

BURROWING OWL



CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY, ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

June-July, 1978

CALENDAR -- JUNE AND JULY

Saturday & Sunday June 3-4 ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGIONAL AUDUBON CONFERENCE in Sierra Vista, Arizona. Audubon President Elvis Stahr to speak. Excellent birding. See April-May "Owl" p. 5 for details.

Wednesday June 7 BOARD MEETING changed to Wednesday. Special guest Dede Armentrout. A "get-acquainted" dinner starts at 6:30 P. M. for old and new board members and their spouses (or friends) at the home of Barbara and Tom Hussey. Bring tableware for your own use. If you can bring a "side-dish" call Barbara Hussey (268-6547). Board meeting starts at 7:30 P. M.

Thursday June 15 REGULAR MEETING of the CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, Copper & Jefferson NE at 7:30 P. M. The "New Heritage Program" will present a slide show and talk on the anthropological history and culture of New Mexico.

Saturday & Sunday June 17-18 FIELD TRIP to Elephant Butte Marsh and Caballo Reservoir. Leaders: Dave Lange (266-4420) and Chuck Hundertmark (266-1031). Meet at 7:15 A. M. at the UNM Physics & Astronomy Bldg., Lomas & Yale NE. Rendezvous at Elephant Butte Power Plant at 10:30 A.M. We will visit Caballo Reservoir Saturday afternoon. Camp at Elephant Butte Marsh (no water available, bring mosquito repellent). Then Sunday birding at the marsh. Do any of our members have a boat we could use for birding close to the rookery?

Saturday June 24 FIELD TRIP to Canyon Media and Capulin Springs in the Sandias. Leader Darwin Miller (265-636) would like us to meet at 7 A.M. at Western Skies, 13400 Central SE. "New" birding area.

Thursday July 6 No BOARD MEETING this month.

Saturday July 8 FIELD TRIP on NM 44 to find the Mountain Plover. Meet at 7 A.M. at Goodwill Industries (formerly Gulfmart) 5000 San Mateo NE. Leader: Ross Teuber (265-8962)

Monday July 10 DEADLINE for submitting copy for the August-Sept. issue of the "Owl" (earlier this time.)

Saturday July 15 FIELD TRIP to Swain's Sueno at La Cueva in the Jemez Mountains. Meet at 9 A.M. at La Cueva parking area on NM-4 just south of the turnoff for Fenton Lake. Again this year Marge and Bob Swain have invited us to their home in the ponderosa pines where there are excellent birding possibilities. Bring lunch. Leader: Mary Alice Root (266-0561)

Thursday July 20 REGULAR MEETING of the CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, Copper & Jefferson NE at 7:30 P.M. Program (tentatively scheduled) will be a film entitled: "Great White Bird"

Saturday July 22 FIELD TRIP to Hyde Park and the Santa Fe Ski Basin. Call Bob Jost (292-3625) after July 8th for time and leader.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

9 birders saw 12 species in Hondo Canyon on April 22nd. A migrating flock of Virginia's Warblers was passing through that morning and a Broad-tailed Hummingbird put on a colorful flight display.

On April 29, 7 people saw approximately 33 species at Priest Canyon in the Manzanos. Some of the species reported included a Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, Rufous-crowned Sparrow and a Bell's Vireo!

On May 20, we had our first Spring Bird Count. It was a success despite the rain with 100 species seen by 25 participants. Afterwards 22 people had dinner together tallying up the birds which included a Whip-poor-will and three Purple Martins.

The mid-week field trip on May 23 turned up a fleeting glimpse of (possibly) a Flammulated Owl and a Whip-poor-will.

Mountain Plover

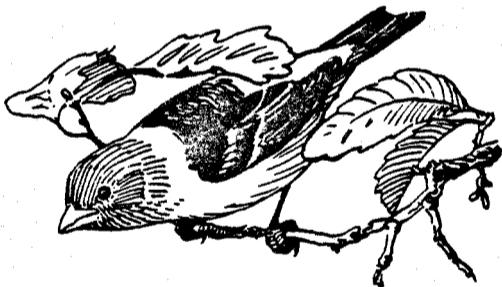


WASHBURN AWARD FOR 1978

Nearly a year ago a new program was started to reduce poaching in New Mexico. This program came about as a result of a study conducted by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, which revealed that poaching is a major problem in New Mexico, with as many as 34,000 deer and 3,000 pronghorn taken each year by poachers. By comparison, legal hunters harvest about 20,000 deer and 2,000 pronghorn yearly.

