



Burrowing Owl

March - May 2011

Vol. 40, No. 2

Welcome to the Central New Mexico Audubon Society! Come join us. All our meetings and field trips are open to the public.

BIRDING ACADEMY 2011 - Birding New Mexico with New Mexico Birders!

The Birding Academy classes will begin at 7:15 p.m. at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church (NW corner of Copper and Jefferson NE).

New members: Join National Audubon for \$20 and get the Birding Academy included for free!

Current members or nonmembers - \$6.00 per class in advance or at the door.

Questions? Visit cnmas.newmexicoaudubon.org/ or call Beth at 508-4942.

Life and Times of New Mexico Raptors

By Gail Garber - March 17th

Intrigued by those charismatic birds at the top of the avian food chain? Puzzled over identification? In what seasons might different species be found here? Need a good laugh? Join Gail Garber, Executive Director, Hawks Aloft, Inc., for a fun-filled, informative overview of the natural history of the many species of hawks, eagles, falcons, owls and more that reside in New Mexico for all or part of the year. More than just characteristic identification marks unique to a species, natural history and biology provides many clues that will help you with identification. Learn about some of the hazards faced by these magnificent birds and actions that can help to reduce mortality and the impact of humans on the various species.



drawing by Daniel S. Kilby

An Iconic Prairie Bird, the Lesser Prairie-Chicken

Christopher Rustay - April 14th

Currently found in southeastern New Mexico and in only four other states, the Lesser Prairie-Chicken is one of the few birds that is endemic to the United States. This bird's population, which at one point was estimated in the millions, has declined to an estimated 30,000-50,000 and is a candidate species for T&E listing by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. It is one of several "prairie-grouse" species found in the United States, most of which are declining. We'll learn about gallinaceous birds found in New Mexico, prairie-grouse in general, and then take an in-depth look at the Lesser Prairie-Chicken, its general natural history including its spectacular mating displays, and some of the reasons that the bird is declining in New Mexico and elsewhere in the U.S.



Central New Mexico Audubon Is On Facebook!

Become a Fan and get Facebook updates: go to the following link: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/> and type "Central New Mexico Audubon Society" in the search box. Then click on the link "Central New Mexico Audubon Society" and it will take you to our page. There will be a button that you can click on that says, "Become a Fan." If you would like to receive an e-mail reminder about meetings rather than joining Facebook, e-mail Judy Liddell, Publicity Chair, at jliddell5@earthlink.net



Be sure to visit our beautiful new website!

cnmas.newmexicoaudubon.org

**National Audubon complimented us on it!
You will too!**

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CNMAS Weekend Field Trips - Spring 2011

Check <http://cnmas.newmexicoaudubon.org/> for more field trips and updates. ALWAYS check with the leader before the trip.

Our Thursday Birders and Weekend Field Trips are really the centerpiece of our chapter's mission: "To appreciate and experience birds..." Everything we do – our youth scholarships and adult education programs, our conservation work and issues advocacy – centers on what's out there to be enjoyed and, if need be, protected. Please consider joining us on any or all of these trips into Nature.

March 5-6: The New Mexico Bootheel, Clanton and Guadalupe Canyons

Leader: Christopher Rustay, chrustay@aol.com

Meet in Lordsburg at 7:00 a.m. in the McDonald's parking lot. From there we will travel to Clanton Canyon, stopping to see what may be in the grasslands or riparian areas that are along the way. In Clanton we'll be looking for southwestern NM specialties such as Arizona Woodpecker and Bridled Titmouse. We will finish the day by traveling to Douglas, Arizona where we'll spend the evening. Sunday morning we'll meet at 7:30 a.m. in the Motel 6 parking lot and travel into Guadalupe Canyon. We will spend the morning in Guadalupe Canyon. There is the possibility of finding Rufous-winged Sparrow, which was found earlier this winter in the canyon. Who knows what else may be around? Very low clearance vehicles may have trouble in Clanton Canyon and on the road into Guadalupe Canyon. There will be a LOT of walking in Guadalupe Canyon though on relatively level ground (about 10 miles). Participants should plan on carrying water and food for lunch on both days.



April 9 & 10: Sandia HawkWatch Site

Leader: Roger Grimshaw, rpgbirds@aol.com, 407-319-0280

Visit HawkWatch's raptor observation point at the peak of migration. Four falcon species are possible amid the more common Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks, as well as Golden Eagles, Goshawks, and others. Meet outside Starbucks in the Four Hills parking lot (S of Central and W of Tramway) at 8:00 a.m. to carpool for the 10-minute drive to Three Gun Spring trailhead at Monticello. It's a 1.5-mile STEEP hike 1,200 feet up to the observation point. You can take your time on the hike birding along the way but a reasonable level of fitness is necessary. Bring stout footwear and hiking poles, at least 2 quarts of water, snacks and lunch, and warm, wind and waterproof clothing. We should be at "obs" around 10, stay as long as you wish. In the event of bad weather we'll do a couple of hours of desert birding along the trail. (**Coordinator's Note: There are no longer formal counts at the Sandia HawkWatch site, so this trip is a great chance to observe raptor migration with an experienced "HawkWatcher.")

