

# BURROWING OWL

CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AUDUBON SOCIETY  
DECEMBER 1995 - JANUARY 1996  
VOLUME 25 - No. 1

UPCOMING CHAPTER ACTIVITIES -- MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!!

MERRY CHRISTMAS! HAPPY HANUKKAH! JOYOUS NEW YEAR!

Welcome! The Central New Mexico Audubon Society meets at 7:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, Copper and Jefferson, N.E. Nonmembers are welcome at all meetings, field trips, and special events.

## 96TH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT



Come we now a'counting, and you're invited! Come take part in any or all of the local counts. Society membership is not necessary. Amateur birders are welcomed; expert birders will be leading all groups. Plan on an all-day outing, rain or shine, blue or blizzard. Wear warm layered clothing, bring food and water, and **JOIN THE FUN!** If you just want to count birds at your feeder, contact the appropriate Count Leader below.

Saturday, Dec. 16 - Bosque del Apache NWR, Socorro  
Contact Steve Cox, 345-2385

Meet at refuge headquarters, 7:00 a.m. Compilation party at the Owl Bar in San Antonio immediately following count.

Sunday, December 17 - Albuquerque  
Contact Hart Schwarz, 266-1810

Meet at Corrales Shopping Center, NW corner of Coors and Alameda, at 7:15 a.m. Compilation Party at the home of Roger Hoppe for Green Chile Stew; bring drink & snacks to share. Maps given out that morning, or phone 856-1263 for directions to 1526 Eagle Ridge Drive, NE, in Sandia Heights.

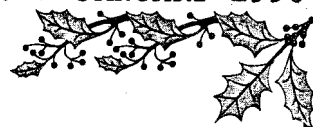
Monday, January 1 - Sandia Mountains  
Contact Tamie Bulow, 298-9116

Meet at Pete's Mexican Restaurant (north Hwy. 14, 1/2 mile north of Sandia Crest Road turnoff) at 7:30 a.m. Compilation Party immediately following at the home of Hardy & Christy Brothers for Soup Buffet; bring drink and snack/dessert to share. Maps given out that morning, or phone 281-7776 for directions to their home in Sandia Park.

Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge, La Joya  
Saturday, Dec. 16 (Five Points) and Thursday, Dec. 21 (West Side)  
Contact the Refuge at 1-505-864-4021 for meeting time and place.



And see inside for Fun Programs! Exciting Outings! More Christmas Counts! (And a Partridge in a Pear Tree, of course!)



## PROGRAMS

Thurs., Dec. 14: O Come, All Ye Faithful! (Faithful Christmas Bird Counters, that is.) In place of a December meeting, we're having a **Christmas Count Social**. Those of you interested in participating in any of this year's Christmas Counts will have the opportunity to socialize while you set up your count areas. We will be meeting for coffee and dessert at 7:30 p.m. at Shoney's Restaurant, 9700 Montgomery Blvd., NE, at Eubank. Prior to an informal presentation on their count circles by count leaders, you can order a hot-fudge ice cream cake and tell war stories of previous Christmas Counts. The count leaders will be there to reaffirm meeting places, perhaps assign groups, hand out copies of last year's results, and bring you up to speed on what to look for. It should be a fun evening -- can we count on you? RSVP to Tamie at 298-9116, as Shoney's would like a head count.

Thurs., Jan. 18 - Leapin' lizards! It's a program about reptiles! Charlie Painter, Endangered Species Biologist for NM Game & Fish Dept., will present a talk/slide show on "**The Commercial Trade in Amphibians and Reptiles in New Mexico.**" Charlie helped write a bill introduced in 1995 in the State Senate that, if passed, would regulate commercial trade in wild-caught amphibians and reptiles within New Mexico. He'll bring us up to date on the bill and on research being done in this area. His slide show will feature New Mexico species most threatened by commercial trade, as well as other common reptile species within the state. Remember, folks, birds descended from reptiles!

