

# BURROWING OWL



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

Dec. 1978-Jan. 1979

## CALENDAR -- DECEMBER & JANUARY

- Saturday Dec. 2** FIELD TRIP by bus to Bosque del Apache NWR. Cost: \$7.00 per person. Reservations must be in by noon, Dec. 1st. Call Mary Lou Arthur at 256-7359. Bus leaves at 12 noon from UNM Physics Bldg., Lomas and Yale, NE. Returns at 8 P.M. Bring supper, binoculars and warm clothes.
- Thursday Dec. 7** BOARD MEETING, 7:30 P.M. at the home of Dave Lange, 1800-B Vassar NE, 266-4420
- Saturday Dec. 16** SANDIA MOUNTAINS CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT. Meet at 6:30 A.M. at San Antonito School on NM 14 just north of the turn-off to Sandia Crest. \$1.50 participation fee. Leader: Ross Teuber - 265-8962. See article page .
- Thursday Dec. 21** REGULAR MEETING of the CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY, 7:30 P.M. at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, Copper & Jefferson, NE. A representative from the New Mexico Game and Fish Department will talk about their non-game program and legislative action coming up next year.
- Saturday Dec. 23** ALBUQUERQUE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT. Meet at 7 A.M. at Corrales Center (intersection of NM 46, NM 448 and NM 528). \$1.50 participation fee. Leader: Jim Karo (204-2777). More information on page .
- Saturday Dec. 30** BOSQUE DEL APACHE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT. Meet at refuge headquarters at 7 A.M. \$1.50 participation fee. Leader: Chuck Hundertmark (266-9402). More information on page .
- Wednesday Jan. 3** AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILM, 7:30 P.M. at UNM Popejoy Hall. Robert Davison presents, "Adventures of a Wildlife Photographer." See how a wildlife film is made in this "behind the scenes" look at nature photography where some of the most interesting wildlife episodes take place at the least expected times.
- Thursday Jan. 4** BOARD MEETING, 6:15 P.M. at the home of Dot DeLollis, 3600 Piermont Dr., NE (299-5384). This will be a "pot luck" dinner for Christmas Count participants and board members. Please bring a generous amount of your favorite recipe to share while we talk over the results of our three Christmas Counts. Beverages provided.

**Thurs.-Sat. Jan. 11-13** WHOOPING CRANE CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION Annual Meeting to be held in Rockport, Texas. Field trips include a cruise aboard the vessel, "Whooping Crane" to Aransas NWR to view the cranes. For more information call Ross Teuber (265-8962).

**Sunday Jan. 14** MUSEUM OF ALBUQUERQUE BUS TRIP to Bosque del Apache NWR. Leaves at 12 noon, returns at 8 PM. Cost \$15.00 includes box supper. Call Museum of Albuquerque for further information. (766-7878).

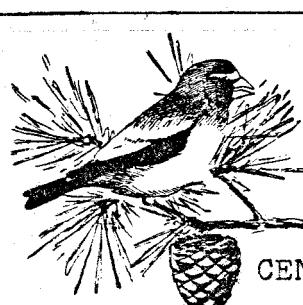
**Thursday Jan. 18** REGULAR MEETING of the CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY, 7:30 P.M. at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, Copper & Jefferson, NE. George Morrison of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will present "Swamp & Sand," a comparison of the Florida Everglades with New Mexico's White Sands National Monument.

**Thursday Jan. 18** DEADLINE for submitting copy for the February-March 1979 issue of the Burrowing Owl. Send to the editor, Barbara Hussey, 2068-B Mercury Dr. SE, 87118, phone 268-6547.

**Saturday Jan. 20** FIELD TRIP -- Eagle Count Destination, meeting place and leader are yet to be determined. If interested in leading or counting call Bob Jost at 292-3625.

**Saturday Jan. 27** FIELD TRIP to two state wildlife refuges -- La Joya and Bernardo. Meet at 7 A.M. at the UNM Physics & Astronomy Bldg., Lomas & Yale, NE. Call leader Bob Jost by Thursday, Jan. 25 if you plan to go. Wintering waterfowl should be abundant.