April 23: Corrales Bosque

Leader: Judy Liddell, jliddell5@earthlink.net, (505) 271-0912

Meet at the shopping center on the NE corner of Alameda and Corrales Rd. in front of Little Anita's at 7:30 a.m. Our exact destination in the bosque will depend on the birds. We'll walk the bosque and levee trails until about 11:00 searching for migrant flycatchers, warblers, and other songbirds.

April 30: Whitfield Wildlife Conservation Area and Belen Marsh

Leader: Linda Heinz, manzanogal@gmail.com, (505) 565-1441

Meet Cole Wolf at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot behind the Hawthorne Suites on Gibson and University, or meet the group at 8:15 a.m. at WWCA, 2424 Highway 47, on the east side of the Rio Grande, (1 mile north of the intersection of E River Rd. and Hwy 47) in Belen. Many migrating species arrive at Whitfield in April, including Swallows, Swainson's Hawks, Hummingbirds, Kingbirds and shorebirds. We'll view more shorebirds later in the morning at the Belen Marsh behind Taco Bell, with the possibility of Burrowing Owl nearby. This is a half-day trip with an easy 1.5 mile-walk at WWCA. Contact the leader for more information.



drawing by Kirsten Munson

May 7: Quarai and East Mountain Migrants

Leader Cole Wolf, colejwolf@gmail.com, (505) 553-4831

Meet in front of the Starbucks at Central and Tramway at 6:00 a.m. The drive to Quarai takes about an hour. We'll spend the morning birding the riparian woods around the ruins. Our main target will be migrant warblers (almost twenty species have been reported there), but we also hope to see some of the area's breeding birds, including Great Horned Owl, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Blue Grosbeak. On the way back we'll stop at several other locations that attract migrants.

May 21: Birding the Mora River

Leader: Christopher Rustay, chrustay@aol.com

Visit the King Ranch north of Las Vegas. This private ranch has some great riparian forest along the Mora River. Meet at the All-sup's Convenience Store west of the second Las Vegas exit off of I-25 (exit 345) at 7:30 a.m. We'll look for migrating songbirds and local residents in some spectacular habitat that is normally closed to public access.

**Remember to record your sightings at
www.ebird.org**

Central New Mexico Audubon Society assumes no responsibility for injuries, personal or otherwise, incurred while attending society sponsored activities and will not be held liable for such accidents. You attend at your own risk.



Thursday Birders Schedule

MARCH 3: Alameda Open Space

with Rebecca Gracey: maryrebeccagracey@gmail.com, 242-3821. Meet at 9:00 in the open space parking lot on the south side of Alameda Boulevard. It is directly east of the Rio Grande river and west of the traffic light on Alameda and Rio Grande Boulevard. Lunch at Village Pizza in Corrales.

MARCH 10: Rio Grande Nature Center

with Larry Lattman: 299-3636, lhattman@comcast.net
Meet at 9:00 a.m. in the Nature Center parking lot at the end of Candelaria N.W.

There is a \$3 parking fee if you do not have a State Parks pass or Friends of the RGNC pass. Both passes may be purchased inside the visitor's center after 10:00.

MARCH 17: Kit Carson Park, Tingley Beach, and bosque ponds

with Lefty Arnold: 514-9398, hoosierjohnarnold@yahoo.com
Meet at 8:27 a.m. in the parking lot of Kit Carson Park, also called Rio Grande Park. To get there turn west to Central from Rio Grande Boulevard NW, go south on Tingley Drive from Central, then turn left at the first opportunity and immediately turn left again into the parking lot. The group will walk about two miles. Lunch at The Red Ball Cafe on 4th Street, north of the Hispanic Cultural Center.

MARCH 24: Corrales Bosque

with Lannois Neely: 890-7881, lfneely@aol.com
Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the shopping center north of Alameda Road/NM 528 and east of NM 448/Coors/Corrales Road near Little Anita's restaurant. The walk will end before noon.

MARCH 31: Pena Blanca, NM, and Cochiti Lake

with Rebecca Gracey: 242-3821, maryrebeccagracey@gmail.com
Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the middle of the parking lot in the Far North shopping center, north of Academy and east of San Mateo. Bring lunch.