The program, Operation Game Thief, is modeled after Crime Stoppers, allowing a person who observes a wildlife violation to report it anonymously. A \$250-minimum reward is given for reporting a big-game violation and a \$50 reward for other wildlife violations. In the first eight months of operation, Operation Game Thief calls led to arrests in 46 cases and defendants have been assessed more than \$27,000 in fines and civil damages. Rewards have amounted to \$6,450. Funds for the rewards are from private donations and total more than \$20,000.

The Central New Mexico Audubon Society is pleased and proud to present the Washburn Award for 1978 to Dan Pursley of the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. Mr. Pursley was instrumental in setting up and coordinating Operation Game Thief.

BIRDING WORKSHOP AT CAPE MAY, N.J.

The National Audubon Society has endorsed a birding workshop conducted by three of the continent's top birders, Will Russell, Davis Finch and Rich Stallcup from September 22 to 26 at Cape May, New Jersey... Activities include 5 days of birding in an area noted for its concentration of fall migrants. There will also be evening sessions of informal lectures and discussions illustrated by slides and museum specimens, as well as discussion of optics, field guides, tape recordings, and techniques of attracting birds in the field. Cost will be \$150 from Cape May. Lodging and workshop events are included; food and transportation are not. For more information write: Northeast Birding, Seal Harbor, ME 04675 (207) 276-3963.

EAGLE KILLERS RECEIVE MAXIMUM FINES

Alva Dale Barnes and the South Texas Helicopter Service received maximum fines when sentenced Monday, May 15, 1978 for their roles in killing Golden Eagles and aiding and abetting in the taking of Golden Eagles. Barnes was also assessed a year's imprisonment. His sentence was suspended, with three years' probation. The case was a spin-off from the highly publicized Eagle Killers' trial in San Antonio last December.

Environmentalists were asked to write Judge John Wood, urging stiff sentences and supporting the law protecting Golden Eagles. (Judge Wood had previously remarked that mail on behalf of the other defendants had convinced him that the law needed attention. Fines levied against those defendants were considered by most environmentalists to be disappointingly light.)

Wildlife supporters responded, and the judge stated from the bench that "Again this case has been the subject of a great deal of mail. I am still being inundated!" He stated that many of the letters were not constructive, and amounted to a "vote." He claimed he had read every letter, and stated that he was "not influenced by the weight of the mail, but by the weight of the argument."

Wildlife supporters' arguments must have outweighed those of Barnes' supporters because the judge assessed fines of \$5,000 per count, the maximum fine allowed.

To those who wrote Judge Wood, a hearty Thank You!

--Dede Armentrout, Audubon Regional Representative

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The following poem, in celebration of this joyous season, is humbly submitted for use in your publication.

Spring, Spring, Spring!

The bird is on the wing.

Absurd, Absurd, Absurd!

The wing is on the bird.

--Anonymous
(For obvious reasons)



BOOK REVIEWWINGS IN THE WILDERNESS by

Allan D. Cruickshank. Available from the library of the Central New Mexico Audubon Society.

Reviewed by Craig G. Andrews

Following World War II Allan D. Cruickshank became well-known as a nature photographer. His photographs appeared in all the outstanding Natural History publications such as National Geographic, Audubon Magazine, Nature Magazine, and were included in many issues of U. S. Camera Yearbook.

However, in addition to still photography, he made moving pictures, and was one of the first lecturers on the Audubon Wildlife Film Series. He remained one of the speakers in most demand until his death a few years ago.

The book we have in our library is a collection of one hundred twenty five of his best photographs of birds, and was secured for us by the ever-alert Mary Alice Root, who learned of its availability from a rare-book dealer here in Albuquerque.

Since the photos are all in black and white (more common than color in 1947, when the book was published), much skill was required in the printing and composition of the pictures. And even though the book is quite valuable as a record of the species shown, it is equally interesting and instructive in its demonstration of the art of composition (cropping, I suppose, to a real photographer), and control of contrast and shading in the darkroom.

