

BURROWING OWL



CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

February- March, 1977

CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY - MARCH

NOTE: Regular meetings of the CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY are being held at the First Unitarian Church on the southwest corner of Carlisle and Comanche NE. Use the parking lot off Comanche, just west of Carlisle. Meetings are held in the main church auditorium.

Thursday
February 10 BOARD MEETING at 7:30 p.m. Meeting place to be announced. If you are a Board member and have not hosted a meeting, you might consider doing so.

Saturday
February 12 FIELD TRIP by bus to Bosque del Apache to see Cranes and other wintering birds. Meet at 7:00 a.m. in the parking lot of the UNM Physics/Astronomy Building, Lomas and Yale NE. Bring binoculars and/or telescope, lunch and \$5 bus fare. The bus will return to Albuquerque about 5:00 p.m. This should be a particularly good trip for inexperienced birders or timid drivers. Leave the driving to the bus driver, the leader, Mary Lou Arthur, an excellent birder, can confirm your bird identifications. Reservations must be made in advance for this trip. Phone Mary Lou at 256-7359 by Tuesday afternoon, February 8th.

SAME DAY,
February 12 Meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the hospitality room of the First State Bank, 103 Manzanares Avenue, Socorro, for further consideration of organizing a New Mexico Council of Audubon Societies. Representatives will be present from the four New Mexico Audubon Societies and other Audubon members are urged to attend and offer their suggestions. See report in this newsletter of the earlier Council meeting.

Thursday
February 17 REGULAR MEETING of the CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY at the First Unitarian Church, Carlisle and Comanche NE at 7:30 p.m. Andy Kraynik will show slides and tell about "Canoeing on the Thelon River in Canada". Andy was one of a small group of hardy souls who were flown in to the Northwest Territory with their supplies so that they might canoe 400 miles easterly toward Hudson Bay on the Thelon River, which roughly parallels the Arctic Circle. Dr. Kraynik is a chemical engineer and a new employee at Sandia Labs.

Saturday
February 26 FIELD TRIP on snowshoes in the Jemez or Pecos (to be announced at the February meeting). Phone leader Dave Lange (266-4420 evenings or 277-3842 during day) for further details. The trip was so popular in January that all the snowshoes in the city were rented and prospective participants had to be turned away. Better phone Dave early if you are interested. The trip will begin at the Physics/Astronomy Building of UNM at 7:00 a.m.

Tuesday
March 8 AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILM at Popejoy Hall at 7:30 p.m. Stefan Kling will present his film THE VANISHING EDEN. It was filmed in Florida's River of Grass, a broad stretch of swampland running from Lake Okeechobee to Florida Bay, which has an extraordinary concentration of fish, reptiles and birds.

Thursday
March 10 BOARD MEETING at 7:30 p.m. Meeting place to be announced.

Sunday
March 13 FIELD TRIP to San Gabriel Park, Granger Ward, trip leader. Meet at the park entrance at 7:30 p.m. San Gabriel State Park is at the west end of Mountain Road next to the Rio Grande. There is generally good birding in the park and along the nearby ditches and the river bank. Granger has been making a study of birds in this area.

Thursday
March 17 REGULAR MEETING of the CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY at the First Unitarian Church, Carlisle and Comanche NE, at 7:30 p.m. Our speaker will be Jay Reed, Director of National Audubon's Mobile Environmental Education. Jay travels with a large trailerfull of displays and demonstrations, speaking to Audubon groups and visiting elementary schools. While in Albuquerque he will advise the City Planning Commission about a nature park being planned at the west end of Candelaria Road next to the Rio Grande.

Saturday
March 19 Annual meeting of the NEW MEXICO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, to be held at the UNM Biology Building, starting at 9:15 a.m. The program generally consists of reports of ornithological research being conducted around the state and other reports on matters of special interest. There is usually an evening speaker of more general interest and frequently a field trip on Sunday. All events are open to the public. For further details call Dot DeLollis (299-5384) or Mary Alice Root (256-7359) after March 1st when arrangements have been completed.

Thursday
June 9
thru
Sunday
June 12

National Audubon Society's biennial convention will be held at Estes Park, Colorado at the YMCA Conference Center. This year's format will be quite different as it will be "family style". There will be more information given in the next "Burrowing Owl" or write to National Audubon for further details of planned meetings and field trips.

