and avian resources, impacts of grazing and results of management, the threats to the river, and also a look into the crystal ball as to its future. Can this be used as an example for other river systems in the arid Southwest, including our own Rio Grande? Join us to find out!

November 10

**“Sight Unseen: The Life of New Mexico Caves”
presented by Diana E. Northup**

So we all know that bats and cave swallows live in NM caves, right? But what kinds of bats, and what lies beneath the nests of the swallows? What else can be found on the floors and walls of the complex and amazingly diverse cave systems of NM? Are those beautiful cave formations just cave formations, or is there so much more to them? What is in the water of the cave pools? Join us and Diana Northup, Associate Professor Biology, Professor Emerita Centennial Science & Engineering Library, UNM, and a leader in the area of cave research and a phenomenal speaker, as she takes us on a journey through lava tubes and limestone passages that will open up our knowledge and wonder of the world beneath our feet.

CNMAS Field Trip Reports

compiled by Celestyn Brozek

Friday-Saturday, June 3-5: Annual Magdalena Mountains/Water Canyon Summer Bird Count

Lead by Andrew Rominger. The count in the Magdalenas was conducted by 14 dedicated folks from Socorro, Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Las Cruces, who lent their eyes and ears to help document the number of breeding birds in the Water Canyon area. In all, 1,045 individuals of 89 species were found. Among those birds were 8 Red-faced Warblers and 3 Flammulated Owls, as well as the reappearance of the Olive Warbler—a single territorial male.

Sadly, the downward trend in species diversity and individual birds has been confirmed again this year. The cause of this decline is unclear and could potentially derive from issues in Neotropical wintering grounds, migration stopover areas and/or the breeding range itself. I want to offer heartfelt thanks to all those citizen scientist Audubon members who participated this year in the Magdalena Summer Count, helping to keep tabs on the trend and add to the search for explanations of bird declines in this biologically unique mountain range.

Looking forward to seeing you all this CBC season, and hope to see you again for next summer's count in the Magdalenas. – Andrew

Saturday, June 11: Sandia Birdathon

Celestyn Brozek led a group of three people from Three Gun Spring to the Crest. 63 species were recorded including 6 warbler, 3 nuthatch species, Pinyon Jay, and Dusky Flycatcher. As always, Capulin Spring provided beautiful and intimate views of drinking and bathing birds. Thank you all for the contributions. (See the bird list on the Birdathon report page in this issue.)

Sunday, August 7: Jemez Mountains

Four people joined Rebecca Gracey on this trip to Ponderosa, NM, Jemez Falls, and the Dome burn area in the Jemez mountains. We didn't see the Three-toed Woodpecker but two in the group saw the Black Swift and the 48 other species seen made up for the two species not seen. A highlight was a singing Olive-sided Flycatcher, Red Crossbills, four warbler species, three nuthatch species, and a male, a female, and an immature male Williamson's Sapsucker.



Melanie Keithley, past educator with HawkWatch International of New Mexico, and Kree, a Swainson's Hawk. Melanie will be presenting our first program of the season.

Photos courtesy of P. Turile-Bear Guillermo



September - October - November 2005

CNMAS Field Trip Schedule

<http://www.newmexicoaudubon.org/cnmas/trips.html>

Saturday, September 24: Melrose trap and places beyond

This will be an all day trip. It is a good time for migrants and rare eastern birds are frequently seen at the trap. We hope to start birding the Trap at 7:30AM and it's a three-hour drive from Albuquerque. If this is too early for you, you can spend the night at Fort Sumner or meet at the Trap later on. In either case YOU HAVE TO CALL Sonia Santa Anna at 797-7309 to discuss the details and time of the meeting place either in Albuquerque or at the trap. Depending on conditions we can stay to bird at the Trap in the afternoon, too, after visiting nearby Bosque Redondo or Sumner Lake, or we can drive to Bitter Lake, so bring your scope in case. Bring lunch as it is unlikely we will break to eat at a restaurant.

Saturday-Sunday, October 1-2: Overnight trip to eastern plains including the tour of Clabber Hill Ranch near Conchas Lake

Meet at 7:00AM at the Four Hills Shopping Center parking near Dion's Pizza (south of Central, west of Tramway). We will drive east to Fort Sumner Lake, Melrose trap, and Bosque Redondo Park (depending on the birds we may change our route). In the afternoon we will head toward Conchas Lake and Clabber Hill Ranch for evening owling (a lot of driving that day!). We will spend the night at the Adobe Belle casitas which are next to the Conchas Lake headquarters. Early next morning, we will visit Clabber Hill Ranch again and then Conchas Lake. Time and weather permitting, we may make our way to Albuquerque via Las Vegas refuge. This is a prime time for fall migrants and we hope for many surprises. Even Baird's Sparrows and Short-Eared Owls are possible. The ranch in itself is a beautiful place and worth a visit.

A casita at the Adobe Belle contains 3 sleeping rooms with double beds, bathroom and kitchen. 3 individuals or 3 couples can sleep in one casita. The cost is \$125 per casita, per night. We need to make reservations in advance. Moreover, we already have several casitas taken so we may run out of room. PLEASE CONTACT Celestyn Brozek at 925-8611 OR E-MAIL cbrozek@unm.edu IMMEDIATELY IF YOU PLAN TO GO!

Saturday, October 29 (or November 5 or November 12): Otero Canyon and Cedro Peak trail

Meet at the Tijeras Ranger Station at 8:00AM to car pool to the canyon. There will be a two mile hike but those unable to walk far can see good birds a few feet from the parking area. Birds that might be encountered are Williamson's Sapsucker, Red-naped Sapsucker, Townsend's Solitaire, and Juniper Titmouse. Expect to be back at the ranger station before noon. Contact Rebecca at 242-3821 or mrgracey@earthlink.net for more details.

Sunday, November 13: Las Vegas NWR

This will be an all day trip. The closed parts of the Las Vegas NWR are open for visitors on the Sundays of November. We will take advantage of this opportunity to visit the Crane Lake area. Dress warmly and bring water, snacks, etc. Meet at 8:30AM behind the Winchell's Donutshop in the Far North Shopping Center (NE corner of San Mateo and Academy Road). Call Sei Tokuda at 266-2480 for details.

