



Central New Mexico Audubon Society

Winter 2022-2023

The Burrowing Owl

 Audubon | SOUTHWEST

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Thick-billed Longspur (formerly McCown's Longspur) was the first bird whose name was changed during the current campaign.

The Central New Mexico Audubon Society is committed to inclusion, equal access and diversity, and we encourage all individuals to join us to learn more about birds, to promote their well-being and the health and future of the environment that sustains us all.

The CNMAS board approved this statement in October 2022 when the National Audubon Society was considering changing the organization's name to reflect concern about John James Audubon's activities and beliefs. A decision is expected in February 2023.

The issue was reflected in articles in *The Burrowing Owl* about the national "Bird Names for Birds" movement: Autumn 2021 and Winter 2021-22.

A perspective on the issue was articulated by Adam Gopnik in *The New Yorker* issue of October 31, 2022:

[Some historians try] to thread the needles of contemporary conscience, never excusing the slave-owning Southerners, but aware of the risks of judging the ideas of the eighteenth century by the standards of the twenty-first. In truth, the moral standards of 2022 are already different from those of 2019. Yet universal amnesty for everyone past feels too easy: taking and holding slaves was not an innocent occupation to which only a handful of moderns have retrospectively been awakened; it was an act self-evidently brutal and inhuman, which countless people at the time said was brutal and inhuman.

The reasonable approach seems to be to survey the field of possibility—to gauge what was understood at the time, which moral doctrines were readily available and which were not. Abolition was a powerful, articulate, and persuasive position during the American Revolution and in the years afterward. Those who rejected it weren't just "men of their time"—they were in a real sense men out of step with their time . . . , having chosen to ignore the best available argument. They need not be eliminated from study or admiration—their contributions are too important, and history, anyway, is not a book of good-conduct awards. But it's not wrong to censure them retrospectively.

Winter Programs Feature the Middle Rio Grande Bosque

January 19

The Isleta Reach of the Middle Rio Grande

Quantina Martine, Audubon Southwest Water Resource Associate

Paul Tashjian, Audubon Southwest Director of Freshwater Conservation

Martine and Paul will provide an overview of the Isleta Reach, the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District restoration projects and the importance of CNMAS bird surveys.

The Reach contains a native bosque forest that has developed over the past 10 years during drought conditions and low river flows. The bosque habitat hosts many species of birds during migration as well as nesting songbirds during spring and early summer.

Audubon Southwest and the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District have partnered to look at irrigation return drains, or “outfalls,” as a place for habitat restoration for the endangered Rio Grande Silvery Minnow and have partnered with CNMAS to collect bird data at these outfalls.

Both programs are virtual. The link will be sent to CNMAS members or it can be requested it by e-mail to cnmasreg@google.com.



Photo by Quantina Martine



Photo by Kim Eichhorst

February 16

Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program—Using Community Science to Study the Changing Middle Rio Grande Ecosystem

Dr. Kim Eichhorst, BEMP Science and Research Director

The Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program (BEMP) combines long-term ecological research with outdoor science education and outreach. K–12 students and their teachers monitor key indicators of structural and functional change in the Middle Rio Grande riparian forest, or bosque. Students participate in field data collection, lab processing and classroom activities that help increase their understanding and appreciation of science and the riparian ecosystem.

Data collected from 34 sites along 350 miles of the Rio Grande are used by federal and state agencies to make land management decisions. The current bosque is a remnant of the 1941 flood and the river regulations and manipulations of that time.

Restoration of a cottonwood/ willow forest and native mosaic under changing temperature regimes and decreasing water availability will be a challenge. Understanding the history of changes, current constraints and implications of anthropogenic drivers on the river and its ecosystem can help us develop predictive models for successful management of the senescing cottonwood bosque.

Chapter's Overnight Field Trips Include Talks

Story by Bob Wilcox, Photos by Joe Schelling

The August field trip to Big Tesuque Creek campground had to be canceled due to weather. In October we visited Bosque del Apache in its late-fall version. There were few flooded fields, and the cranes and snow geese were just starting to filter in. We saw 48 species including many wintering sparrows.



