

# CENTRAL New Mexico AUDUBON SOCIETY

## November 2023 Updates

### This Month's Features



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### Thursday Birders

#### November 2nd

Mariposa Basin Park – 8:30AM – 11AM

#### November 9th

Copper Trailhead Open Space – 9:00AM – 11:30AM

#### November 16th

Los Poblanos Open Space – 8:55AM – 12 noon

#### November 23rd

THANKSGIVING NO BIRD WALK!

#### November 30th

Paseo del Bosque Trail: Alameda Trailhead – 8:30AM – 11:00AM

BE SURE TO CHECK THE WEBSITE AS SCHEDULES CAN CHANGE

<http://cnmas.newmexicoaudubon.org/trips/thursday-birders/>



## About the Climate Team

by Dana Loy - Climate Team Chair

The Climate Team is a new CNMAS project created to raise awareness of climate change and environmental threats and to engage in actions to address these issues.

We are aligning our project with national Audubon climate action and conservation guidelines, generating ideas for climate resilience in Albuquerque and surrounding areas, and collaborating with other organizations that share our environmental values.

It is rewarding to work with others on challenges like these. We're now in the process of forming groups for specific issues and projects. If you'd like to join your CNMAS friends in this new effort, contact [dana@cnmas.newmexicoaudubon.org](mailto:dana@cnmas.newmexicoaudubon.org)

## An Effort to Promote Environmental Justice for the South Valley

--CNMAS Climate Team

Driving south out of Albuquerque, it's hard to overlook the industrial eyesore just west of I-25, a stretch of storage tanks and concrete junk that seems to go on and on. It borders the Rio Grande, which is so vital to not only diverse wildlife but also for its positive impact on people. South Valley neighborhoods, once green and quiet, are home to polluting industries such as asphalt plants, a sewage treatment plant, auto salvage yards, and a Superfund site. All day big trucks rumble in and out, adding to the noise and poor air quality.

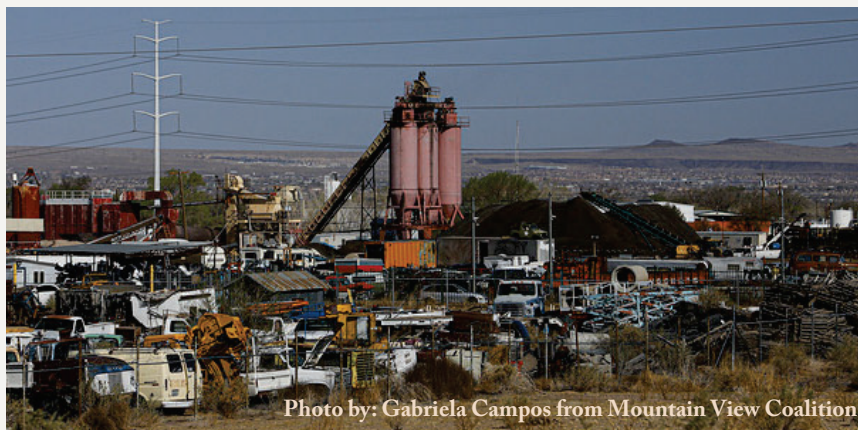


Photo by: Gabriela Campos from Mountain View Coalition

Lack of oversight and a regulatory system that permitted polluting industries have advanced environmental and social injustice in this neighborhood for years, and residents of the Mountain View neighborhood and the Friends of Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge have organized to improve this negative situation. Represented by the New Mexico Environmental Law Center, these concerned parties have proposed the Health, Environment & Equity Impacts (HEEI) regulation, which would allow the City of Albuquerque Environmental Health Department and the Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Air Quality Control Board to deny air pollution permits to facilities proposed in communities, such as the South Valley, that already are overburdened by air pollution.

Central New Mexico Audubon Society supports the HEEI proposal, which is good for humans and also for birds. We encourage the Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Air Quality Control Board to help create conditions in which the air and water are clean throughout the county and to fully support the proposed HEEI Regulation. A hearing is scheduled for December 4-8 at the Albuquerque Convention Center.

# Save the Birds from Excessive Light

--CNMAS Climate Team

It's almost funny, the idea of a giant, electric tumbleweed glowing in the dark as part of Albuquerque's developing new Rail Trail plan. But when you think about the proposed tumbleweed, the invasive plant that chokes habitats, feeds wildfire, and is involved in traffic collisions, you might question why the City of Albuquerque is choosing to glorify it. The city calls tumbleweeds "native plants" and "fantastic creations that lay down firm roots, keeping moisture in the soil for grasses." Not true! They're a wild west stereotype, they aren't native, and they compete for moisture like any other plant.



<https://www.cabq.gov/mra/rail-trail-1/design>

And what about the birds? How much artificial light will the giant electric tumbleweed add to an already glowing sky? Flying across the skies at night, birds are disoriented by bright lights, which cause them to crash into buildings and other structures at alarming rates, especially during migration, when thousands are soaring overhead, all night long.

We hope the Rail Trail's plans will include protection for birds along its seven-mile circle, including the tumbleweed stretch. We hope the lights will be dim and shielded, without excessive glow. CNMAS has contacted the city with our concerns and is collaborating with the newly formed chapter of DarkSky International in New Mexico to monitor the plan and demand that it consider the needs of insects, trees, and people, and that it be safe for birds.