November 15-20: Festival of Cranes - Bosque del Apache NWR

Just a reminder - get your registrations in and volunteers needed for the day!

Saturday, December 3: Bosque del Apache NWR

This will be an all day trip. The sandhill cranes, ducks and geese should be present in large numbers and it would not be

surprising to see a number of species of raptors including bald eagles. Dress warmly and bring lunch, water and snacks. Meet at 8:00AM at the UNM Physics Department parking lot on the NE corner of Yale and Lomas Blvd. Call Sei Tokuda at 266-2480 for details.

December 14 - January 5, 2006: Christmas Bird Counts

Various locations throughout New Mexico - details in the next Audubon newsletter. Later in the year, you can also find the count schedule on the New Mexico Ornithological Society web site, <http://www.nmosbirds.org/index.html>

Saturday, January 21, 2006: Sandia Mts.

It is a half-day trip. Meet at 8:00 AM at the Four Hills Shopping Center parking near Dion's Pizza (south of Central, west of Tramway). We will work our way to the top of the mountain looking for winter birds such as crossbills, nutcrackers, and, of course, rosy-finches. Dress warm, bring your own food or, better, eat at the Crest House. In case of heavy snowfall, we will spend our time at the foothills. Contact Celestyn Brozek at 925-8611 or e-mail cbrozek@unm.edu for additional 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.

Trails and Birds at Bosque del Apache

Saturday-Sunday, October 29-30



Audubon Fans of Helping and Birding: Come join the New Mexico Volunteers For the Outdoors for one day or both, when they celebrate the end of their project season at Bosque del Apache NWR for trail maintenance and pruning in a spectacular Fall setting. Good honest work with friendly folks amidst fall splendor and birds galore! Who needs more? Work one day, go birding the next! You must contact Leonard Padilla to sign up: (505) 690-6428, leonardpadilla@hotmail.com

The Volunteers has wonderful cooks who will provide delicious dinner Saturday night, but you have to reserve to chow down! So call or e-mail Leonard, and when you do, let him know you're a supporter from Audubon!



Thursday Morning Birding Group

Weekly birding outings every Thursday. Meeting time and location, as well as duration, vary. Call Margaret Wallen at (505)341-0928 for details of outings.



All Central New Mexico Audubon Society meetings and field trips are open to the public.



Look-Alikes: Cooper's & Sharp-shinned Hawks

by Art Arenholz, with drawings by Andrew Rominger

The field identification of these two woodland hawks might be the most challenging task at any HawkWatch site. But after some study and experience, you can learn to confidently and correctly call out: "Adult Cooper's" or "Immi Sharp-shinned" on your next birding trip.

Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks are woodland raptors that have long tails, short round-tipped wings and a diet of birds and small mammals. Both have a recognizable way of flying: several (4 or 5) quick flaps followed by a short glide. They also have two favorite hunting techniques: either an ambush (hiding in foliage until a meal comes along and flying out to grab it) or a low, hidden flying approach to a backyard bird feeder or other bird attractor. This behavior means these Accipiters are harder to see than soaring hawks. They are around; they just hide a lot. The best place to see them? Go to a HawkWatch site during migration.

Let's look at the common plumage markings of these two hawks. Later, we will learn how to tell them apart. These two hawks both have different plumages for adults and first-year (juvenile) birds. The adult plumage for both birds includes: 1- Blue-gray upper-parts and 2- Rufous and white barred under-parts. ("Barred" means horizontal lines.) The juvenile plumage includes: 1- Brown upper-parts and 2- Brown and cream-streaked under-parts. ("Streaked" means vertical lines.) For both adult and juvenile, the long tail has 3 or 4 equal-width bands of an alternating dark and light color.

So far, you have learned to tell that this hawk is either a Cooper's or Sharp-shinned Hawk but not which one. You know that it is an Accipiter because this hawk has an appropriately marked, long tail and short, round-tipped wings, and it flies with a series of quick flaps followed by a brief glide. You know it is an adult Accipiter if it is blue-gray above and barred rufous and white below. You know it is a juvenile if it is brown above and streaked brown and cream below.

Now let's learn how to tell if this hawk is a Cooper's or a Sharp-shinned. First, we study a flying bird, which offers us four useful clues. First, Cooper's Hawks fly and soar with the leading (front) edge of the wings straight, while the Sharp-shinned prefers to thrust the "wrists" forward, which produces a curved, not straight, leading edge to the wings. Second, Cooper's has a large, protruding head, while the Sharp-shinned's head is small and does not protrude much past the thrust-forward wrists. (One book describes the flying Cooper's as looking like a flying cross and the Sharp-shinned like a flying mallet.) Third, the tip of the tail on a Cooper's is rounded (i.e., the outer tail feathers are shorter than the center ones), while the Sharp-shinned's tail tip is squared off (i.e., the tail feathers are all about the same length.). Fourth, Cooper's usually has a wide white band at the tail tip, but Sharp-shinned's tail tip has either a narrow or no white band.

Next, let's study a perched Accipiter, which can provide us with a few more clues. First, an adult Cooper's has a distinct change of color between the crown of the head and the back of the neck. (The crown is much darker.) Sharp-shinned does not have this color change; the crown, nape of the neck and the back do not show any abrupt color change. Second, the head of a Cooper's looks squared off because it raises the hackles on the back of the head. Sharp-shinned's head looks round because it rarely raises its hackles. Third, the tail, including the tip, can provide the same clues we discussed

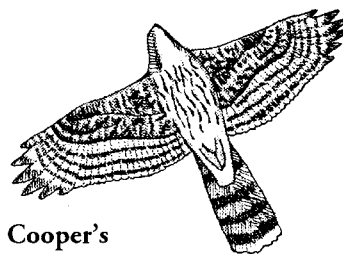
earlier. Fourth, a juvenile Cooper's usually has many small white spots on its brown back, but Sharp-shinned youngster has only a few or no white spots. Fifth, and don't laugh at this clue, Cooper's has sturdy-looking legs, as thick as a pencil. Sharp-shinned's legs look stick-like and spindly, much thinner than a pencil. Really, you can often see this feature on a perched bird.