APRIL 7: Albuquerque Open Space Visitor Center

with Gale Owings: 255-8333
Meet at 9:00 a.m. in the center's parking lot of the east side of Coors Boulevard, 1.3 miles north of Montano and 1 mile south of Paseo del Norte. There will be an easy walk of no more than two miles that will end before noon.

APRIL 14: Hike Embudo Canyon

with Judy Liddell: 271-0912, jliddell5@earthlink.net
Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot near the trail head, located at the east end of Indian School Road NE. This is an easy 1.5 mile walk.

APRIL 21: Hike in the Elena Gallegos Open Space

with Donna Royer: 869-6882, dlroyer@earthlink.net
Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking area that is at the end of the road that runs straight north from the entry station. Look for the parking lot for Cottonwood Trail. There is a \$1 entry fee per car. This is an easy 1.5 mile walk.

APRIL 28: See page 4 for details about the Thursday Birders Birdathon trip!

MAY 5: Manzano Pond and Quarai National Monument

with Bonnie Long: 379-1985, cantrade_1@yahoo.com
Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the Four Hills shopping Center on the south side of Central between Tramway and Juan Tabo, near Carl's Jr. or at 8:50 a.m. at the junction of Highway 337 and Highway 55. Bring lunch.

MAY 12: Whitfield Wildlife Conservation Area and Belen Marsh

with Linda Heinz: 565-1441, manzanogal@gmail.com
Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot behind the Hawthorn Suites on Gibson and University or 8:15 a.m. at WWCA on Highway 47 on the east side of the Rio Grande River (10 miles south of the intersection of NM 6 and NM 47 in Los Lunas). Lunch at Harla Mae's Fat Boy Grill in Belen, one block south of Reinken and one block east of North Main in the old Onate Theater.

MAY 19: Water Canyon in the Magdalena Mountains west of Socorro

with Sei Tokuda: 266-2480, stokuda@juno.com
Meet at 7:00 a.m. in the parking lot behind the Hawthorne Suites, on Gibson and University. Very little walking is involved. Bring lunch. The trip should end in mid afternoon.

MAY 26: Ojito de San Antonio Open Space in Cedar Crest

with Melissa Howard: 286-9365, nmflicker@swcp.com
Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the Four Hills shopping center on the south side of Central, between Juan Tabo and Tramway, close to Carl's Jr. The open space is located behind the San Antonio de Padua Church, one mile on the west after going under I-40. The walk will end before noon.

Judy Liddell has a blog where she reports on the Thursday Birder trips she attends. You may read about them at www.wingandsong.wordpress.com

Appeal for Science Fair Judges

PLEASE consider being a Science Fair Judge for Central New Mexico Audubon Society this year. It's only one afternoon -- Friday, March 18, 2011 -- and it's only a half day, noon to 4:00 p.m. or earlier. Having four judges is ideal: Two for senior division entries and two for junior division entries. This is one of our chapter's Education focal points. We have been awarding Science Fair prizes for almost 20 years. We choose two winners from each category, the Junior Division and the Senior Division. Each winner receives a \$100 savings bond, which costs the chapter \$50 each, \$200 total. A small investment in Environmental Education! Please RSVP to Beth at brave_e@juno.com. Thank you!



skawing by Kristen Munson

The Burrowing Owl newsletter is published quarterly in March, June, September, and December by Central New Mexico Audubon Society, PO Box 30002, Albuquerque, NM 87190-0002. Subscription is free to National Audubon Society members, \$15 to nonmembers.



Birdathon! 2011

Audubon, Birdathon, and your pledge: They're all for the birds! What was the last bird you saw? What's your most anticipated migrant? Which bird song makes your heart rise in your throat? And what's it worth to you to protect that bird, its habitat, and the chance for your grandkid to experience the same thrill?

Join a team, make a pledge, and ask your spouse/parent/sibling/best friend/neighbor/co-worker to sponsor you or your favorite team as CNMAS raises money that stays in New Mexico for conservation and environmental education. If you join us, you'll have a day in the field with great people and great birds. If you can't be there in person, your support encourages your friends and betters your community. And either way, your gift is tax-deductible. Help keep us – and the birds – flying high!

Team 1: Thursday Birder Team, April 28

The Thursday Birders will be attempting to see over 100 bird species in 14 hours and raise over \$1,000 for the educational and conservation programs of Central New Mexico Audubon Society. The group will meet at 5:00 a.m. in the parking lot behind the Hawthorne Suites on Gibson and University and will end the day at 7:30 p.m. when they meet for dinner in Socorro to count the species seen.

The itinerary will be Turtle Bay on the NM Tech Campus, Water Canyon in the Magdalena Mountains, The Box on highway 60, and the Bosque del Apache. All members of the team are encouraged to make a financial donation to CNMAS.

In addition, the team welcomes contributions made to CNMAS in support of their effort. Flat donations may be made or pledges of money per species.

