

BURROWING OWL

CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY

APRIL - MAY 1988

WELCOME!

The Central New Mexico Audubon Society meets on the third Thursday of each month, 7:30 p.m., St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, 211 Jefferson NE (corner of Copper and Jefferson, NE). Nonmembers are welcome at all meetings, fieldtrips, and special events.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

BY DR. CELESTYN BROZEK

BIRDS OF THE RIO GRANDE ZOO

—Monday, April 11th

Join us for another of our special day programs! Meet at the entrance gate of the Rio Grande Zoo, under the pyramid, at 1:30 pm for a guided tour and talk by Bill Aragon, Curator of Birds. Mr. Aragon will bring us up-to-date on the zoo's breeding program for endangered wildlife, and on future plans, including a pond for migratory waterfowl. This meeting will also be an opportunity to see the birds of the rain forest habitat exhibit, and the new condor and pheasant exhibits. Everyone will be charged the special group rate of \$2.00 per person.



take us on an exciting birding trip in Australia!

Interested members and guests are invited to meet for dinner before the April meeting. Jim Karo, who presented the wonderful slides of birds at the March Meeting, has agreed to join us and provide tips on equipment and techniques to use in taking wildlife photos. This pre-meeting dinner will also give you a chance to visit with other birders. Meet at 6:00 pm at the Town House Lounge & Restaurant located at 3911 Central NE (NW corner of Morningside & Central). The menu features fish, burgers, steaks, and their specialty, Greek foods. Parking is behind the restaurant, between Copper and Central. It's then only a short 4-5 blocks east on Copper to St. Timothy's for the evening meeting.

Annual Meeting

—Thursday, May 19th

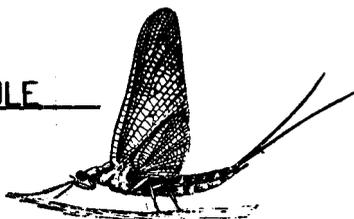
Come join CNMAS for our annual meeting, election of officers, and presentation of the Washburn Award.

Dauna, originally from the east coast, started the art five years ago. Their painstakingly created pieces have been exhibited in many juried and prestigious shows, including World Championship Carving Exhibition, Eastern Waterfowl Festival, and the National Wildlife Show.

FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

SHADY LAKES

—Sunday, April 10th



This year we're going to beat the fishermen to Shady Lakes! Meet at 8:30 am, near the gate to Shady Lakes. Take I25 north to the Tramway exit (exit #234), then turn left under I25 and follow the road west to the "Y". Take Hwy 85 north (right) approximately 1/2 mile. Look for the Shady Lakes sign on the left side of the road.

Joanne Phillips, our hostess, reports that a Great Horned Owl is nesting and the chicks may have hatched. We can also expect to see shore birds and ducks, as well as any early migrants (depending on the weather). This area is always a favorite birding area and the walking is easy! For more information, call Joanne at 898-2568 or 898-8531.

DEL AGUA CANYON

—Saturday, May 14th



An all-day trip with Hart Schwarz to del Agua Canyon in the Sandias, via the Piedra Lisa Trail. We will begin in the foothills with black-chinned sparrows and Scotts orioles, and end up in

BEGINNING BIRDERS' TRIPS

There's still some room on the trips currently being scheduled for beginning birders by Joanne Phillips and Mary Lou Arthur. If you'd like to participate in these week-day trips, call Joanne at 898-2568/8531 or Mary Lou at 256-7359.



ON-YOUR-OWN FIELDTRIPS

FT. HUACHUCA, ARIZONA

Like to see a Spotted Owl or a Buff-Breasted Fly Catcher? If so, call (before 9:00 pm) or write Robert T. Smith ("Smitty"), P.O. Box 771, Ft. Huachuca, AZ 85613, (602)458-7660. Not only is Smitty fond of birds, he also enjoys taking people he doesn't know into Scheelite and Sawmill Canyons to see some of the rare birds of the southeastern Arizona area. Both canyons are located on Ft. Huachuca, which is an army base outside Sierra Vista, Arizona. Smitty, who is retired from the military, has access to the base. Although he might be willing to take you up on an offer of lunch, Smitty will accept no pay for being your guide. However, you can make a donation to The Nature Conservancy in his name.

Other areas that could be visited on this trip include Madera Canyon near Tucson, the ponds at Wilcox where waders and shorebirds can be seen, and Ramsey Canyon, located about 20-30 minutes from Sierra Vista. There's a Motel 6 and other motels in Sierra Vista, or if you're retired military, you may want to use the campground on Ft. Huachuca, which has full hook-ups. A number of CNMAS members have made this trip and

FIFTH ANNUAL "BIG BIRD BASH"**—Friday—Saturday, May 6-7th**

This springtime event offers the opportunity to concentrate on birds by participating in the Spring Bird Count in an area of New Mexico known for some species that occur nowhere else in the state. Sponsored by the Southwestern New Mexico Audubon Society and the New Mexico Audubon Council, the Saturday count will be held in the Silver City environs and will be followed by dinner at a local restaurant. Ralph Fisher will make assignments for the count on Friday, at 7:30 pm, Harlan Hall, WNMU Campus.