CHRISTMAS COUNTS AND OTHER FIELD TRIPS

On December 18th Ross Teuber led the Sandia Mountain Christmas Count. Twenty-two people, including three watching feeders, participated and 49 species were counted. New birds for this count were Prairie Falcon, Merlin and Lesser Goldfinch.

On December 19th Jim Karg led the Albuquerque count. Thirteen people saw 57 species, including the Lewis Woodpecker, Black-capped Chickadee and Scrub Jay. The number of species was fewer than last year but the number of birds was greater, unfortunately, due to the great number of Starlings counted.

On January 2nd Chuck Hundertmark led the Bosque del Apache count. Twenty-four people counted 82 species. The most interesting birds, other than the Whooping Cranes, were Pyrrhuloxia, 15 Verdin and more than 100 Common Merganser. Rio Grande Turkeys, which previously had been released on the Refuge, were also seen.

Inclement wintry weather forced the cancellation of the Chaco Canyon trip and the Hawk Caravan but provided the necessary ingredient, snow, for a successful snowshoe trip in the Sandias, led by Dave Lange, on January 15th. Fifteen intrepid birders mushed (Well, what does one do on snowshoes?) around Capulin Springs picnic area and then on the Crest and saw many birds including Pine Grosbeak and a sizeable flock of Golden-crowned Kinglets.

On January 23rd Bob Jost led ten people on a pleasant scramble over the volcanic cliffs at Petroglyph State Park. In addition to numerous petroglyph drawings of birds, several rabbits and eight species of live birds were seen, including Sage Sparrow, Brown Towhee and Red-tailed Hawk.

NEW MEXICO AUDUBON COUNCIL

A meeting of Audubon society members from throughout the state was held in Socorro on December 11th to discuss the formation of a New Mexico Audubon Council. Representatives were present from Sangre de Cristo (Santa Fe and Los Alamos), Southwest (Silver City), Southeast (Roswell) and Central (Albuquerque) New Mexico Audubon Societies and affiliated members from Socorro. Also present as advisors or observers from National Audubon Society were Dr. Dede Armentrout of Brownwood, Texas, NAS's Southwest Regional Representative, whose district includes New Mexico, Texas and Louisiana; Bob Turner, Rocky Mountain Regional Representative, from Denver, whose district includes Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho and Utah; Phil Fradkin, western editor of AUDUBON magazine; and Vim Wright of Denver, a member of NAS Board of Directors and Chairman of the Scientific Research Committee.

Bob Turner told of the progress being made in his district in the formation of state Audubon councils. Each state council has been set up according to the wishes of its own members and each is concerned only with those matters which seem most worthwhile to its members. Some are involved with lobbying in the state legislature, one concentrates on keeping informed about ornithological research and others are concerned with interaction of the various societies in field trips and other birding activities.

Hal Hallett, of Roswell, acted as temporary chairman of the meeting and committees were formed to discuss the formation of a New Mexico Council and to set some tentative guidelines. Those attending were enthusiastic and a second meeting was arranged for Saturday evening, February 12th, 7:30 p.m. in the hospitality room of the First State Bank, 103 Manzanares Ave., Socorro. Interested Audubon members are cordially invited to attend.

RABBLE ROUSINGS

New Mexicans have a chance this year to join five other states in banning nonreturnable beverage containers. A bill is presently before the New Mexico State Legislature to require that all beer and soft drink containers distributed in the state carry a minimum deposit of five cents. Detachable openers and the plastic rings used to hold six-packs together would be prohibited.

Banning of nonreturnables and detachable openers will help clean up our environment, reduce energy consumption, cost and hazard to wildlife and humans.

If you support this bill, please so indicate by writing your state legislators. For the names and addresses of your State Legislators, see the January 13th and 20th issues of the Albuquerque News. For background information, see the March, May and July 1976 issues of Reader's Digest or pick up a fact sheet at our February meeting.

-- Dave Lange, Social Action
Chairman

THE PRESIDENT PANICS!

If life was ever tedious around Albuquerque, it is not so any more! The past few weeks have provided more interesting and exciting things to worry about than any similar period since the Whooping Cranes flew over the hunters' blinds during the Bosque del Apache Goose Hunt.