Contact the leader Rebecca Gracey at 505-242-3821, maryrebeccagracey@gmail.com if you plan to be on the Thursday Birder team. She will keep you informed via email about plans and changes that might arise.



Team 2: Sunday, May 1, 2011 - NM Migrant Traps and More....

Join us as we bird the eastern plains for migrant songbirds, shorebirds, and any other birds we can find. We'll start the morning at the Melrose Trap east of Fort Sumner and work our way south to Bitter Lake NWR, stopping at various playa lakes and migrant traps along the way. After Bitter Lake and lunch in Roswell we'll head towards Brantley Lake. Time permitting we will check the foothills of the Guadalupe Mountains for Varied Bunting, Gray Vireos, and other local specialties. We will end the day at Rattlesnake Springs for last-minute migrants and owls. Participants are welcome to join us for the whole day, a half-day, or in spirit by pledging money towards our team.

Contact Raymond VanBuskirk: (505) 217-8514 newmexicobirder@gmail.com for details on meeting location, time, or how to pledge.

Notable Women Naturalists

Saturday, March 12, 2011 at 10:30 AM

Learn about women of the past and present who have encountered new species and have discovered perils to our own species. Join Ranger Karen Herzenberg for a PowerPoint on women biologists, explorers, artists and writers who have in common observation of the natural world.

Rio Grande Nature Center State Park
2901 Candelaria NW
Albuquerque, NM 87107 505-344-7240
Please call ahead to register



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Carson, <http://www.tc.umn.edu/~allch001/1815/pesticide/sim/carson-p.jpg>



BioBlitz 2011:
Discover Your Bosque
at the Rio Grande Nature Center
State Park Friday, June 10 and
Saturday, June 11, 2011

Explore the birds, mammals, insects, plants, and lizards of our Rio Grande Bosque during walks led by scientific experts all around the Bosque.

Bring your digital camera and upload your photos to the BioBlitz Slideshow!

All activities, walks, and time spent with biologists are FREE and the only cost is a \$3 per vehicle day-use fee!

For more information, visit www.NMnaturalhistory.org



2010-2011 Teacher Resource Grant Recipients

Three educators have received grants from CNMAS to support their science-based educational programs for young people.

Jay Follett with Boy Scouts of America was awarded \$323.17 to purchase binoculars for use at the Gorham Scout Ranch by scouts working on their Bird Study Merit Badge.

Elizabeth Osborn, a 4th grade teacher at Sandia Base Elementary in Albuquerque, was awarded \$208.63 to purchase hands-on activity tubs in electricity, human anatomy, and the solar system.

Nancy Woodward, Director of Dragonfly School, a non-profit school in Santa Fe, whose motto is "Community, Creativity, Ecology," was awarded \$170.00 for binoculars and bird seed. The students have made their own bird feeders that have been placed throughout the school yard. The binoculars will be used to view visiting birds and for field trips.



Conservation Report

Observations and Reflections on the Urban National Wildlife Refuge Workshop Sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Southwest Regional

February 12, 2011

By Lynn Schuler

Water rights and the welfare of sandhill cranes, snow geese and Canada geese were the main questions raised at a workshop on a proposed wildlife refuge in the South Valley.

About 30 people attended, along with County Commissioner Art de la Cruz and representatives of Senator Jeff Bingaman and Representative Martin Heinrich. Background information about the site--the former Price's Dairy near Broadway and I-25--and maps of the proposed refuge were presented.

I was there as a representative of the New Mexico State Audubon Council, which has chosen the refuge as a focus issue for 2011, and as a middle school teacher and neighbor to the site.

Attendees questioned a panel of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service representatives and were also asked to present written comments. The questions about the welfare of the wintering birds showed that people are emotionally attached to them.

The federal officials said upfront at the meeting that they are not attempting to increase the population of these birds because the site is not big enough for sustained agriculture to support them and because the birds could present a danger to airplanes taking off or landing from the nearby airport. There are a few hundred cranes and geese presently using this land. Their plan is to return this land to bosque habitat that would attract songbirds, hawks, eagles, raccoons, skunks, and coyotes. All of this made sense to me.

My first question was about providing educational opportunities for school children at the refuge. Kenneth Garrahan, head of the educational arm for the project, said their idea is to have day-long field trips where the students can immerse themselves in the area, doing hands-on projects rather than just coming for a couple of hours and walking along a trail and getting back on a bus.

Garrahan will be seeking suggestions from representatives of other environmental education groups such as the Rio Grande Nature Center and the Sandia Mountain Natural History Center (which serves APS fifth-graders). He is thinking of developing a new educational niche for the Price's Dairy land to offer something different from other sites. I thought this was a very good idea, because a lot of these other sites focus on elementary students, and I believe that we need a program for middle school and high school students for extended learning. He liked that idea and said he wants to have a private meeting with me.