American White Pelicans

Winter Field Trips

January 20–21

Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge

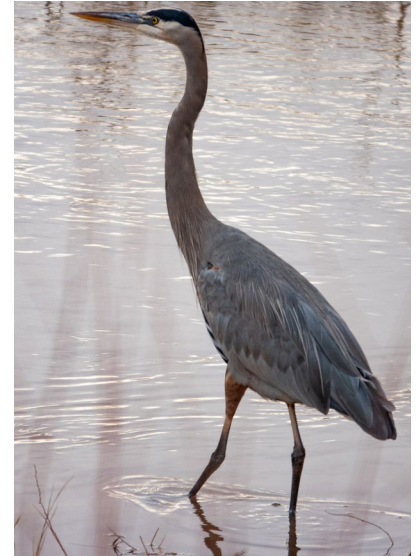
The Bitter Lake area has quite a few sightings of water fowl, shorebirds, and grassland sparrows.

This will be an overnight stay in Roswell for those who would like to go. A brief talk about sparrow identification is planned for Friday evening. A supplementary trip to the east on Sunday morning is possible.

February 17–18

Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge

We hope to see swans and waterfowl that winter further north. Goldeneyes and Rough-legged Hawks are a possibility.



Great Blue Heron

I will prepare a talk on the migratory patterns of three of our great continental bird species: Tundra Swans, White Pelicans and Sandhill Cranes.



Two more Tuesday Talks are scheduled at Whitfield Wildlife Conservation Area:

- Dec. 13, Conservation Talk, by the conservation manager of the Valencia Soil and Water Conservation District and
- Jan. 10, Water Talk, by a retired hydrologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The presentations begin at 11:00 am. Reservations should be made by e-mail to bethcohenabq@gmail.com.

WWCA is at 2424 Highway 47 in Belen.

Travelogues

Introduction and Photo by Glenda Morling

It's fun to learn from others' travel stories. This October my husband and I were inspired to travel to San Carlos Nuevo Guaymas in Sonora, Mexico, as we'd heard from a bird guide in Portal, Arizona, about the ease of getting there and the abundance of birds.

Our interest was solidified when Bonnie Long and her husband shared their RV adventures in Mexico (see this spring's Burrowing Owl). Jim and I had been apprehensive about driving into Mexico, but we were encouraged by these travelers' experiences and their advice.



Always on the lookout for new travel ideas, I was interested when Tim Wallace and Christine Clayton told me about their recent trip. I asked Tim if he would share their adventures with a wider audience. He kindly agreed and provided the following travelogue. If you too would like to tell us about your travel to inspire and inform others, we'd love to hear from you.

Story and Photos by Tim Wallace

Christine and I bought a used pop-up camper early last spring. In April we went to Percha Dam to try it out. We had beautiful weather except for four days of sustained 45mph winds. We found out that the trailer does fine in the wind.

In mid-June we went to Pagosa Springs in Colorado. The weather was mostly beautiful, with some rain and a bit of a chill at night. There we found the camper is tight in the rain and its furnace works nicely.

In August we went to Canjilon Lakes. The lakes are small, scattered and stocked with trout. We had a nice campground across from one of the lakes, but our good time was spoiled by boorish neighbors. We had tried to go to

Trout Lake a few miles away but were stymied by wet, slippery roads. We encountered a true monsoon and had to pull off the road a number of times. The hillside to our right was a sheet of water and the ditch alongside the road was a torrent eight or so feet wide.

Mid-September found us at a campsite along the river near Pilar on the road through the Rio Grande Gorge. We saw rainstorms over Wheeler Peak but nothing that affected us, just beautiful scenery and some wonderful Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep.

Finally, in late September we went south to a small campground south of Reserve called Gwynn Tank. It's a small reservoir along



the creek, which was swollen from rainfall. It rained each night but the days were sunny.

When we travel we generally have a destination picked for a reason. At the destination we tend to wander along forest roads in search of adventure. This summer we saw lots of wonderful scenery and birds, mammals and reptiles, and wildflowers abounded everywhere.