Audubon's "Man-on-the-Go", Jay Reed, was in Albuquerque for a week in late January, bringing the ecological gospel to fifteen or more elementary schools in the Albuquerque Public School System. Following a well worked-out schedule prepared by John Cox, APS's coordinator of Environmental Studies, Jay spoke to nearly one thousand students on subjects concerning our natural heritage. His talks were well received (for kids, that means they listened) and he did the Audubon Cause in Albuquerque a lot of good.

Before leaving town on Friday, January 28, he met with some of our City Planners in a discussion of how to develop the City's newly purchased Candelaria Farms tract into a Nature Walk. The Farms Tract is located near the Rio Grande, directly across the river from the famous Oxbow. One result of that meeting was the formation of a citizens' group to follow the planning process to be sure that it is not diverted from its prime purpose as a Nature Education Center. The Central New Mexico Audubon Society is represented on that group and we'll have the opportunity to express our collective opinion as plans become reality.

The end of the week saw several of our members (Ross Teuber, Martin Ruoss, newer member Stella Comiskey, and maybe others) head south to Socorro to attend the meeting of the Whooping Crane Conservation Association. Seems as though our lives are Whooping Crane-oriented in recent months -- since the remarkable foster-parent experiment was started last year. We're anticipating a report from those members at our next regular meeting.

The Audubon Council of New Mexico will come into being on February 12, when Audubon members from Southeastern New Mexico Audubon Society, Sangre de Cristo Audubon Society, Southwestern New Mexico Audubon Society and our own Central New Mexico Audubon Society meet right there in Socorro again. It's a follow-up meeting to the one which took place in December. It should be equally well attended, with some of the administrative and staff personnel from National Audubon there once more. We're looking for Bob Turner from the Rocky Mountain Regional Office, Dede Armentrout from the Southwest Regional Office and others too numerous and vague to mention. Make plans to attend. Information elsewhere in the "Burrowing Owl."

We seem to be warming up to our new meeting place - i.e., it is warming up to us - and we offer our thanks and applause to Dot de Lollis for making those heart-warming arrangements. In spite of the ineffably cold weather, the meeting hall was pleasant for the January meeting and no one was seen to sneak out during the program. The opportunities for socializing are more than we can resist; there will be more cookies and refreshments at the February meeting. We'll yield to the public outcry and make tea and other harmless (and cheaper!) libations available, in addition to coffee. We are in need of a Social Arbiter -- not the Emily Post kind, but the Be-Responsible-for-Having-Refreshments-Ready kind. Anyone interested in the job, on a temporary basis, come forth.

And remember -- Spring WILL come. And with it, Spring migrations and more field trips. Be prepared!!!

DOUBLE-DATING

If energy conservation means making the most of every day, we're conserving on February 12 for certain. That is the date of the meeting to form the New Mexico Audubon Council in Socorro as well as the date of the bus field trip to Bosque del Apache. (More about that somewhere else in the Owl.)

Our own Pat Basham, Member-on-the-Spot, is making all arrangements for the meeting to take place at the Hospitality Room of the First State Bank in Socorro, at 7:30. This is not a meeting for administration only -- all members are welcome.

The bus will be returning to Albuquerque about 5 p.m., which means it may make a problem for those wishing to cover both events. Perhaps an arrangement can be worked out with a friend who can't make both trips anyway.

SORRY ABOUT THIS, BUT YOU KNOW ABOUT INFLATION --

The "Burrowing Owl" is the bimonthly newsletter of the Central New Mexico Audubon Society and is provided to members of our chapter as a benefit of membership. We also exchange newsletters with a number of other Audubon chapters over the nation and send some to certain civic groups as a matter of information.

It has become necessary now for us to mail copies to other individuals or groups who wish to subscribe at the rate of \$1.50 a year (six copies). Subscriptions can be obtained by writing either the Membership Chairperson or the "Owl" Editor, P. O. Box 30002, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87110.

Upon request, one complimentary issue will be sent.

WHOOPIING CRANES AND SNOW GEESE

There had been much protest in the Fall over the annual Snow Goose hunt at Bosque del Apache, which was due to be conducted after the arrival of the Whooping Cranes. Since Snow Geese and Whoopers have white wings with black tips, although otherwise quite dissimilar, there was concern that Whooping Cranes might be shot down by careless hunters. Hunting of Snow Geese is promoted because the number of geese now wintering at Bosque far outnumber the capacity of the Refuge to feed them. Dick Rigby, Refuge Manager, attended the Council meeting and invited two members to come to the Refuge at 5:30 a.m. Sunday morning to observe the briefing of the goose hunters by Refuge personnel and to watch the precautions taken to insure that no Whooper would be shot on the Refuge.