**Thursday Feb. 1** BOARD MEETING, 7:30 P.M. at the home of Barbara Hussey, 2068-B Mercury Dr., SE, phone 268-6547.



SEASON'S GREETINGS

from  
CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON

December 1978-January 1979

# CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

## YOUR CHANCE TO HELP COLLECT ORNITHOLOGICAL DATA

For the past 78 years birders have gathered each Christmas season to conduct counts all over North and Central America. Last year 1247 counts took place and 30,663 observers participated. 120,912,723 birds were counted.

CNMAS conducts three counts each year. This year the Sandia Mountains CBC will be on December 16, the Albuquerque CBC on December 23, and the Bosque del Apache CBC on December 30. (See calendar for meeting times and places.) Unlike our regular field trips there will be a small charge (\$1.50) for participation. This fee helps defray the costs of publishing the results. It involves nearly 40 editors, 1300 compilers, and thousands of pages of manuscript taking more than six months to complete. the final product is a 500 page publication -- the July issue of American Birds. (Subscriptions to this bi-monthly journal are \$10.00 per year from American Birds, 950 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022).

We need as many observers as will volunteer for this vital work. It is a service you can contribute to Audubon, while enjoying fellowship with other birders. You do not need to be an expert. More eyes see more birds: other members of the group can make identifications. Show up at the designated time and place dressed for cold weather carrying binoculars, lunch and \$1.50 registration.

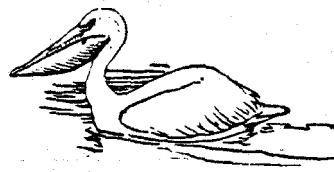
The count areas are circles, generally in a  $7\frac{1}{2}$  mile radius of the meeting point. If you live within a count area and maintain a bird feeder in your yard which you could watch during the count day, please notify the count leader to get instructions.

If you will be out of town during our counts, consider participating in a count where you spend the holidays. Call Barbara Hussey (268-6547) for information on out of town counts.

Let's try for a great turn out this year! More information from the count leaders listed in the calendar.

### ANNOUNCEMENT FOR ALL FIELD TRIP GOERS

On October 7 there was such a poor turn out for the field trip to Black Rock Reservoir that the trip had to be cancelled. (See FIELD TRIP REPORTS, this page). To avoid such circumstances again, the field trip committee has requested that all persons wishing to attend a CNMAS field trip, call the field trip leader at least 36 hours before the trip begins. If there is insufficient interest, the trip may be cancelled.



### FIELD TRIP REPORTS

On September 30th, 7 birders saw approximately 53 species including American bittern and olivaceus cormorant on the field trip to Bosque del Apache.

The field trip on October 7th to Black Rock Reservoir and the Zuni Reservation was cancelled due to lack of participation. (See announcement this page). However, two of our members turned in a report as they arrived the night before. Since they were new to the sport of birding, they were sure of the identity of only a few birds. They saw a pelican, a "very tame" titmouse and heard coyotes howling at night. Their report on the area suggests that we may have missed an interesting trip to a little visited part of New Mexico. They reported "fabulous scenery" and recommended the Zuni Reservation campground as excellent - on a par with national campground chains.

The field trip on October 28th proved successful. Fifteen people found 32 bird species at Bosque del Apache including one whooping crane. Also seen were coyote and mule deer.

On November 4th and 5th about 15 people from our chapter attended the trip to Farmington. Saturday, they had a very informative tour of PNM's San Juan Generating Station including a slide show, a buffet lunch at the plant and a bus tour of the grounds in about 18 inches of mud! Later in the afternoon several birders managed to find a few species along the Animas River near the motel where the group stayed. Black-billed magpies were predominant; others spotted include belted kingfisher and a dowitcher. Mule deer were also seen. That evening the group gathered for a lovely buffet dinner at the motel before a meeting with the members of the New Mexico Association for Environmental Education who also attended the tour. Environmental education techniques were covered in a round-table discussion. Sunday morning, Sterling Groves (speaker at our April meeting) guided the tour Utah International, Inc. conducted at its Navajo strip mine. The group saw the huge dragline ("as large as a hotel") and posed for photos in the giant scoop. They were shown how restoration of the land is taking place -- the gathering of native plant seeds and fencing off of plots for 5 years. All participants reporting enjoyed the trip!

