

ROADRUNNER RAMBLINGS

Volume 24, No. 4. July/August 2002

Community Service

by Harold Harrison

A group of Doña Ana Branch Community College (DABCC) Principles of Human Communication students chose the Mesilla Valley Audubon Society as their community service project. We would like to express sincere thanks to those on the committee who enthusiastically participated in the variety of activities that the group decided was worthy of their time. Most of the students spent time in excess of their assigned ten hours.

- Robert Wu spent extra hours coordinating the committee, designing an attractive Birdathon flyer for our newsletter, attending a regular Audubon meeting, manning a table at NMSU's Earth Day, distributing flyers, and helping to recruit expired Audubon members.
- Janet Corral exuded a "can do" attitude by taking on a variety of projects. She was the committee member who single-handedly manned an Audubon information table at a hummingbird talk presented by Lorraine Schulte at Enchanted Gardens. In addition, she developed a telephone solicitation script for calling expired members for re-recruitment and contacted the old members.
- Jose Torres developed and distributed an extremely attractive flyer advertising our April Audubon meeting program. He also met with the speaker and personally offered to supply a copy of the flyer to him.
- Other committee members distributed membership flyers, passed out posters, and informed their classmates of pertinent Audubon historical facts as well as our conservation philosophy.

The student's enthusiasm for participating in community service was outstanding. The emphasis that DABCC places on working in our community is of utmost importance. The principle that "when one receives benefits from a community, they should also be willing give back" is admirable. Groups that want to join the MVAS in our projects are more than welcome. If anyone has contact with a group that would like to volunteer please contact a MVAS board member listed on the back of the newsletter.

Fundraiser Updates

Silent Auction. The first MVAS Silent Auction was quite a success. Thanks to everyone who generously donated items. Congratulations AND thank you to those with the winning bids. Everyone's participation helped raise \$170.00 for Audubon Adventures. We would like to do this again in the future. Please call me at 523-1548 if you have ideas or suggestions for a future Silent Auction.

Barb Rodriguez

Birdathon. Birdathon was a tremendous success this year. We raised more than \$3,100, which is a record for Mesilla Valley Audubon. I want to thank all our participants and sponsors, especially our celebrity birder, Jackye Meinecke from Enchanted Gardens Nursery, who went with Harold and Barbara Harrison's team. Other MVAS fundraising birders were Amanda Skarsgard, Vince Hernandez, Tim Lawton, Steve Wust, Lee Kellogg, Walt Whitford, Phil Alkon, Lorraine Schulte, Sue and Wally Hill, Tara Shelton, Nancy Stotz, Ralph Preszler, and last but not least, myself, your Birdathon chairperson. Another special thanks goes to Donna Wood who was not able to bird but still went out to raise money for the chapter on behalf of other birders. Another record that I believe we set this year is the number of species counted by one team - 136 for Lorraine, Sue, Wally, and Tara. Congratulations! We also could not have done all this without Barbara Rodriguez, our treasurer, who managed to keep all of our records straight as money trickled in.

These contributions will help continue our educational programs. Money goes to support Audubon Adventures, the New Mexico Supplement for Audubon Adventures, the teaching award to encourage environmental education in the schools, and educational programs at our State office, the Randall Davey Audubon Center in Santa Fe.

I hope everyone who participated this year had as much fun as I did. Hope to see you next year!

Storm Sermay

New Mexico Audubon On the Web

The New Mexico Audubon State Council has recently established a website at

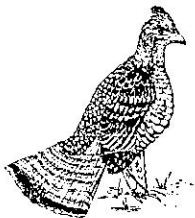
www.NewMexicoAudubon.org.

The site provides links to all the Audubon chapters in the state, as well as the Randall Davey Audubon Center in Santa Fe.

And don't forget, if you ever lose your newsletter and need to see what events MVAS has scheduled, you can always visit our own website, at

www.cybermesa.com/~mvas.

Welcome New Members



Justin and Anel Herrera
Margaret Thompson

JOIN NOW!

I would like to join the **National Audubon Society** and **Mesilla Valley Audubon Society** for the introductory rate of \$20.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Q54
7XCH

Membership includes the publications *Audubon* and *Roadrunner Ramblings*.