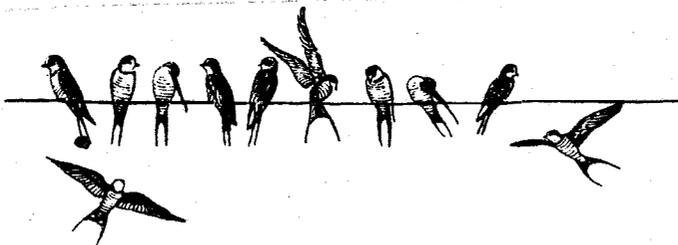
All photos have annotations on camera, film and exposures used.

Cruickshank was, above all, an astute observer of birds. Each photo is accompanied by a short paragraph discussing the picture itself or the bird photographed, and some surprising and even shocking information is brought forth.

From a photographic standpoint, don't miss the landing gannet on page 8; the flying ibis on page 30; the flock of pintails on the water, page 44 (this is a wonderful example of the art of cropping); likewise the lesser scaup on page 47; the beach combers on page 65; and all the shore and sea birds on pages 74, 76, 79, 80 and 88.

For useful information about birds, be sure to read the notes on the Flying Mousetrap, page 98; the origin of the word "Halcyon", page 102; an account of the first known bird-banding conducted in the United States, page 105; an ornithological magican, page 116; and, most distressing, the discussion of the disgraceful behavior of house wrens, page 111. Warning: don't take this book home if there are impressionable children or adults there. This particular note must be rated PG.

For my next book review (if the Editor of the B. O. ever requests another) I will discuss that ornithological masterpiece entitled "I Heard the Owl Call My Name" by Hoot Gibson.

NEW MEMBERS

A special welcome to local members of the National Audubon Society who answered our appeal and have now affiliated with CNMAS.

Dr. T. M. Abel
B. G. Burr
Fred D. Brown
Mrs. Leonard J. Kramer
Mrs. Alden V. Luhrs
Robert R. Lagasse
Mrs. James Ritchie Modrall
Eloise Nokes
Kenneth T. Summers
Frank A. Stoerman
Michele A. Tart
R. H. Thomas.

We are also pleased to welcome four new members of the National Audubon Society who also have become members of CNMAS.

Robert W. Cooper
David Daniel
Anita Denning
Jean Herzegh.

NEWS ITEMS

One of the results of the New Mexico Audubon Council meeting in Santa Fe on April 15, 1978 is the formation of an ad hoc committee of representatives from each Audubon chapter in the state to investigate creating wildlife habitats at bridges on New Mexico's highways.

Gallup bird and wildlife enthusiasts are meeting to organize New Mexico's sixth Audubon chapter. We congratulate Gallup and welcome them as affiliates of National Audubon.

The Central New Mexico Audubon Society is pleased to announce that Ms. Camilla Martinez, first grade teacher at Ranchos Elementary School is the recipient of tuition paid for by our chapter to the Audubon Camp of the West this summer. Congratulations!

**HOW DOES YOUR CONGRESSMAN KNOW HOW YOU
FEEL ABOUT AN ISSUE IF YOU DON'T TELL HIM?**

We have it on the word of our South-West District Representative of National Audubon that our representatives in Congress read -- and heed -- our letters to them. These letters are the only way they have of knowing how we feel on issues before them.

Here are a few tips on giving Pete or Manuel your ideas.

1. **Be brief.** Confine your letter to one subject; state your position in the first paragraph and follow it up with one or two short paragraphs.
2. **Be timely.** Make your opinion known early on; the legislative process is a lengthy one and if your letter trails in just before time for the vote, it won't count for much.
3. **Be courteous.** Threats won't invite friendly consideration.
4. **Be legible.** If you can't type the letter, write it as clearly as you can so he will know what you're talking about.
5. **Sign your name** and include your address, so he can respond. He may have some new information on the issue that you will be glad to have, so give him an opportunity to tell you.

Who are our New Mexico representatives in Congress?

The Hon. Pete Domenici
Senator from New Mexico
Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20510

The Hon. Harrison Schmitt
Senator from New Mexico
Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20510

The Hon. Manuel Lujan, Jr.
1st District, New Mexico
1323 Longworth Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

Congressional staffs do keep a careful tally of letters received on each subject, and Congressmen do pay careful attention to their mail count. Thus it's definitely worthwhile for you to express your opinion; your Congressman wants to know what you think. And if you want to make a difference in what he thinks, a concise, intelligent, well-written letter helps.