The Many Benefits of Birding Near Your Patch

Story and Photos by Deanna Nichols

A couple of years ago I joined a Facebook group called 5MR (Five Mile Radius) Birding. It's a smaller and more personal version of a CBC circle, where you focus your efforts on the area within a five-mile radius of your residence.

The concept was started to encourage people to spend more time closer to home: to decrease the carbon footprint of our birding efforts (which helps the birds) and to get more bird data in areas that have been less heavily birded (like our neighborhoods and local parks).



The pandemic helped me appreciate how much I can observe in my own neighborhood. I was already spending most of my nature time at a few favorite nearby places, and I'm lucky to have some great hotspots in my 5MR. All of these photos are from the past year within five miles of my home, including some rarities and some beauties like these (clockwise from above right):

- the Great Horned Owl and owllet near the UNM North Golf Course on April 4, 2022;
- this Band-tailed Pigeon in the Tingley Bosque on May 5, 2022;
- a female Vermilion Flycatcher at Los Poblanos Open Space on May 5, 2022; and
- a female Wood Duck displaying iridescent feathers at Tingley Beach on January 30, 2020.



If you want to start a 5MR birding list yourself, you can use the eBird app to check out the boundaries of your count circle. Then you can create a 5MR patch in the Patch List function on eBird, adding all the hotspots and personal spots you visit to the patch.



Fulfilling the CNMAS Mission Through Tabling

Story and Photo by Sara Jayne Cole

CNMA's mission: To appreciate, experience, and conserve birds, other wildlife and their habitats; and to encourage and support environmental education in New Mexico.

Tabling is setting up a table at an event or high-traffic location. It's an easy and successful way to educate people about the chapter's conservation initiatives.

CNMA's tables at environmental events and local growers' markets are staffed by volunteers and have displays about the work we do in promoting the enjoyment and conservation of birds. The funding we received from the Migratory Bird Conservation City Grant in 2014 allowed us to acquire the canopy and materials that make our booth inviting.

Tabling has become a mainstay of our education work. We have partnered with Friends of Valle de Oro to promote their ABQ Backyard Refuge program by giving people tips on a bird-safe yard. Other topics include cats indoors, bird-window collisions and reducing the use of pesticides.



Mikal Deese, with the mechanical cat, and Jessica Garduno at the tabling booth

The Conservation Committee has developed handouts and brochures that are available at the table.

The booth includes an activity for kids—making wind socks out of recycled materials—a ploy to engage the parents in discussing bird conservation while the children are busy.

We also invite people to join CNMAS, to enjoy our programs, bird walks and weekend trips.

All this is only possible because of many dedicated volunteers who help set up, take down and “booth sit.” I thank them for their work, including the seven events we attended in 2022. It couldn't have happened without you:

Beth Cohen, Mary Rajc, Shannon Caruso, Ginny Davis, Bo Miller, Mikal Deese, Judy & Zvi Flanders, Linda Heinze, and Tomas & Erin Radcliffe.

P.S.

If you would like to become a tabling volunteer contact Sara Jayne Cole sjcole@cnmas.newmexicoaudubon.org

P.P.S.

The Tabling Committee needs a place to store supplies. This would create room in my garage as well as give access to volunteers who take on organizing for an event.



Birds and Their Habitats Have Well-equipped Allies

By Melissa Howard

In late October a forest restoration project in the Jemez Mountains was wrapping up its third year. Somewhere between 90,000 and 100,000 seedlings had been planted on 156,000 acres devastated by the 2011 Las Conchas Fire. The neighboring Santa Clara Pueblo was a partner in the effort, which was led by the Rio Grande Water Fund.

The goal was to establish “tree islands” to bring life back to the devastated mountains and to supply seeds for its future, says project manager Matthew Piccarello. The work was threatened because the seedlings were in storage in Mora when this summer’s Calf Canyon/Hermits Peak Fire moved in and the crew’s priority shifted to getting 17,000 or so plants to a safe home.

Piccarello, the forest and watershed health manager for the The Nature Conservancy of New Mexico, also leads the TNC side of the Rio Grande Water Fund along with an executive committee and 103 signatories—

allied organizations, government agencies and businesses—to the project’s charter.