On Thanksgiving morning 8 people birded among beautiful ice-covered trees on the field trip to Sandia Crest. Approximately 15 species were found including numerous pine grosbeaks.

HOPE FOR KIRTLAND'S WARBLER

It is presently thought that Kirtland's warblers nest only in a restricted area of Michigan's Lower Peninsula and that only some 200 nesting pairs remain. But there are sandy areas of bushy jack pine growth from 8 to 15 feet tall in central Wisconsin that duplicate quite well the nesting needs of the bird.

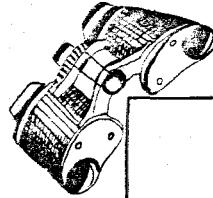
Fire is an important factor in creating a Kirtland's warbler nesting area. From the time of the hunting fires set early-on by Indians in Michigan to the fires set today by the Michigan forest service in behalf of the Kirtland's warbler, the resulting surge of jack pine growth has favored the nesting needs of the bird.

A series of forest fires that has occurred in Juneau County, Wisconsin over the last several years has given rise to a similar resurgence of jack pine growth. Thus there is a real hope for finding nesting Kirtland's warblers in Juneau County, and this accounts in part for the strong motivation of the crew engaged in the search there.

Although the bird is seldom seen in its migration passage to and from the Bahamas, a sighting of Kirtland's warblers in the Madison, Wisconsin area during a recent migration has lent further credence to the possibility that these little warblers nest somewhere in the state.

In response to this possibility the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has initiated a Kirtland's warbler search.

So far no definite sightings have been made. It will take identifications by several qualified observers to give firm foundation to such an ornithological coup. If a bona fide Kirtland's warbler is ever found, there will be federal funds available to protect the habitat.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Many projects have come along in the past few months and along with our chapter's on-going projects, help is needed. Briefly some of the projects are:

1. Bottle bill - plans are afoot to introduce a bill in the upcoming legislative session which would require a deposit on all soft drink and beer bottles and cans, similar to what is now done in Oregon and Vermont and six other states.
2. Nature Center docent corps - early next spring the training of docents for the Rio Grande Nature Center is expected to begin. If you are interested but did not fill out the questionnaire last June please contact me.
3. Our chapter will be hosting the 1980 Southwest Regional meeting of the National Audubon Society. The site for the conference should be selected by next spring and planning started for field trips and other local arrangements.
4. Bluebird trail - for several years we have talked about establishing a bluebird trail possibly on the east side of the Sandia's or Manzano's.
5. Representatives are needed to serve on two committees set up by the New Mexico Audubon Council. The first is a committee to promote better understanding between ranchers and environmentalists. The second is to work on wildlife habitat improvement around bridges.
6. Many of our standing committees need additional help, in particular, the conservation and nominating committees, both of which need chairpersons.

If you would like to help with any of these projects or help with any of our other projects, please give me a call at 266-4420 for more information. And finally don't forget the Christmas Bird Counts.

Seasons greetings,  
Dave Lange

1979 AUDUBON FAMILY ECOLOGY RANCH

National Audubon has announced its Family Ecology Ranch will be held at the T Cross Ranch located in the heart of Wyoming's Absaroka Mountains close to Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks.

There will be three sessions (I July 29-August 4; II August 5-August 11; III August 14-August 26). Prices range from \$250 to \$450 per person.

The program is designed to provide an integrated learning experience of the natural world for families. Emphasis is on nature awareness using a "hands on" discovery approach. Programs are for both adults and children (day care available). Lodging will be in comfortable log cabins with fireplaces & modern plumbing. For more information call Barbara Hussey, 268-6547.

**Robert Davison**

"Adventures of a  
Wildlife Photographer"

Have you ever wondered how they film some of those fantastic nature scenes you have admired on television, or at an Audubon Wildlife Film? Now you have a chance -- the next Audubon Wildlife Film will be an expose by Bob Davison, of Salt Lake City, on his methods of making wildlife movies (he's been making them for twenty years). We will learn of some of his great successes, mistakes, and accidents, happy or otherwise. He's the guy who traveled around the country on a lecture tour with a live bear sitting beside him in his pickup truck. And who showed up at Popejoy Hall a few years ago accompanied by a live bobcat.