I am glad I introduced myself and asked the question I did, because Commissioner de la Cruz's assistant approached me later. We decided that my MESA students could possibly become part of the planning process. She is going to help me make arrangements to bring them to the site to get their input.

I and one other attendee said we live near the proposed refuge site and have concerns about traffic. We were told trails would not be near homes. I wrote that I hope the access road to the refuge will be off Second Street rather than in the residential community.

We were told that the next step is establishing the fair market value of the land, then seeing if Price's will accept that value, then obtaining the money. The Fish and Wildlife spokesman said the cost could be about \$24 million. The county has put aside \$5 million, but this money will only be held until 2012, so we need to act quickly.

Additional funding is expected to come primarily from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund and from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) that is appropriated by Congress. Audubon-New Mexico and CNMAS have incorporated the project in their recommendations to the Congressional delegation for LWCF funding.

I will be receiving a copy of the Fish and Wildlife Service report that is expected to be out in June or July. There will probably be additional meetings for public input after the report comes out.

3rd Annual All-Audubon Work Weekend

For Audubon members only!

We will have an Audubon Work Weekend the weekend of April 2-3 at Broad Canyon Ranch, just north of Las Cruces. The area has just been purchased by NM State Parks and is getting attention from a variety of conservation organizations. Be part of the action! Work will include items such as digging holes and planting poles (part of riparian restoration work), planting shrubs and grasses, other restoration work and cleaning the area, including picking up trash. You may participate on one or both days. We will start around 9:00 in the morning after some birding in the canyon and along the river. Early April should be warm and pleasant but not too hot yet and early migrants should be moving through. See what all the hoopla is about! There will be a New Mexico Audubon Council meeting the evening before from 6:00-8:00pm in Las Cruces.

RSVP by March 25 for one or both events to Christopher Rustay, NMAC president: chrustay@aol.com.

Bernalillo County Open Space Master Naturalists

The Bernalillo County Open Space Master Naturalist Program aims to instill the pursuit of life-long learning and promote environmental stewardship. Participants are actively engaged through education and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources on Open Space properties.

Applications will be accepted until April 1, 2011. There is only space for 25 participants, so apply today!

Contact the Open Space Coordinator if you have any questions at calangan@bernco.gov or call 314-0398.



drawing by Steven D'Amato



Field Trip Reports

Bosque del Apache, Dec. 11th, 2010

Six participants joined Cole Wolf for a warm December morning of birding the Bosque. The trip started well when a bright male Pyrrhuloxia briefly showed itself in front of the visitor center. A walk through the quail garden produced a cooperative male Sharp-shinned Hawk that was eventually chased off by an angry Verdin. A short wait at the visitor center feeders rewarded us with great looks at a bright White-throated Sparrow. The main refuge was also very productive, as the trip recorded several thousand waterfowl of 13 different species. Several



A Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) strikes a pose while sunning at Bosque del Apache NWR
Photo © Cole Wolf 2010

California Gulls and a Great Egret at the boardwalk pond were a surprise, as was a Great Blue Heron striking a strange pose when we walked back to the cars (it appeared to be sunning). Raptors were also in evidence: several Bald Eagles, dark and rufous morph Red-tailed Hawks, and a Merlin were seen. Our last bird before we left the refuge was a nice Marsh Wren at the Boy Scout deck.

After the trip several participants joined the leader for a very short "chase" to San Antonio, where a Yellow-throated Warbler was being seen. Yellow-throated Warbler is a very rare bird in New Mexico, and generally shows up in spring or fall. They breed in lowland eastern forests, and the majority of birds winter in the Greater Antilles or eastern Mexico to Nicaragua, with some remaining in the extreme southeastern United States. In winter they often favor pines, and this bird was no different – we watched it for almost half an hour and it never left the large juniper where it had been originally found! It was a great end to the morning and our 58th species for the day.

Sandias

Twenty people joined leaders Raymond VanBuskirk and Cole Wolf for a fabulous day of birding in the Sandia Mountains. We couldn't have asked for better weather; the sun was shining, the squirrels were scampering, and the birds were chirping.

At Doc Long Picnic Ground we were treated to fantastic looks at Pygmy Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Mountain Chickadee, and Steller's Jay. From the lookout at Balsam Glade we had great views of Townsend's Solitaire, and a few lucky people caught a quick glimpse of a flock of Evening Grosbeaks. One of the participants managed to snap a fantastic full-frame photo of Red Crossbill. At the Crest House we were greeted by a flock of about 130 rosy-finches and a very busy banding crew. The flock was composed of all three species, with the majority being Black Rosy-finches and Gray-crowned Rosy-finches (including both sub-species). After lunch, the remaining intrepid birding crew headed out in search of the American Three-toed Woodpecker. After about an hour of chilly temperatures and snow-filled trails we were rewarded with a beautiful male Three-toed Woodpecker busily drumming away at an aspen snag. He sat

out in the open for about 15 minutes until we finally decided to head back to the warmth of the Crest House.