Come one, come all! Everyone is welcome on field trips: Audubon members or non-members, novice and experienced birders.



## TRIPS FOR DECEMBER

Sat., Dec. 2 - **Bosque Del Apache**. Join us for the best birding in New Mexico. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Physics Building parking lot (Yale and Lomas). Bring your lunch and dress warmly.

December - Join us for the **Christmas Count**.

## TRIPS FOR JANUARY

Sun., Jan. 7 - **Kit Carson Park and Breakfast**. Meet at 7:30 at the Village Inn, 2437 Central NW, for breakfast. If you don't want to get up that early, meet us at Kit Carson Park at 8:30. To get to the park, take Laguna Blvd. south off Central. We'll move on to the Nature Center or Corrales Bosque and be back around noon.

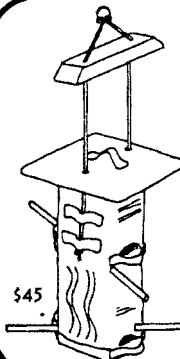
Sun., Jan. 21 - **Los Lunas Grasslands** looking for Longspurs. We'll also check out the refuge south of Belen, looking for Harlans, dark and light-morph Redtails, and Ferruginous Hawks. Meet at 8:30 at the Physics Bldg. parking lot (Yale and Lomas). Bring your lunch; we'll be back by midafternoon.

## TEMPTING TRIPS

Feb. 11-20, 1996: **Among The Great Whales** - Baja, California. An extraordinary benefit tour for **Randall Davey Audubon Center** supporters. Explore isolated islands in the Gulf of California (Sea of Cortez) and bond with the Gray Whales in Magdalena Bay on Baja's Pacific coast. Travel in luxury aboard the 70-passenger M.V. Sea Lion, but go places only small boats can go! Call 505-983-4609 for information.



Jan. 19-21: **Wings Over Willcox** - Sandhill Crane Celebration, Willcox, AZ. Phone 1-800-200-2272.

Jan. 19-20: **Eagle Fest**, Emory, TX. Phone 1-903-473-2901.



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December is a great month! Chanukah, Christmas, snow, my birthday, and the 96th Audubon Christmas Bird Count! Our

world optimistically prepares to give birth to a New Year, new adventures, new promises. Give yourself a special gift - a day of birding - by joining in your Audubon Christmas Count. It's fun. It's an adventure. And it's right in your own backyard - well, almost.

By participating, you contribute to a bird population and habitat database that was begun in 1900. The first Count organized as a protest against holiday hunts, where teams tried to kill the most wildlife in one day.

Today, the results of each Christmas Count are an important aid to understanding our changing environment and its effect on wildlife. Birds are the early warning indicators of the health of the world. Up-to-date information on bird populations and data on geographical shifts in winter ranges alert us to changes in our ecosystem. Eventually, these changes will affect every single life on earth. Help us collect current information, and act to protect all life, with a simple, pleasant day of birding.

What exactly is the Audubon Christmas Count?

CNMAS sponsors seven Counts in our area. Each Count group covers a circle with a 15-mile diameter, over a period of 24 hours. For most of us, that means a delightful early-morning to late-afternoon day of birding. We enjoy a social hour afterwards, when we turn in count sheets, compare notes, and share our day's adventures. We're part of 1700 Bird Counts across the Americas, the West Indies, Bermuda, and several Pacific islands. New Mexico will contribute information from 20 Bird Counts.

The results of the Christmas Count are important to us as local birders,

but they are also carefully transmitted to our National Audubon Society and published the following fall in National Audubon Field Notes. Results of our Local Counts will also appear in our Burrowing Owl.

There are always a few surprises in the Christmas Count. Some of the Displaced Birds we've seen are the American Bittern, Blue Grosbeak, and the Magpie. I remember the excited face of a child reporting her sighting of a Bald Eagle in the Sandias last year.