**Audubon Wildlife Film**

7:30 P.M.  
Popejoy Hall  
Wednesday  
January 3, 1979

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BOOK REVIEWWild Heritage by Sally Carrigher

Wild Heritage looks at nature through the eyes of a person who obviously loves and knows it. Aspects of nature described include all types of animal parenting, most interesting sexual activities, aggressiveness in animals, and their creativity expressed by play. The organisms represented range from bacteria to whales. The reader can't help but suspect that people aren't really all that unique.

Take the sea otter for example. The baby can't swim so the mother actually holds it while it floats, then lets go, just as we do with new swimmers. The young otter cries in frustration when mother expects it to come a few feet toward her, a reaction adult humans see with their own small children.

Perhaps even more curious is the mating behavior of the porcupine. These animals indicate the presence of strong sex drives weeks before mating occurs, sometimes pressing a stick against themselves to relieve this hunger. The author explains that porcupine females are receptive to the male only three to five hours during the entire year. While it may seem a bit unusual to us, such sensitivity insures that the offspring will have been conceived at the optimum moment, thus preventing defective babies. This is something species that copulate anytime have

sacrificed, we are told.

The book winds up with lots of evidence that animals are not intentionally mean and that they do things sometimes just for the fun of it, like we do.

I found Wild Heritage believable and informative, with only a few problems. Her first chapter tries to prove that animals and people are not so different. It wasn't necessary; the enthusiasm of the rest of the book convinces much better. This same section got dull when she defined too many words, one twice. Another problem is that the book was published in 1965 and since then two species of apes have learned to speak in the language of the deaf. This strengthens the book in its believability but weakens it in surprise.

The only other criticism I have is her stereotype of the human sexes in the now obsolete little girl and little boy roles. None of these are deep criticisms. I enjoyed the book.

Author: Sally Carrigher, graduated from Wellsley College in 1922, lived in Cleveland, Ohio, lived in Alaska and wrote about Alaska, published six other books, the first in 1944, recipient of two Guggenheim Fellowships.

- Sarah F. Hunter

Editor's Note: Wild Heritage is available at the monthly meetings from the CNMAS library.

AUDUBON NATIONAL CONVENTION

The National Audubon Society will hold its biennial National Convention June 29 through July 1, 1979 in Colorado. The outstanding conference facilities of the YMCA of the Rockies, near Estes Park, will be used again as they were in 1977. Key environmental issues will be addressed, and special sessions for chapter officers and official delegates are being planned. In addition, there will be art shows, a special Audubon book and gift store, and exhibits open throughout the conference. Pre-and post-convention field trips will be available.

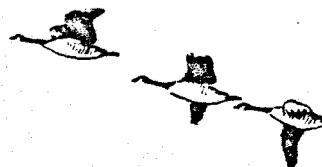
National Audubon has chosen the dates with the thought that many members travelling far might want to combine their convention plans with a family vacation in the Rockies. Also, the weather and scenery and birding should be superb at that time. Although at this early date the detailed plans are in preliminary stages, full information and registration forms will be available in January.

ERRATUM

In the field trip reports on page 2 of the October-November 1978 issue of the Burrowing Owl it was reported that a "white-tailed swift" was seen. It was of course a white-throated swift.

ALASKA SAVED -- FOR A WHILE

On November 16, 1978, Secretary of the Interior Cecil Andrus closed 110 million acres of federal land in Alaska to commercial development for the next three years. Alaska is safe for a while until the new congress can pass the Alaska Lands bill next year. Dede Armentrout, Audubon Southwest Rep. extends thanks to those who wrote Andrus. If you'd like to thank him, write: The Honorable Cecil Andrus, Secretary of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.