Camping is available at KOA, U.S. Hwy 180 East, 388-3351, or at Cherry Creek and MacMillan Campgrounds in the Gila National Forest, north of Pinos Altos. Motels in the area include: Copper Manor, 538-5392, The Drifter Motel, 538-2916, and Holiday Motor Hotel, 538-3711.

For more information and registration, contact Pat Insley, 982-0796, or Ralph Fisher, 535-2320 (evenings). Please make reservations by April 26th. Go and enjoy! You don't have to be an expert birder.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**THE RANDALL DAVEY CENTER NEEDS YOU!**

Have you thought of spending a Sunday in Santa Fe this summer? Volunteers are needed to help in the visitor center, lead natural history walks or guide visitors through the historic Randall Davey home. Summers at the center are

**RAPTOR STUDY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Less than two hours from Albuquerque, rising several hundred feet out of the Rio Puerco Valley, are a series of cliffs collectively known as the San Luis Mesa. In recognition of the importance of these cliffs as nesting habitat for golden eagles, red-tailed hawks, prairie falcons, ravens, great horned owls, and kestrels, the San Luis Mesa Raptor Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) was recently established by the U. S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM). A portion of the area has also been recommended by the BLM for wilderness designation.

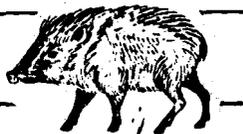
Due to funding cuts, the BLM does not have the resources to locate, monitor, and photograph nesting raptors properly without volunteer help. The future of the ACEC may depend on strong citizen involvement. If this project is of interest to you, and you are able to devote two to four days a month for the next four months, please contact Jim Fish at 867-3062 for more information.

**RAPTOR COUNTERS NEEDED**

The spring raptor migration is close at hand, and the Western Foundation for Raptor Conservation (WFRC) could benefit greatly by the addition of some extra eyes at the count site in the Sandias.

If you would like to sharpen your raptor identification skills while enjoying a first-rate view of migrating birds of prey, join the WFRC observers. Your help will be appreciated because the width of the flight corridor makes it difficult for a single observer to

**CONSERVATION NOTES
BY LEW HELM**



GRAY RANCH PROPOSAL NEEDS A PUSH

Gray Ranch, a 311,000-acre veritable wildlife paradise in southwestern New Mexico's Hildago County, is being considered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for inclusion in the National Wildlife Refuge System. This proposed acquisition from willing sellers is supported strongly by the Audubon Society. The FWS has held a series of public meetings on the proposal, and a majority of attendees were in favor.

Gray Ranch has been managed by past owners in a commendable way. A fine balance of cattle stocking has been maintained while protecting an outstanding diversity of wildlife habitat. Bordering Mexico, the ranch contains a remarkable array of southwestern flora and fauna. This area supports at least 718 species (19%) of New Mexico's known flora. Coexisting on the ranch are 51% of New Mexico's mammal species, 43% of its bird species, 45% of its reptile species, and 36% of its amphibian species. The federally-listed threatened ridge-nosed rattlesnake is also a resident.

The opportunity to protect for all time a priceless portion of New Mexico should not be lost. The need right now is for Audubon members to write our Congressional delegation urging them to move forward in appropriating money from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to purchase the ranch. The money is in the fund and appropriation from this source should have no effect on the Federal deficit. We will continue to track and

National Forest and adjacent BLM lands starting in 1987. The stamp is also required for users of the Jicarilla Division of the Carson National Forest. Proceeds from the sale of the stamps are used to benefit deer, turkey, elk, fish, and other wildlife habitat on lands where the stamp is required.

A series of public meetings is being held by the N.M. Department of Game and Fish so that concerned citizens may comment on proposed projects. A meeting is scheduled at the Department's Albuquerque Office, 3700 Osuna NE, Suite 611, on April 25th, 7:00 p.m.

**SEVILLETA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—LONG
TERM ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH SITE BY
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION**

On January 20, 1988, representatives of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Southwest Region, the University of New Mexico, and The Nature Conservancy met to grant approval to a Cooperative Agreement that is the first step in establishing the Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge as a Long Term Ecological Research site by the National Science Foundation. The agreement will be included in the nomination package of the refuge as a research site that will be considered by the National Science Foundation this spring.

The 228,670-acre Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge, located approximately 45 miles south of Albuquerque, was established through a donation from The Nature Conservancy to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to preserve and enhance the integrity and natural character of the grasslands and desert brush associations within its boundaries. The promotion of research on and about these



CAN NORTH AMERICAN DUCK POPULATIONS BE SAVED?

For those of us who thrill at the sights and sounds of waterfowl flights, a future ray of hope may be in the making. For 30 years, the number of mallards on the breeding grounds averaged 8 million. In 1985 there were only 5.5 million. In 1959 there were 9 million breeding pintails; in 1985 only 3 million. Other duck species show similar or even worse declines. Only some Canada geese subspecies, snow geese, and wood ducks have responded to management efforts.