Send this application and your check (made payable to National Audubon Society) to:

Membership, MVAS
P.O. Box 1645
Las Cruces, NM 88004

Big Summer for the Rio Grande

Three projects which should provide opportunities for habitat rehabilitation along the Rio Grande will be soliciting public input this summer. With enough public support, these projects could be important stepping stones toward healthier wetland, bosque, and riverine habitats in southern New Mexico. Consider attending one of these meetings or submitting a letter of support if you want to see improved habitats along the Rio Grande.

Mesilla Valley Bosque Park (MVBP).

The New Mexico State Parks Department will be hosting a public meeting to discuss the draft of their feasibility study for this park at 7 PM on July 16 at the Spring Hill Suites. The MVBP is a vision developed by the Southwest Environmental Center (SWEC) for the area on the west side of the river between the Calle del Norte bridge and Mesilla Dam, which includes the birding hot spot commonly referred to as the Old Refuge (using the long-term records of some of our members, MVAS has created a preliminary bird list for the MVBP). The MVBP vision includes significant habitat restoration as well as a trail system and environmental education center. Contact Kevin Buggie at SWEC (522-5552) or Steve Cary at NM State Parks (505-476-3355) for more information.

Rio Grande Corridor Project.

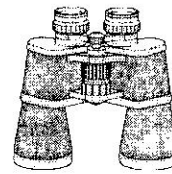
Thanks to a quarter of a million dollar grant from the EPA, the City of Las Cruces has embarked on a comprehensive planning process for an eleven-mile corridor along the Rio Grande, from the Shalem Colony Bridge to Mesilla Dam. Part of the grant was designated for a pilot project to create a restored wetland. A public meeting to review the design for this wetland will be held on July 22 at 5:30 PM (location TBA). In addition, a series of public meetings will be held the week of August 19, to discuss the first draft of the comprehensive plan developed for the entire 11-mile corridor. Contact Carol McCall (528-3117) for more information.

IBWC Environmental Impact Statement.

(continued on page 4) See **Big Summer**

Field Trips

Field trips are free and open to the general public. Entry fees to some areas may be required and driving costs are shared. On all field trips wear appropriate clothing and bring water and binoculars.



Burn Lake. July 20. Please join me at 7:30 AM Saturday July 20th at Burn Lake. Aside from the local resident birds and waterfowl, we may see American Kestrels, Western Kingbirds and Cormorants. If they are still in the area, we'll see a Burrowing Owl family. Then we'll go to the Glass Road/Snow Road area as well as the river levee next to the Calle del Norte bridge in Mesilla. We'll be back no later than noon. Barb Rodriguez (bkrod1@aol.com or 523-1548).

Headwaters of Percha Creek. August 17. Weather and forest fires permitting, we'll venture up into the mountains of the Black Range southwest of Truth or Consequences to cool off and bird. If we're lucky there will be some water in the creek, bringing in lots of montane species. We'll leave from the K-Mart on Highway 70 at 6:30 AM, returning in the late afternoon. Bring a high clearance vehicle if you've got one. Contact Nancy Stotz (nstotz@zianet.com or 521-8087) or Walt Whitford (wawhitfo@nmsu.edu or 521-1358) for more details.

Holloman Lake and Wetlands.

September 7. Hildy Reiser, Natural Resources Manager for Holloman Air Force Base, will lead this trip into the Holloman wetland site, some of which is closed to unescorted public access. This year was a record setting year for Snowy Plover and American Avocet reproduction at the site, and early September is the peak of shorebird migration, so we should be treated to lots and lots of shorebirds on this trip. Meet at information kiosk in the Holloman Lake parking area (turn north off of Highway 70, 3.8 miles east of the White Sands National Monument entrance) at 7:30 AM. To carpool from Las Cruces, be at the K-Mart on Highway 70 by 6:30. The trip will probably involve moderate walking and should be over by mid-afternoon. For more information, contact Hildy Reiser at 505-572-3931 or hildy.reiser@holloman.af.mil.

Audubon Adventures Update

Donations from many members, friends, and organizations have made it possible for Mesilla Valley Audubon Society to fund classrooms with Audubon Adventures kits for the year 2002-2003.

A New Mexico supplement on Burrowing Owls is being prepared at the Randall Davey Audubon Center in Santa Fe and will be included in the Audubon Adventures kits for the next school year.