ROSS'S RAVIN'S

Hi folks! By the time you read this the 1978 fall migration will be pretty much a thing of the past, and it will be time to get on with other things, such as taking care of our hardier avian friends, who elect to spend the winter with us. Some of the interesting things observed during the latter part of the migration include several white-faced ibis over Shady Lakes and at Bernardo, and a flock of about a hundred at Bosque del Apache on September 23. A single black-bellied plover and five olive-colored cormorants were seen at Bosque on September 13, and two northern phalaropes were seen and photographed there in the front display ponds on September 23. On the same date Dave Lange saw an osprey, vermillion flycatchers and possibly a western grebe. Some highlights of the September 30 field trip were an American bittern, vermillion flycatcher and a small flock of white-faced ibis. A pair of white-fronted geese were seen and photographed near the south end of the tour route at Bosque on October 15. Most unusual was an eastern bluejay reported at Los Lunas on October 5. By now, all of you know of the arrival of the first whooping crane, Ida, who returned to Bosque on October 10. The second, a chick of this year's hatch, arrived there on November 9. There were chestnut-collared longspurs on the West Mesa on October 16, hopefully they will be there again for Jim Karo's CBC crew on December 23. Quite unusual was a pair of Bonaparte's gulls at the Bosque on November 8, as well as three late avocets. Some of you surely saw some other interesting things during that period. How about giving me a call at 265-8962 and letting me know what you are seeing so we can share it with the rest of the group? This writer was elated to find 4 new life birds, one endangered species, on a recent trip to California's central valley; also added 76 species to my California list. If you're interested in some ear-bending, see me and we'll swap lies.

Don't forget when and if you start to feed the winter birds, that they become dependent upon the supplemental feeding, and once started, it should be kept up on a regular basis -- not only on stormy days and skipped on days you plan to be away. Most birds are rather selective in their feeding -- specific feeds attract specific birds. Some are picky about where they feed; juncos and towhees are ground feeders, woodpeckers, nuthatches and creepers prefer tree trunks and branches, but some birds like sparrows, starlings and jays will eat most anything wherever they can find it. You can attract woodpeckers, nuthatches, titmice, and chickadees with suet and nut meats, finches and grosbeaks with sunflower seeds, goldfinches and sis-

kins with thistle seed, etc. Don't forget some species like fruit -- apples, raisins, berries, crab-apples -- appeal to cedar and bohemian waxwings, bluebirds and robins. Some of the scratch feeds sold at feed stores, supplemented with some additional sunflower seeds attract as many birds as more expensive wildbird mixes sold in supermarkets and drug stores. Purina makes a good one, handled by some local dealers. You might even try mixing your own. Some scratch runs heavy to corn, especially uncracked corn, which doesn't seem to appeal to anything but chickens, pigeons and sometimes jays. Actually separate offerings of different kinds of seeds offered at separate locations or feeders, properly located for height, protection, and attractiveness will result in attracting more of the less usual birds. Things like thistle seed, peanut hearts, and shelled sunflower seed can be purchased, but are quite expensive.

One of my favorite bird feeds is a mixture of equal parts of beef suet, peanut butter, corn syrup and mixed bird seed. The suet renders out better and easier if you put it through a coarse food grinder first, and melt it slowly over a low flame. The remaining cracklings can be incorporated into the mixture -- the birds really like them! I wait until the suet starts to congeal, then add the other ingredients. This mixture can be packed into large holes bored into a 14"-16" chunk of limb wood about 4"-6" in diameter. Put a screw-eye into one end of the chunk and tie it up to a low branch. Another method is to thread a double loop of twine through the bottom of a 5 oz. paper cup, and leave it long enough to extend 8"-10" above the rim. Pack the suet mixture into the cup, and after it hardens, peel all but the bottom of the cup off, and tie it to a twig.

Remember, water is just as important if not more important than seed for birds in the winter. If you've ever run out of water and tried to melt enough snow for domestic use, you know it takes a lot of snow to provide a drink, even for a bird! Many times in Albuquerque we don't have even any snow. So fill your water containers as often as you do your feeders. Freezing weather presents a challenge, but it does not lessen the birds' need for water. There are a number of ways to meet this challenge. If you are affluent, or lazy, electric bird-bath heaters, and waterers are available from several sources at a cost of about \$22 and up. (See pages 145 and 148 in the November Audubon Magazine.) Or if you are clever with your hands you can build your own heated waterer using electric heat tape, extension cords and light bulbs as a heat source, and sheet metal, sheet aluminum or aluminum foil, wood (continued on page 6)

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ROSS'S RAVIN'S (continued from p. 5)

and asbestos heat duct insulation. I find a nine inch pie pan with a rock in the center works quite well. First thing in the morning and several times during the day pour sufficient hot water into the pan to melt the ice or dump the ice out and start over with tepid water. The frequency depends on how cold the day is. The sight of all the birds flocking in to drink when the water is provided is well worth the effort it takes to keep it available. It doesn't take the birds long to learn your schedule, and they are there to use the water as soon as you get out of the way.