The Water Fund also operates All Hands All Lands, mobilizing resources for prescribed fires by employing people from northern New Mexico’s most fire-risk areas. Trees are thinned, providing firewood, and planned burns remove future fire sources. Last summer’s Midnight Fire, on the El Rito district of the Carson National Forest, was manageable because of that work.

“Prescribed burns are a tool we have to use,” says Piccarello, “especially here, where lightning starts so many fires.” A national wildfire coordinating group is looking at “what has to be done to do it safely,” he adds.

More than 50 wildfire and resource protection projects have received money since the Water Fund’s founding in 2014, says Piccarello, including tree thinning on 140,00 acres, toward a goal of restoring 600,000 acres.

A highlight project involved San Antonio Creek on the east side of the Jemez Mountains, where a cattleman’s organization and

Jemez Pueblo partnered with the Fund to reconnect the creek with its historic floodplain and create wetlands to store water.

More seedling projects are under way on the Santa Fe National Forest and Bandelier National Monument. Tiny trees are planted in clusters, especially near fallen logs on north-facing slopes, so they will “mimic natural regeneration,” Piccarello says, and future climate conditions like the need to manage surface-water runoff are taken into account.

Other Water Fund projects include:

- Multiple efforts in high-risk areas of the Rio Grande watershed, especially the San Juan Chama Project, which is the source of Albuquerque’s water;
- La Jara wetlands restoration near Taos, in partnership with Amigos Bravos; and
- the current Harvey Jones Bioswale demonstration project in Corrales, where a riverside wetland complex will filter out pollution from storm water and create a wetland wildlife habitat.

continued on the next page



. . . more on the Rio Grande Water Fund

continued from the previous page

The Rio Grande Water Fund's goal is "...to protect storage, delivery and quality of Rio Grande water through landscape-scale forest restoration treatments in tributary forested watersheds, including the headwaters of the San Juan Chama Project."

A second document commits to "a monitoring and adaptive management strategy" used to track projects and react to changing circumstances.

Piccarello's winter assignments include updating the Water Fund's comprehensive plan "with an eye on the ten-year horizon" in 2024.

He will also look at how upcoming infusions of federal funding "will make their way to New Mexico." Some of the money will go to projects being planned with the Forest Service in the Enchanted Circle around Taos, Angel Fire, Eagle Nest and Red River.



**RIO GRANDE
WATER FUND**
A Wildfire and Water Source
Protection Project

The Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority was a founding signatory of the Rio Grande Water Fund and recently authorized an additional ten-year funding agreement.

The state's largest water utility, ABCWUA has an important role in the bioswale project in the Corrales bosque. So does the City of Rio Rancho, whose wastewater outlet has been added to the ten-acre site. New channels will carry treated water back to the river.

Report from Rio Grande Bird Research Inc.

In Rio Grande Nature Center State Park

Story and Photo by Jason Kitting

This hatch-year female MacGillivray's Warbler (*Geothlypis tolmiei*) was one of six or seven we banded during the 2022 fall season.

MacGillivray's Warblers (MGWAs) are found breeding in dense vegetation along mountain streams from southern New Mexico up into northern British Columbia and possibly beyond. This species is the western counterpart of the closely related Mourning Warbler that breeds in similar habitat in the eastern Boreal of Canada and down along the Appalachian Mountains.

Both species spend a lot of their time foraging for insects in low-growing vegetation and on the ground.



MCWAs breed in the nearby Sandia and Manzano Mountains and then use the habitat along the Rio Grande during migration.

Rio Grande Bird Research logged ten of these birds this year, compared to twenty or more in previous years.

Systemic Barriers Hinder Bird Research, Say 124 Latin American Ornithologists

By Grace VanDelen

When Lourdes Mugica Valdés was finishing her master's thesis with field work in Cuba in 1992, she lost 70 pounds. Due to the Cuban economic crisis, there was little food to eat. One day, she says, the only calories her team could find near the bird communities they were monitoring was a bottle of wine.