In Accipiters, Cooper's are larger than Sharp-shinneds and females are larger than males. Even so, size is not often very helpful in the field, except when two birds are close together. For example, an American Crow is the same length as a female Cooper's Hawk.

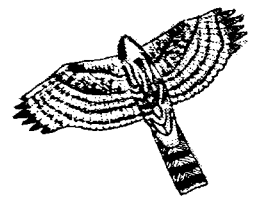
One final suggestion. Try to find 3 or 4 of the clues we have studied before making your identification. Observe flight style, tail-tip color, color, size and shape of the head and other clues before making your identification. A visit to a HawkWatch site during migration might help you a lot. (Call 505-255-7622 for dates and a map.)

SUMMARY:

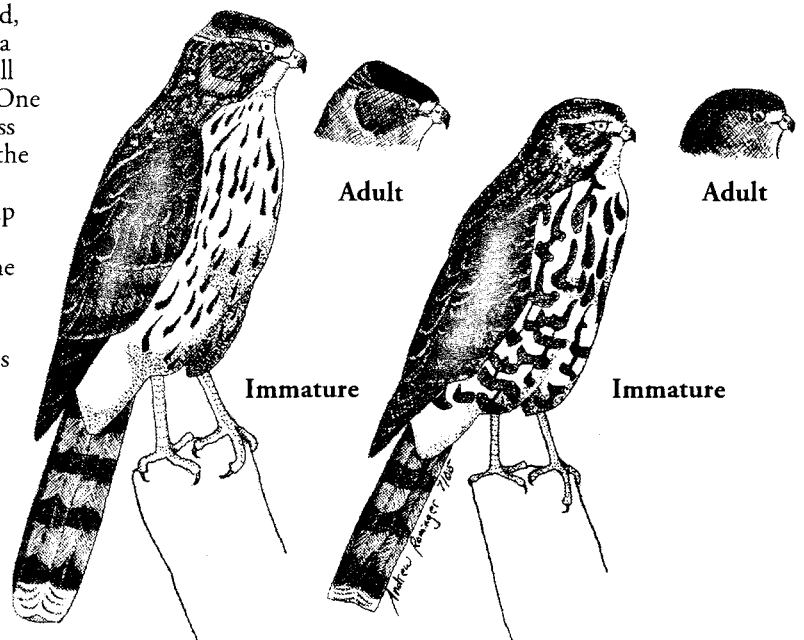
Characteristic	Cooper's	Sharp-shinned
Front of wing:	Straight	Curved
Head size:	Large	Small
Head shape:	Square	Round
Tail tip shape:	Round	Square
Tail tip color:	Wide white	Thin white
Size:	Crow	Jay
Leg size:	Sturdy	Spindly
Back Juvenile:	Many white spots	Few white spots
Flying shape:	Cross	Mallet



Cooper's



Sharp-shinned





September - October - November 2005

Birdathon! 2005

Thanks to the Birders & Contributors!

Birdathon! is a great, fun excuse for us to go birding, and it's a great, important "nest egg" for our chapter. Thanks to the teams that went afield – to Ryan Beaulieu, Raymond VanBuskirk, and Christopher Rustay, who were the Youth Birders Team; to Karen Boettcher, who rallied the Thursday Birders Team; and to Celestyn Brozek, who enchanted his Sandia Singers team – you all contributed just under \$1500 to CNMAS this year. That means conservation education for our youth, more birding adventures for us, and protection of habitat for the birds themselves. We extend our appreciation to the following Birdathon contributors:

Mary Lou Arthur, Gary and Karen Boettcher, Brave E Inc., Celestyn Brozek, Sally Burke, Niels Chapman, Ken Cole, Dianne Cress, Vanessa Dargain, Stephen and Mary Pat Day, Sylvia Fee, Julie Goodding, Rebecca Gracey, Les Hawkins, Lannan Foundation, Paul McConnell, Don Moore (farthest-away participant, visiting from Oregon), Cheri Orwig, Nancy Phillips, Christopher Rustay, Sonia Santa Anna, Virginia Taylor, Thursday Birders Group, Sei Tokuda, John M. Tyson, Ronald W. Waitz, Marian Washburn (farthest-away contributor, supporting us from California), Marge Williams, and Sondra Williamson.



Thursday Birders

by Karen Boettcher

Returning to a travel strategy from the past proved to be a good choice for the Thursday Birders Birdathon team for 2005!

We met in the Manzanitas at 10:00 a.m. Thursday, May 12, and by 10:30 had 20 species and were on the road heading south.

The owls in Quarai cooperated nicely, and Horned Larks presented themselves to be added to the list west of Mountainair.

Next, a brief stop in Socorro to meet our visiting birder from Oregon state. He was able to join our Birdathon team thanks to the CNMAS Website and the wonders of e-mail communication!

The afternoon at Bosque del Apache was quite productive, with all expected species present and counted (with the notable exception of Northern Shovelers – where in the world were they hiding?)

Friday a.m. we stopped briefly at Turtle Bay and then made our way to Box Canyon west of Socorro. The four target birds (White-throated Swift, Black-throated Sparrow, Rock Wren, Canyon Wren) at The Box made a surprisingly rapid appearance, prompting our Oregonian team member to say, "My, that was efficient!"

We finished our 24-hour day at Water Canyon; and although the Red-faced Warbler unfortunately did not appear, other hoped-for species (Acorn Woodpecker, Grace's and Virginia's Warbler, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Western Tanager) were more cooperative, and the total count at 10:00 a.m. was 129 species! That is a new record for Thursday Birders and supports the theory that our best plan is to start our count in the Manzanitas – in spite of the fact that this means about an hour and a half of practically bird-free driving between Quarai and Bosque del Apache.

Of course, our good results this year mean that we'll have a new record to try and best in 2006!