This gift to ourselves of a fun day of birding is also our gift to the Earth. It is a gentle monitoring that is an expression of caring for and unity with all life. Come along with us this year. Bring interested family and friends, too.

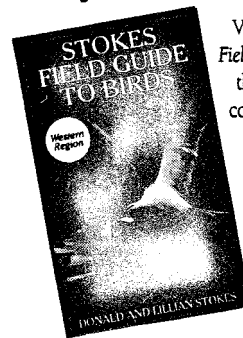
To join a bird counting group, call any of the local Count contact people. You are welcome at any Count and at the social/compilation party afterwards.

Happy Counting!

-- Christy Brothers



## Reserve The New Stokes Field Guide To Birds. (Just In Time For Holiday Gift Giving.)



Visit us to reserve a copy of the new *Stokes Field Guide To Birds*. Three years in the making, this guide features over 500 pages and 900 color photographs and is ideal for novice, expert birders and those who just enjoy backyard birds. To reserve your copy, you may buy a gift certificate, which includes a color brochure and is redeemable in January when the guides arrive. It's a great gift for anyone interested in the wonderful hobby of birdwatching.

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The following article is reprinted, with permission, from Common Ground, a publication of The Conservation Fund.

### Preserving Species: Myths and Realities

By Mollie Beattie, Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The trouble with endangered species is that they tell the truth when people want myth.

The biggest myth is that Americans cannot afford to conserve their wildlife. The Endangered Species Act, in myth, damages the economy, while species and ecosystem losses supposedly have no cost. Reliable studies, however, show no correlation between endangered species listings and declining growth in two common indices of economic activity: construction employment and gross state product.

The real issue is not "jobs versus endangered species." The truth is that development must obey the limits of sustainability. Endangered species are merely messengers of that reality. The question that needs asking is how shall we live within ecological limits?

Our economy depends on the sustained health of our environment. What is economic in the long run is what conserves endangered species. No accurate cost-benefit analysis would calculate in favor of extinction.

Just ask the salmon fishermen of the Northwest or the watermen of the Chesapeake Bay. They know from painful experience what happens when the long-term health of the environment is sacrificed in the name of economic development.

Myth-makers also frequently criticize the science used by the Fish and Wildlife Service, but rarely, if ever, has a listing been reversed because of poor science. If anything, we tend to be too thorough -- and to list too late to avoid emergencies, not too early.

The myth says that the Act has halted thousands of Federal projects. The facts say that between 1987 and 1992 the Service conducted nearly 97,000 consultations with other agencies, producing only 54 project withdrawals or terminations.

The myth says that the Service has prosecuted hundreds, if not thousands, of landowners for things they did on private land, but a 1994 report by the General Accounting Office shows that from FY '88 through FY '93, the Service obtained injunctive relief only four times to stop or delay activities harming endangered species on nonfederal lands.

The myth says that the Service doesn't balance human interests with those of animals, but when a species appears on the endangered species list, the "balancing" has already been done. Many listed species have already lost over 90% of their habitat. Advocates of "balance" now protest saving the last 10, 5, or 2%. Where is the "balance" in that?

In 25 years the Endangered Species Act has helped prevent extinction of over 200 species. Most important, the Act has given warning of ecological crisis while time still remained to take action. The increasing frequency with which these warnings are sounding today does not mean that something is wrong with the alarm. It signals unsustainable use of natural resources -- over-harvesting timber, pollution, destruction of wetlands and other habitats vital to both wildlife and human health.

Until we change our ways, such problems will exist whether or not we have an Endangered Species Act. Congress may change the Act, but it cannot repeal the laws of nature.

The Burrowing Owl Newsletter is published six times a year, February, April, June, August, October and December by Central New Mexico Audubon Society, P.O. Box 30002, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87190-0002. Subscription is free to National Audubon Society members, \$12 to nonmembers.