--With a little help from
"Family Circle"

THANKS

We have just learned from Steve Young that the Alaska bill has passed in the House by an overwhelming margin of 277-31!

A number of congressmen completely reversed their positions and voted with us. We attributed this to the grassroots lobbying from the chapters.

To each of you who helped with letters, wires, calls or personal visits we say THANK YOU!!!

--Dede Armentrout, Audubon
Regional Representative

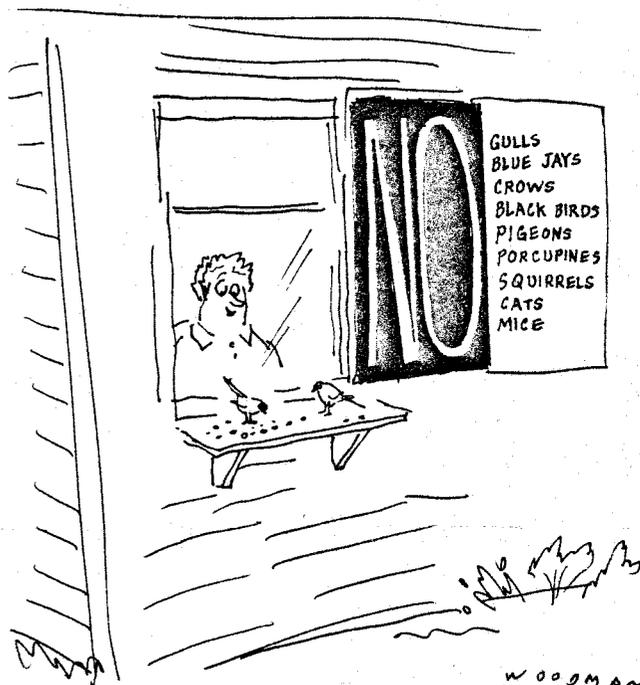
ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

On May 18th, CNMAS held its Sixth Annual Meeting and election of officers (see directory on back page).

Melinda Ebert was chairman of arrangements for the potluck dinner. Many thanks to her and all who helped set up and take down tables and chairs, washed dishes and helped in many ways.

Mayor David Rusk spoke about plans for Albuquerque with respect to the environment touching on subjects such as the bus system and open-space planning.

The Washburn Award for 1978 was presented at the meeting to Dan Pursley of the the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish for his work in setting up Operation Game Thief. (See article: Washburn Award for 1978)



SAVE THAT DRAIN PIPE

A 90-foot piece of iron drain pipe leading to an abandoned bath house in New Mexico is the only home for 2,500 remaining Socorro isopods.

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service has proposed that this relative of the common sowbug be listed as an endangered species because of the link it may provide in the ecological and evolutionary web. This half-inch freshwater crustacean, which eats the algae lining the drain pipes, is one of only two freshwater species in a family that is otherwise entirely ocean-dwelling. Biologists think it may be a key to understanding how this and other landlocked relic animals evolved from ancient marine isopods that lived in the oceans that once covered much of the western U. S. The Socorro isopod adapted to the warm fresh water of a spring, where it lived for millions of years until the spring was capped in 1949. Then it was down the drain pipe for this animal, threatened now by periodic drought and flushing of the pipes.

--Conservation News 3/15/78

CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY

Membership Questionnaire

IMPORTANT: PLEASE COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE AT ONCE AND RETURN IT AT THE JUNE MEETING OR MAIL TO OUR BOX OFFICE BY JULY 1.

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L

Name _____ Phone # _____
 Address _____ Home _____
 City & zip _____ Work _____
 Occupation _____

1. Preference regarding degree of activity with CNMAS (check appropriate items)
 - a. Leave me alone and let me read my AUDUBON magazine in peace!
 - b. I'm already doing as much as I can for CNMAS.
 - c. I'm interested in doing more, but I don't know enough other members.
 - d. I would be delighted, if someone contacted me, to do well-defined tasks.