Though species numbers were low it was still a fantastic trip and I urge everyone to come along next year!

Christmas Bird Count Results

by Judith Liddell

Central New Mexico birders enjoyed warmer than usual weather as they participated in five different counts for the 111th Christmas Bird Count, assisting the National Audubon Society and other organizations that use data collected in this longest-running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations - and to help guide conservation action.

The first central New Mexico count, Five Points, kicked off the official count season on December 14. Seventeen participants reported 67 species. While a Northern Pygmy-Owl was undoubtedly the 'bird of the day,' other unusual species for this count reported by compilers Steve and Nancy Cox included a single Great Blue Heron, a White-breasted Nuthatch, two Yellow-headed Blackbirds and 7 Cassin's Finches.

The next count, also on the Sevilleta NWR, occurred two days later at the western part of the refuge. Twelve participants ticked off 91 species. While 618 Mountain Bluebirds, 29 Sage Thrashers and 111 Sage Sparrows were recorded, compilers Steve and Nancy Cox did not highlight any species as unusual for the count.

Two days later, 20 participants gathered at the Bosque del Apache for the count. Compiler Dave Hawksworth reported high counts for 17 Ladder-backed Woodpeckers, 33 Say's Phoebe, 19 Chihuahuan Ravens, 23 Verdins, 14 Rock Wrens, 250 Savannah Sparrows, 11 Swamp Sparrows, and 10 Eastern Meadowlarks. Unusual species included 1 Brown Thrasher, 1 Yellow-throated Warbler, 1 Lark Sparrow and 1 McCown's Longspur. Unusual sightings seen during the count week but not on the count day included a White-tailed Kite and Lesser Yellowlegs.

The Albuquerque count was the following day, with 51 participants and 108 species. Compiler Hart Schwartz stated the highlights included an empidonax flycatcher, two hybrid chickadees (Mt. x Black-c.), 3 Cactus Wrens, a Sage thrasher (apparently rare this year), a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and even a Winter wren during the count week.

The final central New Mexico count was Sandia Mountains on December 26 with 42 participants. Organizer Rebecca Gracey stated they "broke our record of 70 species set in 2006 by adding six more species to the list." Highlights included a pair of Three-toed Woodpeckers –the first in 25 years- 3 Winter Wrens, an Eastern Bluebird, 8 Chipping Sparrows, 1 Fox Sparrow and one each Golden-crowned, Swamp and Harris's Sparrows. A Bald Eagle was first reported on the count in 1995 and wasn't spotted again until 2009 and then this year, according to Rebecca.

Many, many thanks to all of the participants. Plan now to participate in 2011.



Whom to Contact

National Audubon Society
 Membership Hotline
 (800) 274-4201, chadd@audubon.org
 Activist Hotline
 (800) 659-2622
 Audubon Take Action
 www.audubonaction.org/audubon/
 New Mexico Office
 Randall Davey Audubon Center
 P.O. Box 9314 Santa Fe, NM 87504
 (505) 983-4609 www.nm.audubon.org
 newmexico@audubon.org
 The President
 The White House
 Washington, DC 20500
 (202) 456-1111
 president@whitehouse.gov
 Secretary Ken Salazar
 Department of the Interior
 1849 C Street, NW
 Washington, DC 20240
 (202) 208-3100
 www.doi.gov
 Senator Jeff Bingaman
 703 Hart Senate Office Building
 Washington, DC 20510
 (800) 443-8658
 bingaman.senate.gov
 Senator Tom Udall
 B40D Dirksen Senate Office Building
 Washington, DC 20510
 Congressman Steve Pearce
 www.house.gov
 (202) 224-3121

Congressman Ben R. Lujan
 502 Cannon HOB
 Washington, DC 20515
 (202) 225-6190
 Congressman Martin T. Heinrich
 1505 Longworth HOB
 Washington, DC 20515
 (202) 225-6316
 Governor Susana Martinez
 State Capitol, Room 400
 Santa Fe, NM 87501
 (505) 476-2200
 US Fish and Wildlife Service
 500 Gold Avenue, SW
 Albuquerque, NM 87102
 External Affairs Office (505) 248-6911
 New Mexico Dept. of Game & Fish
 P.O. Box 25112
 Santa Fe, NM 87504
 (505)476-8000
 www.wildlife.state.nm.us
 Sandia Ranger District
 US Forest Service
 11776 Highway 337
 Tijeras, NM 87059
 (505) 281-3304
 Bosque del Apache NWR
 (575) 838-2120
 Friends of the Bosque del Apache
 (575) 835-1828
 www.friendsofthebosque.org
 Rio Grande Nature Center State Park
 (505) 344-7240
 Friends of RGNC
 friends@rgnc.org, www.rgnc.org

The Ryan Beaulieu Memorial Education Fund

This is the fourth year CNMAS is able to accept applications for the Ryan Beaulieu Memorial Education Fund. The fund provides scholarships for youth between the ages of 13 and 20, or educators of youth, to attend a specific program, camp or course, pertaining to the candidate's interest in the natural sciences.