## RECYCLING INFORMATION . . .

From Roadrunner Ramblings, Mesilla Valley Audubon, comes this tip on recycling all kinds of greeting cards -- Christmas, birthday, etc. Send them to: The St. Jude's Ranch for Children, 100 St. Jude Street, Boulder City, NV 89005. You can send just the front of the card with the picture. The kids recycle them into new greeting cards, and the project enables them to earn pocket money. For more information call 702-293-3131.

For free pickup of a wide array of recyclable paper at your office, contact Capital Recycling of New Mexico. They will accept computer paper, photocopy paper, white and colored ledger, legal pad paper, envelopes, manila file folders, slick/glossy paper, catalogues, brochures, magazines, telephone books, index cards, shredded paper, and JUNK MAIL -- with staples! Call 247-0118 to sign up.



Hidden in the misty reaches of the Sierra Madres, a little known, only partially explored canyon, deeper and 5 times larger than our Grand Canyon. Called Copper Canyon, inhabited by secretive Tarahumaras, solitary cowboys, and lean prospectors who plunk down solid silver to buy goods, and leave at first light with heavily laden mules. Hidden on the tropical bottom, below the rapids that cascade over huge boulders in the forgotten village of BATOPILAS, is the fabulously restored Hacienda, the dream of American businessman Skip McWilliams. Maintained for a few select guests, who appreciate authenticity, privacy and isolation. At the end of an 8 hour rugged cliff-hanging dirt road, the Hacienda's shady courtyard fountains invite relaxation in another era. The life of the village goes on at its own pace, just outside the massive adobe walls.

YOU are invited. Call Judy at our U.S. Office.

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## OTHER NEW MEXICO CHRISTMAS COUNTS

- Roswell - Dec. 16. Contact Sherry Bixler, 522-0597  
Gila River - Dec. 30. Contact Ralph Fisher, 535-2320  
Silver City - Dec. 16. Contact Ralph Fisher, 535-2320  
Las Cruces - Dec. 17. Contact Barry Zimmer, 915-821-6737  
Caballo - Jan. 2. Contact Barry Zimmer, 915-821-6737  
Santa Fe - Dec. 23. Contact Pat Insley, 982-0796  
Española - Dec. 31. Contact Bernie Foy, 466-1587  
Las Vegas - Dec. 16 or 17. Contact Chris Rustay, 989-8081  
Peloncillo Mtns. - Dec. 30. Contact Bob Scholes, 557-2330  
Bluewater Lake/Zuni - probably Dec. 16. Contact John Trochet, 916-736-3560  
Loving - Dec. 17 or 26. Contact Steve West, 885-1153  
Carlsbad Caverns - Dec. 16. Contact Steve West, 885-1153  
Lakes Avalon/McMillan - To be announced. Contact Mike Medrano, 899-1287

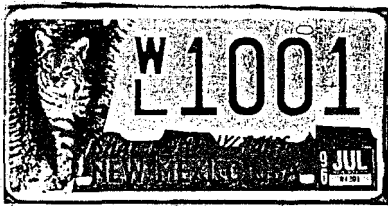
**CONSERVATION - ACT LOCALLY!**

Are you "green" in a sea of brown? Do you want to do your part for conservation in New Mexico, but don't know where to start? Read on!

1. Pick up the phone and volunteer for **New Mexico Conservation Voters Alliance** (466-6920). In every legislative session since 1983, CVA has had a successful record of defeating "bad" bills and helping pass landmark legislation (such as solid waste management and recycling, and hardrock mining reclamation.) They monitor, present testimony, lobby, amend, and report on individual legislative actions as they pass through the State Legislature. They need your support right away -- the Legislative session is less than two months away! And yes, they need funds. Send your contribution to NMCVA, PO Box 40497, Alb, NM 87196, to become a member of this dynamic and effective Environmental Team.

(By the way, Dave Henderson is on the Executive Committee of NM Conservation Voters Alliance. We can't stress enough their important role in our grassroots efforts to influence our legislators.)