We'd like to acknowledge the generosity of those who donated directly to our Audubon Adventures program for this

coming year: Shirley Minge, Thomas and Jane Teaguc, Nancy Stotz, Mary R. Williams, Storm Sermay, Tim Lawton, Tom and Shirley Whalen, Helen Barber, Jean Henry, Susan Stauffer-Baning, Helga Mendoza, Bill and Donna Jacobson, Robert Meyer, Nigel Fitch, Citizen's Bank of Las Cruces, Angel B. Montoya, Alice Doss, Mary Lou and John Wallace, Darrell Mott, Lorraine Schulte, Barbara Lee Myers, Ruth Wiser, Janice and David Newman, Mr. and Mrs. John Ludka, Leslye and John Ramirez, Dr. and Mrs. William Klein, Jackie Meineke, Desert Dauber's Garden Club, and Diane Nelson.

Lorraine Schulte

Field Trip Reports

Ladder Ranch. April 20. The trip to the Ladder Ranch led by Tracy Mader was very productive and interesting. We had 19 people show up for the trip and saw many birds including Western and Summer Tanagers, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Bridled Titmouse, Virginia Warbler and many other birds plus a very nice herd of bison. Tracy did a very nice job of showing us the birds and answering many questions about Ted Turner.

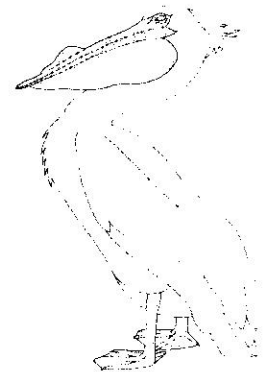
Ed Mayfield

Holloman Lakes. April 20. International Migratory Bird Day was held at White Sands National Monument on Saturday, April 20, 2002. Harold Harrison and Barb Rodriguez manned a booth for Audubon. In addition to helping man the booth, Guy Powers gave a Jr. Duck Stamp Presentation. Gordon Ewing helped lead field trips to Holloman Lakes. Birds seen near the visitor center included Red-naped Sapsucker, Vermilion Flycatcher, Lark Bunting, Scott's Oriole and Western Kingbird. At Holloman Lakes White-faced Ibis, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, Snowy Plover and Long-billed Dowitcher were some of the highlights.

Barb Rodriguez

Chiricahua Mountains. May 18. The Chiricahuas were very dry and a ban on fires was imposed on Saturday morning. We did have a great birding trip with an Elegant Trogan coming to a tree at our camp on two consecutive days and sitting and posing while we photographed him. On the South Fork we were able to see many different birds where there was water. We did not beat the Alamogordo Bird Club's count of 95, but we came in with 87 species.

Ed Mayfield



Bird Notes

Species	Date	Location	Observers
Whimbrel	4-9	Mesilla	HH
Summer Tanager	4-25	Soledad Canyon	PT
Lazuli Bunting	4-28	Las Cruces	KS
Northern Parula	5-3	NMSU	CB
American Golden Plover	5-4	Ft. Bliss Sewage Ponds	JP
House Wren	5-6	Ft. Bliss Sewage Ponds	BZ
Western Tanager	5-6	Ft. Bliss Sewage Ponds	BZ
Painted Bunting	5-7	La Mesa	BG
Northern Cardinal	5-9	Mesilla	KM
Mountain Bluebird	5-19	Palomas	RB
Lazuli Bunting	5-19	Ft. Bliss Sewage Ponds	JP
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5-21	Organ Mountains	CR
Bell's Vireo	5-21	WSMR	CR
Blue-winged Warbler	5-21	WSMR	CR
Varied Bunting	5-21	WSMR	CR
Lazuli Bunting	5-21	WSMR	CR
Indigo Bunting	5-21	WSMR	CR
Reddish Egret	5-24	Holloman Lakes	BZ
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	5-24	Leasburg	SH, LS
Hooded Warbler	5-26	Ft. Bliss Sewage Ponds	JP
Vermilion Flycatcher	5-27	Palomas	RB, FL
Arctic Tern	5-27	Ft. Bliss Sewage Ponds	JP
Broad-billed Hummer	4-14-5-27	Radium Springs	MS, JZ
Indigo Bunting	5-28	Ft. Bliss Sewage Ponds	JP
Painted Redstart	6-04	Ft. Bliss Sewage Ponds	JP
Zone-tailed Hawk	6-05	Radium Springs	MS, JZ
Common Ground-Dove	6-06	Radium Springs	MS, JZ
Rose-throated Becard	6-07	Las Cruces	JG, LS
Hooded Oriole	6-14	Las Cruces	LS
Phainopepla	6-20	Palomas	RB, FL