Don't forget the Christmas Bird Counts the last three Saturdays in December. Your physical participation in counting is needed to help inventory the birds, and your \$1.50 participation fee is essential if the counts are to be published. Because of the cost of putting out the 500 page CBC edition of American Birds leaders cannot permit unpaid participation, even if you "only drive" or watch a feeder. See Jim Karo, Chuck Hundertmark or me for further details.

That's it for this time. See you on the Sandia Mountains Christmas Count. Let me know what you are seeing, when, and where. More next time.

- Ross L. Teuber

ADDRESSES

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D. C. 20500

The Hon. Manuel Lujan, Jr.  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D. C. 20515

The Honorable Pete V. Domenici  
United States Senate  
Washington, D. C. 20515

The Hon. Harrison H. Schmitt  
United States Senate  
Washington, D. C. 20515

MISSING OWLS?

For missed copies call Dot DeLollis, 222-5384, or Barbara Hussey, 268-6547.

NMAC ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

Attendance was somewhat low for the New Mexico Audubon Council meeting held at the UNM Biology Building here on October 21-22.

Business meetings were held on Saturday morning. A discussion on water rights for wildlife was the subject of Saturday afternoon's workshop.

The field trips were poorly attended by birders as well as the birds due to fairly heavy rains.

The evening buffet dinner held at the Trade Winds Motor Hotel was highlighted by a presentation by Dr. John Wiens, professor of biology at UNM and editor of The Auk. During his talk and slide program, he compared professional ornithological data gathering with amateur techniques in desert areas of Oregon.

The next meeting of NMAC will be held in Roswell in the spring.

NMAC NEW SLATE OF OFFICERS

President: Betty Harrington, Sangre de Cristo Chapter

Vice President: Walton Hawk, Sangre de Cristo Chapter

Treasurer: James Karo, Central New Mexico Chapter

Secretary: Harold W. Hallett, South-eastern N. M. Chapter

CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

President	Dave Lange, 1800B Vassar NE 87106 (off. 277-3842) home 266-4420
Vice Pres/Field Trip/NMAC	Robert Jost, 812 Eastridge NE 87123 292-3625
Treasurer	Alice Andrews, 3416 Sierra Dr. NE 87108 881-9387
Recording Secretary	Karen Peterson, 12016 Indian School NE Apt 3, 87112 296-6262
Corresponding Secretary	Chuck & Alana Gallagher, 415 San Pablo, NE 87108 255-7718
Program/Publicity Chmn.	Maurice Mackey, 4812 Goodrich NE 87110 881-6019
Audubon Wildlife Film Chmn.	Craig Andrews, 3416 Sierra Dr. NE 87108 881-9387
Conservation Chairman	Tom Hussey, 2068-B Mercury Dr. SE 87118 268-6547
Education Committee Chmn.	Mary Lou Arthur, 728 Monroe Dr. NE 87110 256-7355
Histrion	Celia Mizez, 204 Madison Dr. NE, Apt B, 87108 268-0376
Librarian	Marilyn Jacobsen, 10414 Towner NE 87112 296-9159
Editor, "Burrowing Owl"	Barbara Hussey, 2068-B Mercury Dr. SE 87118 268-6547
Director/Membership Chmn.	Dot DeLollis, 3600 Piermont Dr. NE 87111 299-5384
Director/NMAC Rep.	Jim Karo, 1621 Cedar Ridge Dr. NE 87112 294-2777
Director	Jacque Hohlfelder, 13009 Blackstone NE 87111 296-8197
Director	Helen Riddell, 3010 Gen. Stillwell NE 87111 294-6096
NM Conservation Coordinating Council Rep.	Steve Smersh, 9324 Arville Av. NE 293-6543

RARE BIRD ALERT - report sightings to: 898-2568 or 268-6547

CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY  
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