2. **Wildlife License Plate?** Say "Yes," and say it loudly. To let Santa Fe know you want one, and you want it this year: (1) Join Conservation Voters Alliance above. (2) **Write to Dave Henderson at Randall Davey Audubon Center, PO Box 9314, Santa Fe, NM 87504, and add your support to the petition drive he is collecting toward this end.**



Why support the Wildlife License Plate? It's voluntary (not a new tax.) It does not create new bureaucracy (no additional employees required.) It's effective (the proceeds go to **Share with Wildlife**, which funds numerous conservation projects which are, in many cases, matched by federal aid grants). It's broad-based (verifiable citizen

support). It's self-supporting (a share of the voluntary fee goes to cover the cost of making the license plates).

3. Finally, **CHECK IT OFF!** Let us put the cue in your mind now to check off a voluntary donation of part of your State Tax refund to **Share with Wildlife**. There's a box to "check it off" on your State income tax form.



**AMERICAN BIRDING  
ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE  
CENTRAL NEW MEXICO**

**January 13, 1996**

The American Birding Association will be having a 5-day conference in Albuquerque from January 11 to January 15. (Among other things, they will be visiting Bosque del Apache NWR and having a series of lectures.) On Saturday, January 13, the conference speakers will cover such interesting topics as the evolution of bird color, finding rarities and specialties in New Mexico, raptor conservation, New Mexico Partners in Flight, and Difficult Warblers.

The New Mexico Ornithological Society will be co-sponsoring the social event in the afternoon. *Audubon members are invited.* If members wish, they may also attend that night's dinner and dinner presentation.

The Conference will be based at the Sheraton in Old Town in Albuquerque. To save a place for the full day of lectures (\$49), and/or the dinner and dinner presentation (\$20), send a check to the ABA.

**SCHEDULE**

	Breakfast on your own
8:45 am	Program: Why Tail-spots Are Not in the Middle of the Tail by Edward H. Burt, Jr.
10:20 am	Break
10:45 am	Program: Finding Rarities and Specialties in New Mexico by Larry Corbet
11:40 am	Program: New Mexico and Partners in Flight by Roberta Salazar and James Travis
12:10 pm	Lunch on your own and ABA Sales display
2:30 pm	Program: Raptor Enjoyment/Raptor Conservation by Jim Place
3:30 pm	Break
3:30 - 5:00	Social Hour (ABA and NMOS)
5:00 pm	Program: Difficult Plumages and Vocalizations of North American Warblers by Jon Dunn
6:30 pm	Dinner
7:30 pm	Program: Encounters with North American Owls by Julio de la Torre

To register for these activities, please send your name, address and check for events you wish to attend to: American Birding Association, Central New Mexico Regional Conference, PO Box 6599, Colorado Springs, CO 80934

**AUDUBON ADVENTURES  
YOUR EFFORTS ARE PAYING OFF!**

Thirty classrooms are receiving Audubon Adventures because of your generous gifts. Whether you designated a teacher or donated to the 1995 Birdathon, you helped CNMAS support environmental education throughout the region. Students will receive six issues (32 copies each) of the NAS newspaper, and the teachers will receive a leader's guide for each issue. This year's topics include: spiders, endangered species, conifers, mammals, bird migration, and soil invertebrates.

Do you plan ahead? If so, a donation you make now will fund a classroom subscription for school year 1996-97. Please make your check payable to CNMAS and send with this form to:

Ron Waitz  
804 Guadalupe Cir., NW  
Alb, NM 87114  
Thanks!



Enclosed please find my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Each \$35 will sponsor one classroom in the Audubon Adventures Program. Any amount you contribute will benefit our educational activities.)

I choose to designate \_\_\_\_\_  
Elementary/Middle School for my sponsorship  
(designation is optional).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

New from NAS, full Spanish editions of Audubon Adventures. With the help of Karen Copeland-Williams at the Randall Davey Audubon Center, 29 classes in the Albuquerque area are being treated to free subscriptions in Spanish. New Mexico is a trial area, along with California and Mexico. Funding comes from the ARCO Foundation and National Audubon Society. This has provided a great opportunity to reach so many more schools and students.