Observers: Craig Benkman, Richard Bischoff, Bill Glenn, Jill Green, Harold Harrison, Sue Hill, Frankie Lerner, Kerry McClain, Jim Paton, Chris Rustay, Lorraine Schulte, Marcy Scott, Ken Stinnett, Peggy Thompson, Jimmy Zabriskie, Barry Zimmer

Please report early, late, or unusual sightings to Sue Hill at 505-382-9758 or hillco@zianet.com

New Mexico Rare Bird Hotline 505-323-9323

Mesilla Valley Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society, is a conservation and natural history organization in southern New Mexico that promotes appreciation and conservation of birds, other wildlife, and habitat, through environmental education, issue advocacy, and natural history experiences.

OFFICERS AND BOARD

President	Walt Whitford	521-1358
Vice-president	Guy Powers	373-3843
Secretary	Donna Wood	525-8704
Treasurer	Barb Rodriguez	523-1548
Board (00-02)	Wendy Davis	527-4551
Board (00-02)	Sue Hill	382-9758
Board (01-03)	Tim Lawton	522-2056
Board (01-03)	Nancy Stotz	521-8087
Board (02-04)	Harold Harrison	522-6199
Board (02-04)	Rob Davis	527-4551

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Audubon Adventures	Lorraine Schulte	524-7029
Audubon Council	Storm Sermay	382-3348
Delegates	Jack DeLong	527-9118
Conservation	Nancy Stotz	521-8087
Education	Wendy Davis	527-4551
Field Trips	Ed Mayfield	382-0715
Programs	board at large	
Membership Records	Mary Anne Thibodeau	524-4126
Membership	Harold Harrison	522-6199
Newsletter Editor	Nancy Stotz	521-8087
Publicity	vacant	

Board meetings are held, September through May, on the Thursday before the 3rd Wednesday at 5:30 PM at the Southwest Environmental Center (on the downtown mall). All Audubon members are welcome.

Visit our website at www.cybermesa.com/~mvas/.

and Water Commission is responsible for the management of the river channel and floodway (the area between the levees) of the Rio Grande in our area. They are currently drafting an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for their management practices for the stretch known as the Canalization Project, which runs from Percha Dam, north of Hatch, to El Paso.

The current projected schedule for release of the draft EIS is August or September of 2002, and public meetings on the draft will be held when it is released. The Alliance for the Rio Grande Heritage, which includes New Mexico Audubon among its member organizations, is working with the IBWC to achieve a comprehensive restoration or rehabilitation plan for the Rio Grande through this EIS. The Alliance is encouraging concerned citizens to contact the IBWC to request that the preferred alternative be the one with the greatest restoration potential; letters can be addressed to IBWC Commissioner Carlos Ramirez, International Boundary and Water Commission, 4171 N. Mesa Suite C-310, El Paso, TX 79902-1441. Local members of the Alliance, who can update you on the meeting schedule and the status of the EIS include the World Wildlife Fund's Chihuahuan Desert Program (525-9537) and the Southwest Environmental Center (522-5552).

Nancy Stotz

Second Annual Dragonfly Festival

**Bitter Lake National
Wildlife Refuge
Roswell, NM
(505-622-6755)**



**Guest Speakers
Live Animal Exhibit
Nature Vendors
Kid's Activities
Photography Workshop
Guided Tours**

September 14-15, 2002

Roadrunner Ramblings is published six times a year: January, March, May, July, September, and November. Submissions are welcome; please email copy to nstotz@zianet.com, or call for mailing information. **Next deadline: 24 August.** Printed by **insta-copy printing** on 50% kenaf, 50% PCW recycled chlorine-free paper. Images, except Dale Zimmerman's roadrunner, are from IMSI's Master Clips/Master Photos[©] Collection.

**Mesilla Valley Audubon Society
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