## The Importance of eBird



<https://ebird.org/about/ebird-mobile/>

Birders, inexperienced or experienced, can play a vital role in scientific research and conservation efforts by contributing their observations to eBird from Cornell. Every sighting matters, and your data can help researchers understand and protect bird populations globally. Watch how your growing life list can be a powerful tool for conservation and study: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VKh9L6hjdIM>

## Calendar

**Nov 4th**

**10:30am- 12pm (noon)**  
**Rio Grande Nature Center**  
**State Park**

The Language of Birds! talk  
by Nathan Pieplow, the  
author of the Peterson Field  
Guide to Bird Sounds.

<https://www.rgnc.org/>

**November 9th**

**7:00pm - 8:30pm**  
**Bernalillo County Co-Op Extension**  
**Office and on ZOOM**

Dr. Megan Friggens, of the U.S.  
Forest Service Rocky Mountain  
Research Station, will be discussing  
climate change in the Southwest and  
its recent responses and future  
impacts for bird populations.  
<https://cnmas.newmexicoaudubon.org/events/>

**Nov 11th**

**9:00am to 5:00pm**  
**Open Space Visitor Center**

Come join us for a FREE  
community event as we  
celebrate the return of the  
Sandhill Cranes!

<https://www.cabq.gov/parksandrecreation/open-space/events/2023-crane-festival-celebration>



# Sandia Crest Recreation Complex Renovation Project

By Robert Munro



The Central New Mexico Audubon Society has expressed its concerns and recommendations in response to the proposed Sandia Crest Recreation Complex Renovation Project, linked below. In our official comments, addressed to Recreation Staff Officer Julie Padilla, we highlight the potential disruption of high-elevation specialist bird species during the nesting season due to the project's nature. We strongly urge the implementation of mitigation measures to protect nesting bird populations. Our concerns encompass the scale and timing of the project, compliance with environmental regulations, the potential impact of ground disturbance, alignment with the Dark Sky's initiative, and the opportunity for partnership with organizations like Rio Grande Bird Research to enhance mitigation strategies. We emphasize the importance of responsible development and the preservation of the region's natural environment and its inhabitants.

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=61358>

## Have you joined our Audubon chapter?

A message from CNMAS President, Glenda Morling

If you have not yet joined us, please consider doing so – we need you and, more importantly, our birds need you too! It is easy to join: go to the About Us page of the CNMAS website, or click on the National Audubon Society membership link, <https://act.audubon.org/onlineactions/DH8fxTkoC0qHjXF9fZCtRw2> and choose Central New Mexico Audubon Society under the Chapter Donation Designation dropdown box.

If you join our local chapter, we can track how many people in our region are NAS members and use this data in news articles and letters to officials and other organizations to show the amount of support that we have!

In addition, when you designate Central New Mexico as your local chapter, your name and contact information is added to our secure roster so we can send you important local updates, such as the Burrowing Owl quarterly newsletter, the new Monthly Updates news bulletins and action alerts from NAS that are most relevant to central New Mexico.

By the way, we do not receive your membership dues: these go directly to NAS who send us the same annual donation out of their coffers each year irrespective of our membership numbers. So if you want to make a donation directly to our chapter, please use the donation area on the CNMAS website on the home page. <https://donorbox.org/donate-to-central-new-mexico-audubon-society-1>

If you have any questions, contact us through this link or on the CNMAS website:  
<https://cnmas.newmexicoaudubon.org/>



Join the NAS today



Donate to  
CNMAS Today

Thank you!

# Members' Photos of the Month

Photo By: Deanna Nichols



This Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, normally found in the southeastern US, was fishing from the edge of the South Pond in the Tingley Bosque in mid-October 2023, providing a rare opportunity for Albuquerque birders and photographers. Photo By: Deanna Nichols

A wooden picture frame with a light brown finish. Inside the frame, the text "YOUR PHOTO COULD BE HERE" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font, arranged in two lines.

YOUR PHOTO  
COULD BE HERE



## Calling CNMAS Photographers

We would love to show off your bird photos!

For the "December Update" we want to see your pictures of Sandhill Cranes, American Pipits, Pinyon Jays OR any rare/ stray birds like the Yellow-crowned Night-Heron that showed up at Tingley Beach.

Email your photos to Jordan Graham- [thisnomadiclife@gmail.com](mailto:thisnomadiclife@gmail.com)  
PLEASE PUT "CNMAS DEC PHOTO - YOUR NAME" as the header/ subject!



# What is this bird?

Are you new to birding? Here are two sparrows to look out for this winter in our region and a couple details that will help you tell your little feathered friends apart.

This month we're looking at the  
White-throated Sparrows vs White-crowned Sparrows



Photo: Doug Greenberg/Flickr (CC-BY-NC-ND-2.0)

## White-throated

- Adults: They have a white throat and a yellow spot between the eye and the bill (called a lores).
- Crown: White stripes on the head, which are less prominent than those of the White-crowned Sparrow.
- Body: Grayish-brown overall with subtle streaks on the underparts.
- Breast: A noticeable white patch on the throat and upper breast.
- Bill: Pinkish or yellowish.

<https://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/white-throated-sparrow>



Photo: Lillian Derwelis/Audubon Photography Awards

## White-crowned

- Adults: They have distinct white stripes on the crown (top of the head), which is one of their most prominent features.
- Throat: Usually gray or pale, lacking the prominent white throat patch found in White-throated Sparrows.
- Body: Grayish-brown with prominent black and white stripes on the head, especially the crown.
- Bill: Usually pink or orange.

<https://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/white-crowned-sparrow>



## Did you know?

Geese are believed to be the first domesticated bird. Scientists believe that geese might have been domesticated almost 2000 years before chickens.