**TRIP REPORT**  
By Rebecca Gracey

Central Audubon had three outings in September: First to Fort Sumner, where we saw several Red-headed Woodpeckers and Blue Jays in town; a Red-breasted Nuthatch and Wilson Warblers at Bosque Redondo; and then Black Terns and an Osprey at Lake Sumner. The next trip was to the HawkWatch side in the Manzano Mountains, and the last was to Percha Dam, where Yellow-billed Cuckoos and a pair of Red-naped Sapsuckers were seen. An Osprey and Golden Eagle were also sighted.

In October a trip south of Albuquerque found Redheads, Marsh Wrens, and a female Common Yellowthroat at Isleta Marsh. Then the group went on to Grasslands Turf Farm, passing a Ferruginous Hawk en route. Several Sage Thrashers, American Pipits, and Horned Larks were seen there. The last stop was at Willie Chavez State Park in Belen, where some saw the Lewis' Woodpecker, but all saw the plentiful Yellow-rumped Warblers.

Our final trip before the Burrowing Owl went to press was to the Bosque del Apache on October 28. The Sandhill Cranes were seen in all parts of the refuge, and Ross' Geese were in abundance. Some of the more interesting sightings were two Greater White-fronted Geese, a dark/rufous integrate Red-tailed Hawk (it looked just like the picture in Bill Clark's new book on hawks), a Bald Eagle, and five Western Grebes.

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email: President@WhiteHouse.GOV.

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Washington, DC 20240  
(202) 208-7351

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(505) 766-3481

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(202) 224-5521  
(505) 766-3636

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Washington, DC 20510

Hon. Steve Schiff — (505) 766-2538  
Hon. Joe Skeen — (202) 225-2365  
Hon. Bill Richardson — (202) 225-6190  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

### National Audubon Society

**Membership Hotline**  
(800) 274-4201

**Activist Hotline**  
(800) 659-2622

**Southwest Regional Office**  
2525 Wallingwood, Suite 1505  
Austin, Texas 78746  
(512) 327-1943

**New Mexico Office**  
David Henderson  
Randall Davey Audubon Center  
PO Box 9314  
Santa Fe, NM 87504  
(505) 983-4609

US Fish and Wildlife Service  
500 Gold Avenue, SW  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
Regional Director-(505) 766-2321  
Refuges and Wildlife-(505) 766-2036  
Habitat Conservation-(505) 766-2914

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish  
Villagra Building  
P.O. Box 25112  
Santa Fe, NM 87503-0001  
(505) 841-8881

Sandia Ranger District  
US Forest Service  
Floyd A. Thompson III, District Ranger  
11776 Highway 337  
Tijeras, NM 87059  
(505) 281-3304

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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.

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



## National Audubon Society

### Chapter Membership Application

Yes, I'd like to join.

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and of my local chapter. Please send AUDUBON magazine and my membership card to the address below.

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ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

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CNMAS Chapter

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

LOCAL CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

**Central New Mexico Audubon Society**

Local Chapter Code — Q51

7XCH8

Use the above form for new subscriptions only. Contact Membership Chairperson for changes of address or corrections in your Burrowing Owl label. Nonmembers can receive the Burrowing Owl by sending your name and address with \$10 to CNMAS, c/o Beth Hurst, 804 Guadalupe Circle, N.W., 87114-1710.

### THURSDAY MORNING BIRDING GROUP --

For information on Thursday morning outings to nearby areas, call Tamie Bulow at 298-9116.

### WILDLIFE RESCUE

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

### RARE BIRD ALERT

To learn about sightings all over the state or to report a rare sighting, the number in Santa Fe is 662-2101.

### BAT IN TROUBLE?

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281-1133

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