Nevertheless, Mugica Valdés collected her data, finished her degree and went on to complete her PhD. Now a professor at the University of Havana, Mugica Valdés is one of 124 ornithologists from the neotropics—a region that includes Latin America and the Caribbean—co-authoring a new paper highlighting the many systemic barriers that ornithologists face in the neotropics. While, they say, they have a wealth of knowledge and data to share, their contributions are often ignored by the global scientific community—specifically, scientists in North America and Europe.

The preprint, which will be published as a peer-reviewed paper in the journal *Ornithological Applications* this fall, was written in response to a 2020 article by ornithologist Alexander Lees and others. The article, published in *The Auk*, identified a number

of “shortfalls” in neotropical ornithology, including a “lack of basic natural history knowledge.” The rebuttal argues that these gaps are in part a result of the exclusion of Latin American scientists from the global discourse in the field.



“Knowledge—and knowledge gaps—look different depending on where we are standing, our lived experiences, and what we perceive

to be our objectives,” reads the preprint’s introduction.

Removing the barriers that Latin American scientists face, as well as “increasing reliance on local leadership and major investment in local capacity,” says Mugica Valdés, is the key to not only advancing knowledge in the field but also improving outcomes for birds.

“I congratulate these authors for pointing out the elephant in the room,” says Jorge Velásquez, Audubon’s science director for Latin America and the Caribbean. Though he was not involved in the paper, he says he has experienced the issues and that his work has often been ignored in favor of English-language articles.

According to the preprint’s authors, Lees’ 2020 article followed a similar trend: Of more

than 150 citations, the paper cited literature from only three of the numerous ornithological journals based in the neotropics, and all six of its co-authors were primarily affiliated with institutions in North America and Europe.

Lees, who worked as a postdoc at the Goeldi Museum in Brazil for five years, says that the 2020 paper is one of just three he’s ever written about the neotropics that hasn’t featured a neotropical scientist as a co-author. The criticisms raised by the preprint, he says, are fair enough.

However, says National Autonomous University of Mexico Professor and an author of the rebuttal Leopoldo Vázquez, citations are not always synonymous with inclusion. “To cite a few of the relevant authors and then indicate that there are huge gaps in the knowledge neglects that there are groups of people doing this work in [Latin America],” he says.

Kristina Cockle, an author on the preprint and a Canadian ornithologist who has lived and worked in Argentina for the last 20 years, says the new paper was not meant to attack Lees or his co-authors, but the article was “the straw that broke the camel’s back.”

Audubon Reporter
October 2022

Thursday Birder Trips

December 2022, January, February 2023

Hi, All Thursday Birders,
Here is the winter schedule. We are looking forward to some old favorites and some new locations. Thank you to our leaders and our members for your continued support.

Please note start times—we have opted to meet at 8:25 a.m. for the majority of walks this quarter as the varying start times we had in the fall were somewhat confusing for members. Any updates on remaining walks for this year will be sent out if needed.

Get Ready!
Bird!
Glenda and Shannon

December 1

Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, 7:50 a.m.—3 p.m.
GPS coordinates (35.030140, -106.6568077)
Difficulty level: 180-mile drive, plus driving and short walks at Refuge.
Bring a picnic lunch.
Leader: Bob Wilcox



Townsend's Solitaire at
Ojito de San Antonio
Open Space

Photo by Deanna Nichols

December 8

Rio Grande Nature Center State Park, 8:55 a.m.—12 noon
Meet at the wetland blind in the northeast corner of the Nature Center parking lot.
Note that a \$3 parking fee, State Parks pass or Friends of the RGNC pass is required per car, and that the Visitor Center and restrooms open at 10 a.m.
Difficulty level: one mile on flat, even trails

Following a guided walk behind the Nature Center, we will hold our holiday get-together inside the RGNC Education Building. Please bring a donation of \$3 towards cookies and a hot drink. Books donated by Bonnie Long will be offered in exchange for a donation.

Leaders: Leah Henzler and Karen Herzenberg



December 15, 22, 29

Holiday season—no trips scheduled.

January 5

Albuquerque Open Space Bosque Trails, 8:25—11 a.m.

Meet in the east end of the parking lot of Sagebrush Church near the trail bridge: from Coors Boulevard NW turn east on La Orilla Rd. Proceed to the end of La Orilla and turn left into the parking lot.