Sandia Birdathon

by Celestyn Brozek

Dear Friends in Birding:

On Saturday, June 11, I enjoyed birding in Sandias for the "Sandia Songsters" Birdathon. A few people joined me and Beth faithfully stayed through the whole day. No surprises but many beautiful sightings. I wish you were there! Here's what we enjoyed (and what you missed!):

Red-tailed Hawk
Scaled Quail
Band-tailed Pigeon
White-winged Dove
Mourning Dove
Common Nighthawk
Broad-tailed Hummingbird
Red-naped Sapsucker
Hairy Woodpecker
N. Flicker
Western Wood-pewee
Dusky Flycatcher
Say's Phoebe
Ash-throated Flycatcher
Cassin's Kingbird
Western Kingbird
Plumbeous Vireo
Warbling Vireo
Steller's Jay
W. Scrub-Jay
Pinon Jay
A. Crow
Common Raven
Violet-gr. Swallow
Cliff Swallow
Barn Swallow
Mt. Chickadee
Juniper Titmouse
Bush-tit
Red-breasted Nuthatch
White-breasted Nuthatch
Pygmy Nuthatch

Canon Wren
Bewick's Wren
House Wren
Ruby-cr. Kinglet
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Hermit Thrush
A. Robin
N. Mockingbird
Curve-billed Thrasher
E. Starling
Orange-cr. Warbler
Virginia's Warbler
Yellow-rump. Warbler
Black-throated Gray Warbler
Grace's Warbler
MacGillivray's Warbler
Western Tanager
Green-tailed Towhee
Spotted Towhee
Canyon Towhee
Chipping Sparrow
D.-eyed Junco
Bl. headed Grosbeak
Brewer's Blackbird
Br.-headed Cowbird
Bullock's Oriole
Scott's Oriole
House Finch
Pine Siskin
Lesser Goldfinch
House Sparrow
TOTAL: 63 species

Don't Let Sammy Be An Assassin



For more information:
www.abcbirds.org/cats/

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.



CATS INDOORS!
The Campaign for Safer Birds and Cats

HawkWatch Observations

<http://www.hawkwatch.org/>

The Manzano HawkWatch migration count project is upon us. Observers are at the site daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call Bobbie at 505-255-7622 for information and directions.



Kyan Beaumont

September 21, 1987 - August 28, 2005



Photo montage by Laurel Ladwig, photos courtesy of Rosyfinch.com; various contributors

Fall 2005 Audubon Programs - Central NM Audubon Society

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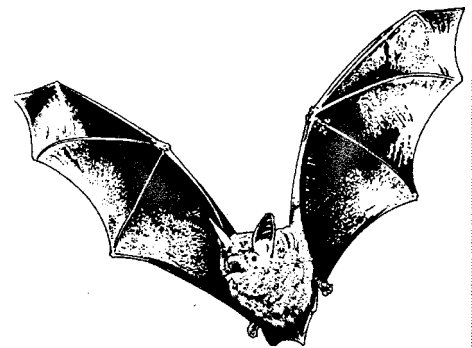
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Bienvenidos todos - - - All Welcome



September - October - November 2005

Science Fair: Everybody's A Winner

Congratulations to this year's winners of the CNMAS award of a \$50.00 savings bond to two winners each from the Senior and Junior Divisions. We especially appreciate our volunteer judges – Lannois Neely, Virginia Lawler, Nancy Murray, and Art Arenholz – who donated their time to choose four winning stars from among a constellation of bright young optimists. Congratulations also to the teachers who support and encourage these young people: James Renshaw, St. Pius X; Stephen Haras, Roosevelt Middle School; Katherine MacDermott, Los Lunas Middle School; and a special recognition to Steve and Nancy Cox, sponsors of Ryan Beaulieu and Raymond VanBuskirk in the ongoing five-year Rosy-finch study. Each of the teachers receives a one-year membership in National Audubon. And the winners are...

Senior Division

Project Rosy-Finch!

Ryan Beaulieu and Raymond VanBuskirk

Black Rosy-Finches (*Leucosticte atrata*), Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches (*Leucosticte tephrocotis*), and Brown-capped Rosy-Finches (*Leucosticte australis*) breed in high alpine tundra mountain ranges above 9,000 feet and migrate south in winter, generally staying at high elevations rarely below 7,000 feet. Every year, Rosy-Finches are present at the Sandia Crest House, located at the top of the Sandia Mountains. Little is known about these bird species, such as, do they exhibit site fidelity on the winter grounds? The primary goal in this research project is to study if the Rosy-Finch population in the Sandias exhibit site fidelity. The project is also looking at age and sex ratios for any trends.

This project utilized live walk-in traps to capture the Rosy-Finches unharmed. These traps were specifically made for this project. The traps are triggered by an attached string, which simultaneously closes the two doors when pulled. The doors fall and entrap the finches. The finches are then retrieved within a few seconds of the trap being closed.

A uniquely numbered USGS aluminum band is placed around the right tarsus of each bird. These bands have a specific series of numbers identifying each bird. Various measurements are taken including: wing and tail lengths, age and sex determination, molt limits, bill length and depth, the amount of fat, muscle mass, and the weight. The birds are then subsequently released unharmed.

This project is proposed to continue for up to five years. This is the second season. Sufficient data for assessing site fidelity has yet to be collected, making a conclusive statement difficult. However, with five of twenty-three banded Black Rosy-Finches being recaptured from the previous season, there is some evidence of site fidelity. Based on the data collected so far on the wintering Black Rosy-Finches at the Sandia Crest, they have a 21.7% site fidelity rate.

Assuming that there is an equal chance of capturing juvenile vs. adult birds and these species have about the same number of offspring, the data suggests that the juvenile Brown-capped Rosy-Finches, which have the shortest travel distance, are more likely to survive the migration. Whereas, Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches, which travel the farthest distances, are least likely to survive migration. The Black Rosy-Finches fall between the ranges of Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch and Brown-capped Rosy-Finch.

Junior Division

Do We Spoil the Soil?

A Study of Peralta Soils - Phase III

Jonny Cole

In Phase 3, I chose to measure potassium and phosphorous levels at the 13 sites for four months. I am doing this because potassium (K) and phosphorous (P) are both essential nutrients to plants as well as to microbes and animals. I am also looking to see how human activity affects these nutrient levels and comparing my results to the previous two years to see if there are any common trends or patterns in the ways people affect the soil or how the changing seasons affect the soil.