2. My primary reason for being a member of CNMAS is:
 - a. To obtain AUDUBON magazine
 - b. Participate in field trips
 - c. Attend monthly meetings
 - d. To get involved in conservation
 - e. To meet people with similar interests
 - f. Other _____

3. Do you need transportation to CNMAS meetings or field trips? Yes No

4. Would you like to see more field trips sponsored by CNMAS? Yes No
 Where to: _____

5. Do you enjoy the overnight field trips? Yes No

6. Would you be interested in field trips to more distant places (such as Mexico)? Yes No
 Where to: _____

7. Would you like to see the meeting place changed? Yes No
 Explain if yes _____

8. Have you been satisfied with the monthly meetings recently? Yes No
 If not, why? (check as many as apply)
 - a. Too much environmental education, too little entertainment.
 - b. Too much entertainment, too little environmental education.
 - c. Just plain boring.
 - d. I would like to see more movies and slide shows.
 - e. Not bird-wildlife oriented enough.
 - f. Should discuss more CNMAS activities and business before and after feature.
 - g. Other _____
 - h. Any suggestions for change _____

9. What types of programs would you like for monthly meetings?
 - a. Geology
 - b. Energy
 - c. Bird study
 - d. Wildlife films
 - e. Wilderness and National Parks
 - f. Travelogs
 - g. Other _____

10. How much of the BURROWING OWL do you read?

0% 25% 50% 75% 100%

Would you read the OWL more if it . . .

- a. Were shorter
- b. Were longer
- c. Had more information about local birds
- d. Had more information about CNMAS activities
- e. Had more Nationwide environmental news
- f. Came out more often
- g. Other _____

11. Should a summary of the board meeting and a treasurer's report be included in the OWL? Yes No

12. Would you be willing to make occasional contributions to the OWL in the form of...

- a. Book reviews
- b. Bird/wildlife related articles
- c. Conservation articles
- d. Other _____

13. In what ways would you like to help with Albuquerque's new nature center (Rio Grande Nature Center and Wildlife Preserve)?

- a. Planning facilities & trails
- b. Setting up exhibits
- c. Being a docent volunteer
- d. Work at reception desk
- e. Other _____

14. I would be willing to help with:

- a. Refreshments (one month)
- b. Folding and mailing the BURROWING OWL
- c. State fair exhibit

15. Please number, in order of preference, the committee on which you would like to serve.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Social | <input type="checkbox"/> Burrowing Owl |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program | <input type="checkbox"/> Nominating | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife film |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity | <input type="checkbox"/> Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Field Trip | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | |

16. Would you be willing to serve as a representative to:

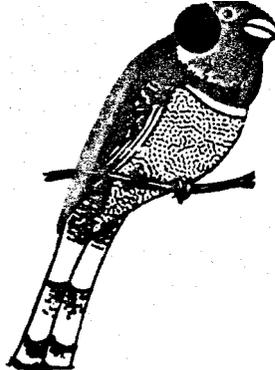
- New Mexico Conservation Coordinating Council? Yes No
- New Mexico Audubon Council? Yes No

17. Comments _____

Please fold the questionnaire so that the chapter address is on the outside, staple, stamp and mail. Thank you.

Place Stamp Here

Central New Mexico Audubon Society
P. O. Box 30002
Albuquerque, NM 87190



A TROGON ETHOS

by Richard Taylor, March 12, 1978

Soon now Elegant Trogons (also known as Coppery-tailed Trogon - Ed.) will be arriving on their breeding grounds in the borderlands of South-east Arizona. Canyons such as South Fork in the Chiricahua Mountains, Garden in the Huachuca Mountains, and Madera in the Santa Rita Mountains will draw many birders making their annual pilgrimage to see these crimson red and tropical green visitors from Mexico. While the primary goal of some will be another species--Painted Redstart, Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, or even the Eared Trogon--at least 25,000 birdwatchers in 1978 will be hoping to glimpse the resplendent plumage of Trogon elegans.

All of this attention will be focused on approximately 50 birds, assuming that the 1977 population remains stable. A dozen individuals, those that are most accessible, will have to support almost the full weight of this human landslide. We have only to consider that the Arizona Game and Fish Department authorizes just 15,000 permits for a herd of 25,000 or more deer occupying a range twice the size of the trogon's to realize the colossal pressure to which Elegant Trogons are subjected. Few other populations of wildlife in the world command such disproportionate numbers of field observers.

None of us wants to be responsible for the failure of a trogon nest. To insure we aren't I would like to propose the following rules of conduct based on the biology of the species.