Here's the ray of hope. The North American Waterfowl Management Plan is being implemented on a broad front. The Plan is based on an agreement between the U.S. and Canadian governments, with a goal to stabilize waterfowl numbers at the average that prevailed in the 1970's. Signed in 1986, the agreement is hailed as the most important bilateral conservation effort since the Migratory Bird Convention in 1916.

What has been the root cause of the drastic decline in duck numbers? The answer of course is simple and well-known: declining wetland habitat. Equally well-known are the ecological benefits of wetlands for flood control, water quality, and aquifer recharge. And, Auduboners recognize the importance of wetlands to many kinds of wildlife, including a host of bird species.

About half of this country's original wetland is already gone, and we are destroying the remainder at an increasing rate of 400,000 acres per year. All this in spite of a number of Federal and state laws and programs which are supposed to deter conversion

Plan is designed to hold the line at 62 million breeding birds and has identified a number of fronts on which to proceed. Chief among the efforts will be to buy control of wetland habitat. Altogether, the goal is to acquire, protect, or rehabilitate almost 6 million acres of waterfowl habitat in the U.S. and Canada. The Audubon Society is cooperating in this most needed program, chiefly in the areas of public education, lobbying where needed, and in grassroots support. Stay tuned on how the CNMAS can help in implementing the Plan, both locally and nationally.

LOBO T-SHIRTS FOR SALE

The Mexican Wolf Coalition has printed beautiful "Bring Back the Lobo" T-shirts in both long and short sleeved styles. Mountains and Rivers, 2320 Central Avenue SE (opposite UNM) has offered to sell them, with all proceeds going to the Coalition.

The Coalition meets regularly on Wednesdays at 7 pm at the Sierra Club office, 207 San Pedro NE. Everyone is welcome. Interested persons should contact Susan Larsen at 299-3496 or John Somers at 344-6541.

GET YOUR FEED WET



Audubon Activists move swiftly when it comes to dealing with polluters, unscrupulous developers, and those who just don't care. For \$9--the price of Audubon Activist's "complete activist" package--you too can help keep them on the run.

As a complete activist, you'll:

- o Receive the bimonthly Audubon Activist
- o Get "Action Alerts" from our Washington, D.C. office
- o Be a part of our "telephone tree"
- o Keep in touch with the front lines in Washington, D.C.

THE PEREGRINE FALCON

—by Lois Campbell

The peregrine falcon is found not just in the wilderness, but has also become an urbanite, nesting atop skyscrapers in many cities such as San Francisco and New York. It is safe there from other predators, and food is plentiful, especially pigeons!

A pair of falcons has nested on the top floors of the Golden Nugget Casino in Atlantic City, New Jersey since 1983. However, they do not appreciate being disturbed by the "high-rollers!"



Editor's Note: Lois is a member of CNMAS and reports that she has been drawing birds and making greeting cards for friends and relatives for three

Then herbicides and pesticides were made available to the public and the revolution started. All you had to do was spread on the chemicals and the weeds and insects disappeared. Never mind that it also killed the clover and earthworms, you ended up with a uniform green lawn, just like astroturf. And so the lawn care industry was born. Not only will they spread the chemicals, they will also dethatch, aerate and spray your yard with long lasting insecticides so you won't be bothered by any stray bugs that may wander your way. The problem is that the spray also kills honeybees, praying mantises, ladybugs, and many birds. Birds are sensitive to many pesticides such as bebomyl, dursban, diazinon, baygon and dylox. The lawn care industry has captured a market and is promoting one of the fastest growing industries around. Everyone has received the lawn care propoganda they send through the mail.

To counter the lawn care industry promotions, the other side of the coin is that an astroturf lawn is undesirable because:

1. All herbicides contain minute amounts of dioxins that do not degrade, and after repeated applications, they can build up to undesirable levels.
2. Many birds are killed, sickened or driven away as their food supply dwindles.
3. Many beneficial insects are killed, and as natural predators are removed from the scene, more pesticides are applied.
4. City dwellers are exposed to nearly five times as many pesticides as those who live in rural areas. Allergic reactions to these chemicals are increasing in numbers and intensity.

TRAVEL IDEAS**RIO CHAMA BIRDING ADVENTURES**

The Rio Chama is soon to be designated a Wild & Scenic River because of its superb riparian habitat and its importance as a migratory route for birds. The best way to see this beautiful river and its variety of birds is to float it on a trip designated specifically for birders. Over 70 species of birds can be found along the river in early summer.

The Randall Davey Audubon Center is offering two exclusive float trips in June as part of their summer natural history program. The Chama is a serene river as it flows through red-walled canyons and cottonwood groves; and it provides many opportunities to observe birds. The river is tame, so the adventure is the birds. No river experience is necessary to participate on this trip. All the necessary river equipment and food will be provided, and an expert birder will join the trips, which are scheduled for June 3-5 (\$165) and June 11-12 (\$135). For itinerary and registration information, call or write Janie Cox, Randall Davey Audubon Center, P.O. Box 9314, Santa Fe, NM 87504, (505)983-4609.



COSTA RICA

--November 9 - 20, 1988

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