My hypothesis is in two parts: (a) I hypothesize that the garden soil will have the highest readings for potassium and phosphorous. I think that the industrial site will have the lowest readings of both potassium and phosphorous; (b) I also predict that the amount of potassium and phosphorous available to plants will vary from month to month as the seasons change.

I used a Lamotte soil test kit to measure K and P levels in 13 test sites once a month for four months. My experimentation both proved and disproved my hypotheses. The garden soils had the highest readings for both K and P, but the lawn and alfalfa field were equally high for K. The industrial site did have the lowest P readings, but only the third lowest K tally. The lowest, and least healthy, K reading was recorded at the abandoned dairy site.

For Part B of my hypothesis I was proven correct; the availability for K and P does vary at every site from month to month. My research revealed that P decreases in wet, cold soil conditions. My experimentation documented a decrease in P as the weather in Peralta got colder and wetter this fall. So, the exact same weather conditions that increase K, reduce P. This was readily demonstrated in my results. My monthly readings varied last year just like this year. There is an obvious trend common to each of the nutrients – they all change as the season and the weather changes.

To Cut or Not to Cut... What Should We Do with All Those Dead Pinyons?

Graham Bryan

My project was to see what happens to plants and animals in forests where pinyon trees have been infested by bark beetles, and to compare a forest that had dead pinyon trees removed to a forest with dead pinyon trees left standing.

I compared two forests. Forest A had dead pinyon trees left standing. Forest B had dead pinyon trees removed. In each forest, I selected a 40 ft by 40 ft area. Inside that area I selected a 20 ft by 20 ft area. In the smaller squares I placed 10 dry pitfall traps, 4 small mammal live traps, and 1 medium live trap. In each 40 ft square I used survey tape to make 8 columns to walk up and down to count the plants (succulents, evergreen saplings, and groundcover).

Forest A had more insect life (18 versus 4 in Forest B) and more saplings (29 versus 4 in Forest B). Forest B had more groundcover plants, especially grasses (97 versus 11 in Forest A), and had more succulents (27 versus 5 in Forest A). I did not capture any small mammals in my live traps.

I concluded that the dead pinyons could be used as shelter and food by insects in Forest A, and that leaving the dead pinyons helps to regenerate the forest. Forest B had more grasses and cactus. I think this could mean that this forest could become a meadow over time because grasses and cactus are usually signs of high desert meadows.



N a t i o n a l W i l d l i f e R e f u g e
B u l l e t i n B o a r d

Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge
& La Joya Community Open House
October 15

A once annual opportunity to visit the backcountry of the Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge will be offered on Saturday, October 15, 2005. This year's event features two new hikes. The Pinyon Canyon Hike is an easy to moderate hike into a beautiful little canyon that features wildflowers, petroglyphs and unusual geological features. The Los Pinos Mountains Hike is an off-trail adventure for the hearty hiker exploring ridges, saddles and peaks in these normally inaccessible mountains. Old favorites will also return including the west side 4x4 geology field trip, native plant field trip, and the all-day birding trip.

Field trips are limited to 24 participants. Reservations are required. A hot breakfast or lunch is included with each trip. The cost is \$7 per person. Reservations must be received in the mail no later than October 8th.

To request your Open House brochure including a full list of activities and descriptions contact the Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge at 505-864-4021 or the Socorro Chamber of Commerce at 505-835-0424.

Bosque del Apache NWR Fall Events

Wildlife Artists to be Honored
Saturday, October 15, 1 - 4 pm

A special reception recognizing wildlife artists is planned as part of National Wildlife Refuge Week.

Artists to be honored include 2005 Festival logo artist Marjorie Mullany, potters Samantha and Erich Decker-Hoppen from Turtle Rock Studios, authors Valerie Graves and Sandra Seth (Finding Refuge, A Safe Place to Land) and Art Arenholz (Field Guide to the Sandia Mountains), National Wildlife Refuge Week commissioned artist Skeeter Leard, New Mexico Junior Duck Stamp winner Oscar Urbina, and Refuge Photographer Jerry Goffe Everyone is invited to this free afternoon of art and artists, food, music and fun.

A Close Encounter With Mars
Saturday, October 22, 7pm

Refuge astronomer Amy Estelle plans an "Encounter With Mars". The planet will be especially close to the earth this fall. As the sun sets, Mars will rise in the eastern sky, so bright it will outshine the brightest star. Amy will have telescopes, special entertainment for children ages 8 - 13, and fascinating tales about the "War Planet". It's free! Limited to 30 participants.

The Bosque del Apache NWR is off I-25 at exit 139. Go east 1/2 mile to the town of San Antonio, then south on NM Hwy #1. Call 505-835-1828 for more information.

Festival of the Cranes
Tuesday- Sunday, November 15-20

CNMAS Volunteers needed to staff. See next page for details.

Friends of Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge
Fall Events Schedule

Sunday, September 11, 2pm - Refuge Headquarters

2nd Annual Meeting Friends of Las Vegas NWR

Short business meeting for election of new FLVNR board followed immediately outdoors, weather permitting, in celebration "A Concert For the Birds and People, Too," featuring George Deerfoot Tyler, Native Flute Player and Storyteller.

Wednesday, October 26, 6pm - Refuge Headquarters

Discussion of refuge water management and current challenges of area water supply by Joe Rodriquez, Refuge Manager and Frank Splendoria, Local Water Researcher.

Sunday Auto Loop Tour: 9am - 4pm

November will be an active month for birders at Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge. Each Sunday as part of their "Annual Fall Flight Program," the auto tour loop will be open from 9am to 4pm.

Fall flight activities are a cooperative effort of refuge staff, refuge volunteers and members of Friends of Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge.

Experienced birders, with spotting scopes, will be set up at tour loop lakes and ponds to assist in locating and identifying waterfowl, raptors, other birds and wildlife. Very little, if any walking is required. You can easily bird from your vehicle.

Sunday Interpretive Talk: 1pm, Refuge Headquarters

The indoor program will involve slide and digital presentations. There will be an opportunity to ask questions of the presenters.