GPS coordinates (35.161965, -106.675091)

Difficulty level: two miles on flat trails, some uneven and sandy

Leader: Sara Jayne Cole

January 12

Tingley Ponds and Bosque, 8:25—11 a.m.

Meet at the north end of the Tingley Beach parking lot

GPS coordinates (35.088596, -106.677003)

continued on the next page

. . . more Thursday Birder Trips

January 12 trip continued

Difficulty level: one and a half miles, flat with sandy trails

Leader: Mary Rajé

January 19

Tijeras Arroyo Bosque Trails, 8:25 –11 a.m.

Directions: From Rio Bravo, turn left onto Second Street. Turn right onto Sunnyslope, (second left past Joy Junction). Take Sunnyslope until it turns to the left at the arroyo. This street comes to a dead end shortly after the turn, and parking is along the right side of the road by the arroyo.

GPS coordinates (35.007746, -106.671892)

Difficulty level: two miles, mostly flat with sandy trails and one short descent

No restrooms

Leaders: Darlene Benedict and Deanna Nichols

January 26

Willow Creek Bosque Open Space, 8:25 –11 a.m.

Meet in trailhead parking lot.

Directions: go east on Willow Creek Rd NE from 528, 1.8 miles south of 550 in Bernalillo. After 0.1 mile, turn left after Spruce Mountain Rd NE (gravel road marked Bosque Trail leading to trailhead parking lot).

Difficulty level: one and a half miles, flat with some uneven trails

No restrooms

Leader: TBA

February 2

Pueblo Montaña Trailhead, 8:25—11 a.m.

GPS coordinates (35.147886, -106.684174)

Meet in the trailhead parking lot on the south side of Montaña Rd NW, just east of Coors.

Difficulty level: two miles, flat with some uneven, sandy trails

Leaders: Glenda Morling, Maxine Schmidt, David Watkins

February 9

Mariposa Basin Park, 8:25 —11 a.m.

Meet at south end of parking lot of Mariposa Park, off Taylor Ranch Rd NW just north of Kachina St NW. The park has a pond and a natural swampy area, in addition to trees and lawns.

GPS coordinates (35.1557479, -106.694350)

Difficulty level: one mile on flat, even ground, with one short incline

Leaders: Susan and Jim Hunter

February 16

North Corrales Siphon Beach trail access, 8:25 a.m.—12 noon

Meet at 8:25 a.m. in the parking lot north of Boxing Bear Brewery, 10200 Corrales Road.

GPS coordinates (35.203801, -106.644975)

Carpool to north end of Corrales to Siphon Beach bosque access. Those

going directly to Siphon Beach should meet there at 8:45 a.m.

Difficulty level: one and a half miles on flat trails, some uneven, one short incline

No restrooms

Leader: Perrienne Houghton

February 23

Coyote del Malpais Golf Course, Grants, 6:50 a.m.—2 p.m.

There will be space for 15 people. Please e-mail us at thursdaybirders@gmail.com by February 15 to reserve your spot and to let us know where you intend to join the trip.

Meet at 6:50 a.m. for a 7:00 a.m. departure from the southeast corner of the parking lot at Lowe's on I-40 and 12th St NW.

Secondary meeting place and break/snack stop, 8 a.m., Sky City Travel Center Express, I-40, exit 89

GPS coordinates (35.086117, -107.770001)

Bring picnic lunch or buy lunch in clubhouse.

Difficulty level: a 75-mile drive then three-mile walk on mainly even turf.

Leaders: Peter Neils and Sue Chavez

Trips may be rescheduled or canceled. For updated information check the Thursday Birders page on the CNMAS website <http://cnmas.newmexicoaudubon.org/trips/thursday-birders> or e-mail thursdaybirders@gmail.com.

CNMAS Directory and Contacts

Central New Mexico Audubon Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit chapter of the National Audubon Society Inc.

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

Mailing address: CNMAS, P.O. Box 30002, Albuquerque NM 87190-0002

The CNMAS membership form is on the web site:

<http://cnmas.newmexicoaudubon.org>

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