1. Do not use tape recorders or other sound devices to attract trogons.

It is completely unnecessary. From early May to mid-July the voice of the Elegant Trogon is the single most conspicuous bird call in the canyons they choose to inhabit. Because dense vegetation characterizes their habitat trogons rely on antiphonal cries, duetting, to attract a mate, to establish territories, to maintain the pair bond. Males share incubation and feeding duties with the female. Virtually every component of trogon breeding ecology is dependent on their vocalizations, and any auditory disruption undermines the chances for a self-regenerating U. S. population.

2. Always use a blind to photograph a nest. More nest failures can be directly attributed to thoughtless photographers than any other cause. As insectivores which take their prey on the wing, trogons are equipped with very sharp eyes. They show extreme

reluctance to adopt nests known to human observers. Once committed to a clutch either adult may refuse its turn at incubation if people are present; later on nestlings may be abandoned if the visual disturbance is prolonged beyond their tolerance.

3. Never clip screening vegetation or break limbs that interfere with a clear view of the nest cavity. An acceptable nest must have a nearby bare branch for a perch.

4. Never rap, scratch, or tap known or suspected trogon nest trees. This is an effective technique for causing nests to be abandoned. Although there is variation between pairs, trogons are typically upset by any activity within 75 feet of their home.

5. Leave the area anytime trogons sound their alarm call, a W-k-k-k-k which begins shrilly and trails into a series of clucks. Male trogons have a reputation in some quarters as curious birds: during the fore-summer especially they tend to investigate anyone that intrudes on their territories. Bisyllabic challenges--Koa's and Koink's--often accompany these confrontations. But when either sex utters the alarm the birds are extremely disturbed. You have encroached on the nest zone, or fledglings are hidden nearby. Back off. If you wait patiently at a respectable distance you may be rewarded with memorable views of trogon domestic life.

6. Walk quietly when visiting trogon haunts. Don't drive. I've seen courtship stopped cold by eager birders who sped past trogons in sound-proof automobiles. Most of the major canyons of the border mountain ranges are penetrated by roads up to the 6,000 foot level, originally engineered as tracks for miners and fuelwood cutters. If the canyon gradient was mild enough to permit the passage of primitive machinery, it also traps sufficient nutrients and sub-surface water in most cases to foster the growth of big sycamores and pine trees. Here--not road's end--is where the birds are. The Nature Conservancy has wisely set the example by asking birders to walk in Ramsey Canyon.

It is time for birdwatchers to exercise self-restraint. Consider the life history of this species. Show your appreciation for the Elegant Trogon's future in the United States, and for the future esthetic pleasure of naturalists who follow, by giving the trogon living room.

ACTION ALERT

THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT IS ENDANGERED. The conservation community vigorously opposes efforts by the U. S. Senate to weaken the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Protection of rare and endangered species is a major objective not only of conservationists, but of all Americans concerned with the health and beauty of our natural heritage. Preserving species from extinction maintains unique natural systems and protects an irreplaceable stock of biological knowledge and biochemical ingredients potentially vital to future technologies. Pharmacological researchers, for example, regularly scour remote spots for new natural sources for medicines.

Recently, public policy has moved strongly in the direction of protecting threatened and endangered species from destruction. The precarious efforts of the Fish and Wildlife Service to preserve a few dozen whooping cranes have been closely watched by millions of grownups and schoolchildren. Protection of whales, porpoises, and other threatened marine mammals is a matter of national pride, enforced by strict federal law and

international agreements.

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (the portion that Congress may weaken) requires federal agencies to "insure that actions authorized, funded or carried out by them do not jeopardize the continued existence of such endangered species...or result in the destruction or modification of habitat of such species..."

The Act is up for a 3-year re-authorization this year. That means that Congress must vote to allow funding for the entire Federal Endangered Species program. Those who want to weaken the Act know that this is the time and place to make their attack, and unless we tell them otherwise they may be successful!

WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS, YOUR SENATORS WILL BE VOTING ON WHETHER OR NOT TO TAKE THE HEART OUT OF THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT. WRITE, CALL, OR SEND A TELEGRAM TODAY AND TELL HIM TO VOTE AGAINST ALL WEAKENING AMENDMENTS TO THIS LANDMARK LEGISLATION.

TELL YOUR SENATORS AND PRESIDENT CARTER THAT YOU CARE ABOUT ALL ENDANGERED SPECIES. (Addresses on page 4)

--Ann Graham, Audubon
Washington Office

CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

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