November 6: "Wetlands Birds" with Art Arenholz

November 13: "Wildlife of the Short Grass Prairie" with Lawry Sager

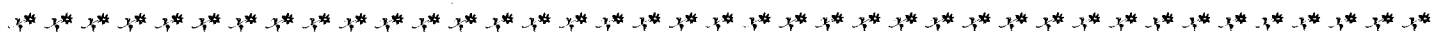
November 20: "Maxwell, Our Sister Refuge to the North" with Patty Hoban, Maxwell National Wildlife Refuge Manager

November 27: "Back to the Basics of Birds" with Eileen Everett, Education Specialist, Randall Davey Audubon

Events are free. Refuge headquarters is smoke-free and handicap accessible. The refuge is a short distance from the city of Las Vegas. From I-25 exit 345, proceed east on Hwy 104 for about 1.5 miles, turn south on the road to McAlister Lake, Hwy 281, and go about 4.5 miles to refuge headquarters. For additional information call Jan Arrott at 505-454-6115 or Lori Casados at 505-425-3581 ext. 203.

A true conservationist is a man who knows that the world is not given by his fathers, but borrowed from his children.

- John James Audubon

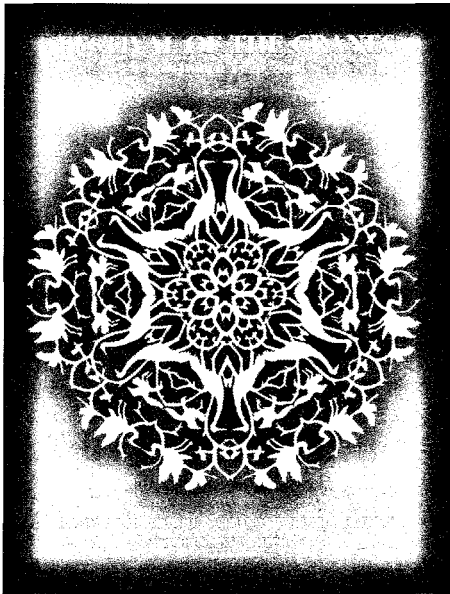




September - October - November 2005

18th Annual Festival of the Cranes Tuesday - Sunday, November 15 - 20

Over 100 events will include birding with experts and guided tours of the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge; visits to the VLA, the Armendaris Ranch and the brand-new El Camino Real International Heritage Center; plus long-lens photography; art, gardens; field trips with local old-timers; outstanding keynote speakers (Michael Forsberg, award-winning nature photographer; and Wayne Sentman, marine biologist and international traveler); and so much more.



Cover art by Marjorie Mullany

Please call 505-835-2077 for a brochure, check "<http://www.friendsofthebosque.org/crane>" for more details, or write P.O. Box 340, San Antonio NM 87832.

The Bosque del Apache NWR is off I-25 at exit 139. Go east 1/2 mile to the town of San Antonio, then south on NM Hwy #1. Call 505-835-1828 for more information.

Call For Volunteers: 18th Annual Festival of the Cranes

CNMAS and the New Mexico Audubon Council need YOU to help us as we enjoy birdwatching and share our scopes, smiles, and love of Bosque del Apache, this special place for birding, with others. Please volunteer for a two-hour shift on Saturday, November 19 and/or Sunday, November 20. Contact Jeff Myers at jmyers@peacocklaw.com or at 998-1502 to sign up to help. You can choose your site: our chapter site at the Phil Norton Commemorative Photography Blind (funded by Central New Mexico Audubon) or at the State Audubon Council tent, which will once again be on the two-way middle road (so we'll see lots more birds this year!) We really need your help, as this is one of the major ways we show our support for the National Refuge System in general, and Bosque del Apache NWR in particular.



Rosy-Finch Update - Fall 2005 by Fran Lusso and Dave Weaver

The Rosy-finch season is fast approaching. We expect to put up the feeders on October 26th, hoping to have them up before the Rosy-finches arrive so that this year's counts can be as complete as possible. To that end, we urge everyone to record their sightings in the Log, which will be at the USFS desk inside the Crest House. Ken and Mary Lou Schneider will continue to post the log book entries and sighting information on their website (<http://www.rosyfinch.com>), so be sure to check there!

By this time, we imagine that everyone knows of Ryan Beaulieu's tragic death in August. Ryan and Raymond Van-Buskirk were the originators and driving forces behind the Rosy-finch Banding and Research Project and always cheerfully lent their enthusiastic support to the Rosy-finch Feeding Project... carrying up seed, refilling the feeders and educating visitors. Ryan will be deeply missed. Nancy and Steve Cox and Raymond intend to continue the Banding Project, and of course we will do whatever we can to assist in that effort.

We are very fortunate and most grateful to have the continued support of Lee Hopwood of the Wild Bird Center Westside and Paula Diepolder at PRD Seed. If you would like to assist in some way or donate seed, just let one of us know. If you prefer to bring a seed contribution, please be sure that you bring hull-less seed, which is in keeping with our agreement with the USFS. There is very limited storage space at the Crest House so it would be best to coordinate seed contributions with us.

As winter on the Crest can be both harsh and unpredictable, we suggest that people check the weather and road conditions before starting out. Snowfall at the Crest can be significant and the road may not be cleared for a day or two. Ken Schneider's website maintains up to date weather and road information, including links to road condition and webcam sites. You can also call the NM Road Advisory Hotline (1-800-432-4269), the USFS Sandia Ranger Station at (505) 281-3304, or the Sandia Crest House (505-243-0605) for current weather and road information.

The staff and management of the Sandia Crest House have been most generous in their support of Rosy-finch viewing, and have committed to making space available again this year. We hope that you will reciprocate and support their business as well. Please remember to be courteous to the staff and other visitors even in your enthusiasm over seeing the Rosies. Ken Schneider's website includes detailed information about what to expect at the Crest and at the Crest House and how to be prepared for your visit. Obviously, we hope this mutually rewarding situation can continue for all parties.

We hope that we have provided enough information for you to have an enjoyable and productive visit to see the Rosy-finches. If you have any questions, or need any more information, please feel free to contact us at home (505-286-8899) or by email at flusso@wfubmc.edu or weaver@wfu.edu. Hope to see you at the Crest!