Craig Andrews and Dave Lange were chosen as observers. Rigby also arranged to meet other interested members at the Refuge at 6:30 a.m. Sunday and led the group to the tower where Whooping Cranes could be seen "by dawn's early light" still standing in the shallow water where they had spent the night. The group then went to a point further north in the Refuge where they could observe the Whoopers and other large birds as they flew north to the cornfields for their morning feeding. During the wait a Golden Eagle made a slow pass over a flock of several hundred sleeping Snow Geese and the whole flock took off at once.

In addition to human hunters and eagles, coyotes were also seen stalking the geese. Whooping Cranes and Sandhills are large enough so that they are not bothered by coyotes or predatory birds, Dick Rigby reported.

FLASH! BUS TRIP TO BOSQUE FILLING FAST!

If you have ever wished you could go to the Bosque del Apache Refuge and just birdwatch in comfort, without having to watch where you were driving, don't say we didn't give you a chance -- but you'll have to hurry.

There are only a few places left on the bus which will leave from the Physics/Astronomy Building parking lot on Saturday, February 12, so if you'd like a seat for this fun trip, better get in touch with Mary Lou Arthur.

Comfort accommodations will be available on the bus, but you will need to bring your own lunch, water or other drink, etc. Also, it would be well to dress in layers so that if a chance offers to get out and look around you won't freeze solid. It can be awfully cold in the wind at the Refuge; after all, the only thing between you and its origin is the barbed wire fence around the Refuge -- and that leaks.

As to the nitty-gritty basics:

- Date: Saturday, February 12
- Departure: From Physics/Astronomy Building of UNM, at Lomas and Yale NE, 7 a.m. They might wait a few minutes, but if you're very late, you may have to chase it all the way down.
- Return: The bus will leave Bosque about 5:00 p.m. and should make it back to Albuquerque by 7:30 if not before.
- Cost of the trip: \$5.00. You can hardly afford to drive your own car for that!
- Reservations: Call Mary Lou Arthur at 256-7359. She can accept reservations right up to Friday night, but the sooner the better.
- Cancellations: MUST be made no later than noon of Thursday, February 10. Otherwise, you may be asked to pay for the trip anyway, because the rate is based on having a complete bus full.

But H - U - R - R - Y and make your reservation or you'll be left behind!



From "The Man Next Door" (Better Homes and Gardens):

There has to be something wrong with a society where a new car lasts three years, but a beer can goes on forever.

U.S. STUDY REPORTS SOLAR ENERGY IS BECOMING A BETTER BUY

In its most comprehensive analysis of the economics of solar energy yet, the U.S. Energy Research and Development Administration reports that "solar heating can now compete economically" with electric heat in at least a dozen major cities across the U.S.

Sun power still has a long way to go before it can provide heat cheaper than oil or natural gas can, ERDA reports, but there is a trend working in two directions to close that gap. A growing new industry has been steadily paring down the costs of solar equipment, and the outlook for conventional fuels is for higher prices. It is the difference between the two that determines whether or not solar energy would save the householder money.



"HOW COME YOU'RE WATCHIN' BIRDS?
IS YOUR TELEVISION SET BUSTED?"

NOMINATIONS REQUESTED

It is time again to consider who shall be the recipient of the Dan and Marian Washburn Award for 1976. This award is intended to honor the public employee -- official or not -- who has, in the opinion of the committee, contributed the most to conservation in New Mexico.

The committee will be meeting shortly to discuss nominations and suggestions are needed. If you have a nominee in mind, please contact either Dan or Marian Washburn at 266-3078 and the name will be submitted to the committee.

The award was given to Dick Rigby, Manager of the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge last year at the annual meeting of the Chapter. This was the first award and it is hoped that each year there will be more nominations.

OFFICERS OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY

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THE AUDUBON CAUSE

To promote the conservation of wild-
 life and the natural environment.
 To educate man regarding his relation-
 ship with, and place within, the
 natural environment as an ecological
 system.

The time was never better; the cause
 was never greater.