For more information about applications, please e-mail both members of our Education Committee, Helen Haskell at helenm@yahoo.com and Lynn Lorrain Schuler at onthepulse@msn.com and visit <http://newmexicoaudubon.org/cnmas/> where you can follow links to the application form and instructions. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis. The grant will be awarded by May 31, 2011.

Ryan Beaulieu was a young ornithologist, environmentalist and conservationist who filled his life with the joy of exploration and discovery of nature. This scholarship fund was established to give testimony to the living legacy of what Ryan gave to all of us as family, friends and community. CNMAS wishes to thank the Lannan Foundation for its generous support of the fund, as well as the family and friends of Ryan.

Central New Mexico Audubon Society Application Form For **New National Members Only**



Make checks payable to the **National Audubon Society, PO Box 30002, Albuquerque, NM 87190-0002.** FOR NEW NATIONAL MEMBERSHIPS ONLY. Your National Audubon membership RENEWAL cannot be processed by the Chapter; it must be sent directly to National Audubon.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone (with Area Code) _____

E-mail Address: _____

The following rates include the *National Audubon Magazine* and the CNMAS Newsletter the *Burrowing Owl*. Please check your preference.

- \$20 New Member, *special introductory rate for one year.*
- \$30 New Member, *special introductory rate for two years.*

As part of our commitment to protecting our natural environment we are encouraging members to opt to receive their copies of the *Burrowing Owl* online, where they can read it on their computers or print it out at home. This will significantly reduce the amount of paper generated by mailing hard copies. We will, of course, honor those requests from members who wish to continue receiving the hard copies through the mail. Please indicate your preference below.

- I would like to receive the *Burrowing Owl* online. Be sure to enter your e-mail address on the address section above.
- I would prefer to receive the *Burrowing Owl* via printed copy by regular mail.

For the **Burrowing Owl Only**

For annual subscription to the *Burrowing Owl* within our Chapter area or outside of it:

- \$15.00 (Check delivery choice above.)

For this subscription make checks payable to **CNMAS, PO Box 30002, Albuquerque, NM 87190-0002.**

Burrowing Owl Deadline

Information and articles to be included in Summer 2011 issue of the *Burrowing Owl* must be received by May 5, 2011.

Contact Laurel Ladwig at 505-362-6871 or BUROWLnm@gmail.com.

We are not accepting commercial advertising at this time.



photo by Laurel Ladwig

Central New Mexico Audubon Society

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NAS Chapter C1ZQ510Z

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Central New Mexico Audubon is a
Chapter of the National Audubon Society, Inc.

*Our missions: "To appreciate, experience, and conserve birds, other wildlife and their habitats;
and to encourage and support environmental education in New Mexico."*

CNMAS DIRECTORY

CNMAS Phone (505)255-7622 Email jmyers@peacocklaw.com

Webpage <http://cnmas.newmexicoaudubon.org/>

CNMAS, P.O. Box 30002, Albuquerque, NM 87190-0002

PRESIDENT

Beth Hurst-Waitz 1260 Rosemont Ave NW, Alb. 87104-2175

(505)508-4942 fax (505)508-4998 cell: (505)259-0709 brave_e@juno.com

VICE-PRESIDENT

Open

TREASURER

Donna Royer, dlroyer@earthlink.net

SECRETARY

Cole Wolf colejwolf@gmail.com

CONSERVATION CO-CHAIRPERSONS

Michael Hilchey (505)228-7439 leucosticte@gmail.com

Jeffrey Myers work (505)998-1502 jmyers@peacocklaw.com

EDITOR, BURROWING OWL

Laurel Ladwig BUROWLnm@gmail.com

EDUCATION & SCHOLARSHIPS COMMITTEE

Helen Haskell PO Box 36741, Alb. 87176-6741 helenm@yahoo.com

Lynn Lorrain Schuler onthepulse@msn.com

FIELD TRIP CHAIRPERSON

Cole Wolf colejwolf@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP DATABASE CHAIRPERSON (for change of address only)