Audubon Adventures

It's the start of the school year already, and again, there are Audubon Adventures Kits available for students in our schools. CNMAS needs to hear from you if you know of a 3rd-6th grade teacher, or are one yourself, who could utilize this educational resource in the classroom. Also, we would love to hear from you if you would like to help CNMAS sponsor a kit in a classroom. Each kit contains newspapers for the students on environmental and natural history topics, as well as posters and teaching materials for the teachers. Please fill out the form below, or contact Helen Haskell at 281-6453, or helennm@yahoo.com for more information. Also, visit the website at <http://www.audubon.org/educate/aa/index.php>



Teacher Professional Development Opportunity

The Central New Mexico Audubon Society has an exciting opportunity to offer a classroom teacher from the central New Mexico area. Would you like to attend the 'Institute of Desert Ecology' held in Tucson, Arizona? Would you like to spend four days outdoors learning about the Sonoran Desert, immersing yourself and exploring all its exciting components? Be prepared to be fascinated with how the saguaro cactus plays a key role for many species in the desert. Meet many other interesting people from around the United States, including other teachers.

When: April 20-23, 2006

All participants are encouraged to arrive on Wednesday, April 19 between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m. The Institute begins on Thursday April 20th at 6:30 a.m. (Arizona time!).

Location: Catalina State Park, Tucson, AZ. The Santa Catalina Mountains are the backdrop for the state park the Institute is held in. The park has many species of desert wildlife, and has over 150 species of birds. Days should be hot and sunny, and evenings chillier.

Description: The program focuses on Sonoran Desert ecosystems, looking at the interactions between plants, animals and the physical environment. The Institute faculty members are experienced teachers, working as consultants or professors at the various universities of Arizona. The days start early and optional activities such as 'owling' and star talks extend into the evening. Participants are divided in to small groups for the first three days. A hike on the final day ties all the groups and experiences together.

Accommodation: You must bring your own tent or camper. There are no electrical hookups, and no generators allowed. Solar showers and portable restrooms are provided. The food is fantastic, and is able to accommodate vegetarians! Camping is shaded by mesquite trees.

Cost: Central New Mexico Audubon Society will pay for the tuition! You must provide your own transportation to the site (car, air) and dinner on the Wednesday evening.

Application: **Due November 1st 2005**

Please send a one-page short essay detailing:

- How you would benefit from this opportunity
- How would you use the experience in your everyday teaching
- Details on where you teach and what grade you teach
- One reference

We realize that this workshop is partly during school time. Please check with your principal before applying that you can attend the Institute, and be out of school on these dates (23-27 including travel time). There may be the possibility of some additional funding to cover a substitute.

Please send the application by November 1st to:
 Central New Mexico Audubon Society
 c/o Helen Haskell
 PO Box 1453
 Cedar Crest, NM 87008

For more information on program content, visit:

<http://www.tucsonaudubon.org>

Any questions? Please call Helen Haskell at 281-6453, or email helennm@yahoo.com



Connect a child to nature with Audubon Adventures 2005-2006

Enclosed please find my check for \$ _____
 (Each \$41.50 will sponsor one classroom in the Audubon Adventures Program. Any amount you contribute will benefit our educational activities.)

I choose to designate _____
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Send your check payable to CNMAS with this form to:
 Audubon Adventures, c/o CNMAS,
 PO BOX 30002, Albuquerque, NM 87190-0002

From the Astronaut's Point Of View by Scotty Johnson, Defenders of Wildlife

Irony filled the heavens the first week of August. As earthlings looked skyward worried about repair to the space shuttle, the astronauts looked Earthward worried about disrepair to the Earth. Shuttle Commander Eileen Collins reported from 220 miles above of "widespread environmental destruction on Earth" and warned "that greater care was needed to protect natural resources." Collins, who has lead four previous shuttle flights added, "Sometimes you can see how there is erosion and you can see how there is deforestation. It's very widespread in some parts of the world." As astronauts removed torn pieces of blanket from the shuttle's shell, Collins' thoughtful words reminded us that the earth is our space shuttle, and in some ways, equally fragile. "The atmosphere almost looks like an eggshell on an egg, it's so very thin. We know that we don't have much air, we need to protect what we have. We would like to see, from the astronauts' point of view, people take good care of the Earth and replace the resources that have been used."

<http://edition.cnn.com/2005/TECH/space/08/04/shuttle.earth.environment.reut/>





September - October - November 2005

!!AUCTION!!

A Treasure Fit For a Centennial

Marjorie Williams has donated to Central New Mexico Audubon Society the complete 26-volume set of Bent's Life Histories of Birds. The set is in good condition, clean, stiff-paperback cover, good spine. Marge wants her generosity to benefit our chapter, so she has sanctioned an auction for this hard-to-find complete collection. Starting minimum bid is \$100.00 for the complete set ONLY – unbelievably underpriced! Minimum increments after that are \$5.00.

We would ask you to contact our Librarian, but since we don't have one, we'll ask you to BE our Librarian – whoops, lost the train of thought there! If you'd like to bid on the 26-volume set of Bent's Life Histories of Birds, please contact Dianne Cress at 294-2928 or dcress@sld.state.nm.us. Thank you, and good luck!

Is There a Stamp Collector/EBay Purveyor In The House???

Emily Frear, the widow of Larry Frear, has donated to Central New Mexico Audubon the stamp collection of her late husband. The collection is a charming hodgepodge of stamps and philatelic items, ranging from five bound volumes of First Day of Issue Stamps from 1980 through 1985; stamps of "Great Americans" series as early as 1938, 1926, '40s, '50s, and '60s; and centenary and anniversary stamps of railways. There is more, lots more. The collection is historic, interesting, education, and enjoyable.

But is it valuable? We've gotten a thoughtful and kind assessment from Robert G. Heyman (thanks, Robbie!), who has given us suggestions about which portion of the collection might be advertised for sale on eBay and which portion would merit further evaluation by a knowledgeable collector/stamp dealer. (Robbie himself is not a collector of U.S. stamps.)

