

Chapter's Winter Programs: Bird Nests and a TBA

Last March many of us thought “zoom” meant “go fast,” but now we recognize Zoom as a key part of the Covid-19 pandemic’s new normal. It and programs like it connect us safely to people and events we would otherwise miss while we shelter in place.

CNMAS monthly programs will be virtual, conducted over Zoom, for the foreseeable future. E-mail CNMASreg@gmail.com to register and receive the link.

Kathy Carson, long-time program coordinator for Central New Mexico Audubon, has arranged the new year’s first program and is working on a presentation for Feb. 18.

Jan. 21, 2021, 7:00–8:30 p.m. Nests!

Join Casey McFarland, co-author of the all-new *Peterson Field Guide to North American Bird Nests* (to be released in August) to explore the fascinating world of bird nests and what they offer to our understanding of bird life and ecology. We’ll look at building styles, nest architecture, migration and breeding behavior—among other topics—and learn tips for identifying the array of nests on our local landscapes.

Woodhouse’s Scrub-Jay Nest

Photo by Casey McFarland



New Board Member Brings Social Media Skills

By Perriane Houghton

The CNMAS board welcomed our newest member in October. Jo Fine is a senior in high school and an avid birder committed to conservation who plans to pursue ornithology as a career. He received the Ryan Beaulieu scholarship to attend the American Birding Association’s Camp Colorado in 2019.

Jo volunteered to manage the CNMAS Facebook page and within the first week of his joining the Board he set up a CNMAS Instagram page. We appreciate having someone young and experienced to help keep us all



connected and to share photos of the birds we love. The CNMAS social media platforms are a good way to stay current on birding and conservation issues in and around New Mexico.

You will need an account for both Facebook and Instagram. Here’s how to find them: for Facebook, type “Central New Mexico Audubon Society” into your main search and the page will show up. Then you can “Like” the page. For Instagram, search the username [@centralnmaudubon](https://www.instagram.com/centralnmaudubon) and “Follow” it.

Christmas Bird Counts: the Show Must Go on

Pandemic Guidelines

By David Mehlman

Most of you are probably familiar with the Christmas Bird Count (CBC), Audubon's annual tradition for 121 years. If you are not, there is a great introduction on the Audubon web site: see the link in the box opposite.

As always the count will be Dec. 14 through Jan. 5. This year, however, is different due to the pandemic. National Audubon has given CBC compilers two options this year:

Option 1: Run a COVID-19 safe and socially distanced CBC, if local rules allow.

Option 2: If option 1 is not possible, cancel this season's CBC for your location.

Albuquerque Count

I have chosen Option 1, and the date for the Albuquerque count is **Sunday, Dec. 20**—BUT please check for updates.

We will make the following changes to our usual practices:

1. There will be no compilation or tally gathering at the end of the day, and the final results will be e-mailed to all participants.

2. Counts must be submitted to the compiler via eBird checklists: <https://ebird.org/home> by sharing them with the "official" Albuquerque CBC eBird count.

3. Participants will be expected to go out singly or in small, socially-distanced (and masked!) groups and to follow all health and safety protocols.

For up-to-date information on Christmas Bird Counts in our area use the link under Events on our chapter's home page:

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

Other Counts

As of Dec. 3 these counts had been scheduled. Additions may be available from the link in the box above.

For details about a count, e-mail the contact.

Pagosa Springs, CO Dec. 18

weminuche.aububon@gmail.com

Bosque del Apache Dec. 19

dlhawksworth@gmail.com

Los Alamos Dec. 19

mouser@mouser.org

Silver City Dec. 19

johnp.gorey@gmail.com

Albuquerque Dec. 20

AlbuquerqueCBC@gmail.com

Espanola Dec. 20

jerry_friedman@yahoo.com

Orilla Verde Dec. 20

steve84911@gmail.com

Sandia Mountains Dec. 26

npederson83@gmail.com

Santa Fe Dec. 27

lonnieh@cybermesa.com

Pecos Jan. 2

schultzaw@gmail.com

Gila River Jan. 2

raptors.linda@yahoo.com

Pandemic Brings Changes to Area Birding Sites

National Wildlife Refuges

Central New Mexico's national wildlife refuges have closed their visitor centers and cancelled programs for the duration. Details are available from www.fws.gov/refuges. Telephone numbers listed below are for weekdays only.

Valle de Oro

Access to the refuge is now limited to walkers, horseback riders and bicyclists. Cars may be parked at the Welcome Center. Dogs on leashes no longer than six feet continue to be allowed.

This change in access allows refuge managers to protect wildlife and their habitat as it is being restored while also accommodating recreation.

The refuge staff is exploring ways to accommodate visitors with disabilities. Questions or concerns may be addressed to vdolistens@fws.gov or (505) 248-6667.

Bosque del Apache

As of Nov. 7 the refuge's visitor center and nature store are closed, as are restrooms and vault toilets. No drinking water is available.

Most tour routes are open during daylight hours. The on-line nature store is open.

Those planning a visit should call (575) 835-1828 or check the website.

Sevilleta

Trails are open. Trail maps and a guide to the refuge's wildflowers may be downloaded from the website. (505) 864-4021.



Rio Grande Nature Center

All special events have been cancelled through December. www.rgnc.org, (505) 344-7240 on weekdays.

Sandia Ranger District

Some picnic sites and trailheads on the road to Sandia Crest are gated, and others are not being maintained. The annual snowshoe race has been cancelled. (505) 281-3304 on weekdays or www.fs.usda.gov.



Outdoor Learning Grant Available

Applications are invited for a grant for public-school teachers in Valencia County to support outdoor learning activities.

Allison Martin, education manager for the Valencia Soil and Water Conservation District, said the goal is to find new ways for students to interact with the environment they see every day.

The grant program is funded by Central New Mexico Audubon Society, which contributed members' donations to the 2020 Birdathon and made a matching gift, and by a contribution from Friends of Whitfield Wildlife Conservation Area.

These funds will pay for garden starter kits, nature journals, binoculars, magnifying glasses, butterfly habitat kits and more, Martin said.

The application is available from <https://www.valenciaswcd.org>.

CNMAS Directory and Contacts

Central New Mexico Audubon Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit chapter of the National Audubon Society, Inc.

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

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

The CNMAS membership form is on the web site:

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

Click "About Us" on the home page.

Board Members

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