Ed Dover 1421 San Carlos SW, Alb. 87104-1040 (505)242-5427

whitecliffs@comcast.net

NEW MEXICO AUDUBON COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

Lynn Lorrain Schuler onthepulse@msn.com

Raymond Van Buskirk newmexicobirder@gmail.com

WEBSITE UPDATES/PUBLICITY CHAIRPERSON

Judy Liddell (505)271-0912 jliddell5@earthlink.net

BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE

Christopher Rustay home (505)255-7786 chrustay@aol.com

Raymond Van Buskirk trogon282000@yahoo.com

Robert Munro (505)730-7762 robert.munro@earthlink.net

NEW MEXICO AUDUBON COUNCIL

President - Christopher Rustay (505)255-7786 chrustay@aol.com

Bat in Trouble? (Talking Talons)

Call before you intervene: 281-1133 or 281-1515

New Mexico Rare Bird Alert

Compiler: Matt J. Baumann

505-264-1052, mb687@yahoo.com <http://www.nmbirds.org/>

<http://www.birder.com/birding/alert/index.html>

Rosy Finch Project

Fran Lusso & Dave Weaver, flusso@wfubmc.edu

<http://www.rosyfinch.com/>

Wildlife Rescue

If you find a sick or injured bird, call 344-2500

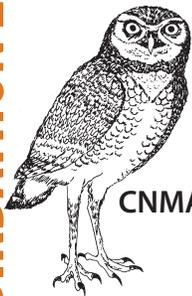
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Jeannie Wagner-Greven
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
P.O. Box 1306
Albuquerque, NM 87103



Central New Mexico Audubon Birding for Dollars

BIRDATHON 2011!



For every bird species the team identifies during Birdathon, CNMAS benefits!

Circle your pledge per species

10¢ 50¢
25¢
\$1 \$2
\$1.50
\$5 \$10
\$7.50

NAS Chapter C170510Z

or fill in a fixed donation amount here:

This pledge can be designated for team:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City & ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

To make a pledge, or make your tax-deductible donation, return this form with your payment to:

Central New Mexico Audubon Society
Post Office Box 30002
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87190-0002

Recycling Binoculars

On behalf of the Education Committee, we have another option to sending your used binoculars to ABA, and this one won't involve shipping costs: Bring them with you to the next CNMAS meeting or field trip and give them to us! We regularly receive requests for "loaner" binoculars from Scout troop leaders and others. Similar to ABA's binocular exchange, we will collect donated binoculars and give them to groups or individuals whose requests meet criteria developed by CNMAS for our Educator Resource Grant. People wishing to contribute may also send in a check earmarked for "Educator Resource Grant." It could be an eye-opening experience for a child in more ways than one!



Weekend Bird Walks at the Rio Grande Nature Center State Park

Join Saturday and Sunday morning bird walks at the RGNC located at the far west end of Candelaria Road in Albuquerque's North Valley. The walk starts at 8:30 a.m. March through April and 8:00 a.m. May through August. There is a \$3 parking fee if you do not have a state parks pass or a Friends of the Rio Grande Nature Center parking pass. Call 344-7240 or visit www.rgnc.org for more information.

Price's Dairy NWR Public Comments



Price's Dairy NWR Public Comments

Audubon-New Mexico and CNMAS strongly support the Price's Dairy project and have incorporated it in our recommendations to our NM Congressmen and Senators for LWCF (Land & Water Conservation Fund) funding.

The vision is to provide a place where students, families, and the general public can learn about nature, enjoy a natural open space and see wildlife, and access the Rio Grande bosque. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service wants to hear the public's ideas for using the site during this scoping phase. See Lynn Schuler's full report on page five.

If you missed the recent public comment opportunities in Albuquerque, please use the card above to send your comments and questions to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Here are a few suggested questions:

- Would the public have access to the Rio Grande from the refuge, say from a foot bridge?
- Would community service groups and school groups have the opportunity to help plant vegetation and do restorative work in turning this land back to bosque?
- Will there be a restroom in the interim before an education building is built?
- When do you envision the public actually having access to this land? How far out after the land is purchased?

The 13th Annual Audubon Birding Academy Registration Form

- o Mar. 17 - Life and Times of New Mexico Raptors - - - - \$6
- o Apr. 14 - An Iconic Prairie Bird, the Lesser Prairie-Chicken - \$6
- o Become a NEW Audubon member and get the Birding Academy classes for FREE - - - - - \$20

NAS chapter code C1ZQ510Z • Source code 79M7

Total Enclosed: _____

Name/s: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

o I want to get the Burrowing Owl via the web

Email: _____

Send your check, payable to CNMAS to:
CNMAS Birding Academy
P.O. Box 30002
Albuquerque, NM 87190-0002

CNMAS ABA 2011