Can you help us? Do you know someone who can? Do you like to collect, categorize, research, play on eBay? Would you enjoy taking on this project for CNMAS? There is no time limit, no pressure. If this sounds fun, interesting, educational, and enjoyable to you, call Beth at 898-8514. Thanks!



Electronic Burrowing Owl

Just a short reminder that people who wish to receive the *Burrowing Owl* electronically should contact our Membership Chairman, Ed Dover, and let him know. Email him at dover5427@msn.com



NOTICE: The next issue of the *Burrowing Owl* will be incorporated into the statewide Audubon-New Mexico Newsletter. The next regular issue of the *Burrowing Owl* will be published in March 2006.



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- Subscription to CNMAS Burrowing Owl

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- Senior citizen or student rate - only \$15/year
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Use this form for New Membership Subscriptions only

Burrowing Owl Subscription Tidbits

- For changes of address or correction to your Burrowing Owl subscription, contact the Membership Chairperson (see Directory on the back page of this newsletter).
- If you are in the CNMAS Chapter area, you can receive the Burrowing Owl by sending your name and address with \$12 to CNMAS, PO BOX 30002, Albuquerque, NM 87190-0002 - this does NOT include National Audubon membership or Audubon Magazine!
- You can also subscribe to our newsletter without being a member of our Chapter. If you live outside the CNMAS region, send \$15 to the above address.
- If you wish to receive notice of our downloadable PDF newsletter (instead of a hard copy) give us your email address in addition to your name and address.
- Members can call (800) 274-4201 to sign up for National Audubon's Paper-Free Renewal Program. Those who sign up will have their membership automatically renewed each year and will receive only one bill approximately 2 months in advance of your membership expiration date.



Burrowing Owl Deadline

Information and articles to be included in Winter 2005 issue of the State Audubon Newsletter, *Burrowing Owl* section, must be received by **November 5**. Contact Turtle-Bear at 505-265-6094 or turtlebear@jensenbear.com. We are not accepting commercial advertising at this time.

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Our missions: "To appreciate, experience, and conserve birds, other wildlife and their habitats; and to encourage and support environmental education in New Mexico."

WHOM TO CONTACT

National Audubon Society
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(800)274-4201, chadd@audubon.org
Activist Hotline
(800)659-2622
Audubon Take Action
www.capitolconnect.com/audubon/
New Mexico Office
David Henderson
Randall Davey Audubon Center
P.O. Box 9314 Santa Fe, NM 87504
(505)983-4609, dhenderson@audubon.org
The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500
(202)456-1111
president@whitehouse.gov
Hon. Gale Norton
Secretary of the Interior
18th & C Streets, NW, Rm. 6151
Washington, DC 20240
(202)208-7351
Hon. Pete Domenici
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510
(202)224-6621 (505)346-6791
senator_domenici@domenici.senate.gov
Hon. Jeff Bingaman
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510
(202)224-5521 (505)346-6601
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Hon. Stephen Pearce
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
(202)225-2365
Hon. Tom Udall
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
(202)225-6190 (505)984-8950
tom.udall@mail.house.gov

Hon. Heather Wilson
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
(202)225-6316 (505)346-6781
ask.heather@mail.house.gov
Governor Bill Richardson
State Capitol, Room 400
Santa Fe, NM 87501
(505) 476-2200
Bosque del Apache NWR
(505)838-2120
Friends of the Bosque del Apache
(505)835-1828
www.friendsofthebosque.org
US Fish and Wildlife Service
500 Gold Avenue, SW
Albuquerque, NM 87102
External Affairs Office (505)248-6911
Sandia Ranger District
US Forest Service
Clifford Dils, District Ranger
11776 Highway 337
Tijeras, NM 87059
(505)281-3304
New Mexico Department
of Game and Fish
Villagra Building
P.O. Box 25112
Santa Fe, NM 87503-0001
(505)827-6681
<http://www.gmfsh.state.nm.us>

Bar in Trouble? (Talking Talons)
Call before you intervene: 281-1133 or 281-1515
Rare Bird Alert
Albuquerque: 884-3269, Pinyonjay@aol.com
<http://www.nmosbirds.org/hotline.html>
Rosy Finch Project
Fran Lusso & Dave Weaver, flusso@wfbumc.edu
Wildlife Rescue
If you find a sick or injured bird, call 344-2500

DIRECTORY

CNMAAS Phone 255-7622 Email jmyers@peacocklaw.com
Webpage <http://www.newmexicoaudubon.org/cnmas/>
CNMAAS, P.O. Box 30002, Albuquerque, NM 87190-0002
PRESIDENT
Beth Hurst-Waitz 804 Guadalupe Circle NW 87114-1710
home 898-8514 work 243-7029 fax 243-9136 brave_e@juno.com
VICE-PRESIDENT
Laurel Ladwig home 254-9834 pbgrebe@gmail.com
TREASURER
Glen Finley 7404 Ankara Road NE 87122 450-3782 grf@nmlrc.com
SECRETARY
Christopher Rustay home 255-7786 chrustay@aol.com
AUDUBON ADVENTURES CHAIRPERSON
Helen Haskell home 281-6453 helennm@yahoo.com
CONSERVATION CHAIRPERSON
ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS CHAIRPERSON
Jeffrey Myers work 998-1502 jmyers@peacocklaw.com
EDITOR, BURROWING OWL
Pauline Turtle-Bear Guillermo 265-6094 turtlebear@jensenbear.com
FIELD TRIP CHAIRPERSON
Celestyn Brozek home 266-9225 work 925-8611 cbrozek@unm.edu
PUBLICITY CHAIRPERSON
Sylvia Chatin Fee 294-4073 nmsylvia@peoplepc.com
MEMBERSHIP CHAIRPERSON (for change of address only)
Ed Dover 1421 San Carlos SW 87104-1040 242-5427 dover5427@msn.com
NEW MEXICO COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE
OPEN
BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE
Ruth Burstrom 856-2901 rburstrom@aol.com
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NEW MEXICO AUDUBON COUNCIL
President - Tom Jervis, Sangre de Cristo
60 Barranca Rd., Los Alamos, NM 87544

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