

ROADRUNNER RAMBLINGS

Volume 34, No. 2. Mar.-Apr. 2012

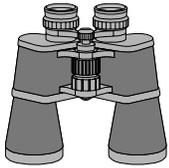


MVAS Programs

Membership meetings and programs are held each month at the Village at Northrise, Hallmark Building, 2882 N. Roadrunner Pkwy. Meetings begin at 7:00 PM. Programs begin immediately following the business meeting and announcements.

Birds, Beasts & the Bush: Scenes from Australia. March 21. MVAS member Al Krueger will share photos from his trip to western Australia during March-June of 2011.

Cottonwood Conservation: How Saving Them Can Save Others. April 18. Gregory Penn, winner of the MVAS Richard Bischoff Memorial Scholarship, will describe his research in conservation genetics, which aims to develop models that accurately measure productivity and fragmentation in small populations.



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, sunscreen, and binoculars. Announced trips subject to change—to receive updates and reminders, sign up for the field trip email list, by contacting Mark Pendleton at mpndltn@gmail.com.

Aguirre Springs & Holloman Lakes. March 24. We'll cross the mountains to hit 2 birding hotspots on the east side of the Organs for this trip. At the Aguirre Springs picnic area, we might pick up some foothill and montane species such as nuthatches and titmice, while the entrance road can yield numerous desert species and overwintering sparrows. Holloman Lakes, near Alamogordo, should give us a chance at a wide variety of wintering waterfowl and shorebirds, along with interesting species such as Harris's Hawks, Sage Sparrows, and longspurs. For more info, contact Mark Pendleton (at mpndltn@gmail.com or 575-635-8711).

Lower Gila Box. April 28. Jennifer Montoya will lead our trip into this scenic canyon full of valuable riparian habitats north of Lordsburg. The Gila River is the only undammed major river in New Mexico, and the Lower Gila Box supports significant numbers of rare species including Zone-tailed, Gray, and Common Black-Hawks, Yellow-billed Cuckoos, and SW Willow Flycatchers. Participants will gather in Lordsburg at 7:30 AM (so you might consider an overnight stay in Lordsburg Friday night). Space is limited; registration required. For more info or to register, contact Mark Pendleton (at mpndltn@gmail.com or 575-635-8711).

Intermediate Birdwatching

Interested in improving your identification skills or learning more about the physical and behavioral adaptations that help birds survive? Through classroom sessions and field trips, we'll help you to improve your birding skills and to develop a deeper appreciation for these amazing creatures.

This course will focus on vocalizations, form & function, and bird behavior. On our field trips, we'll explore some of the diverse habitats that are found in our region, from wetlands to desert foothills.

Classroom Sessions will be held Tuesday evenings, April 10, 17, and 24. Half- to ¾-day field trips will be Saturdays, April 14, 21, and 28.

Cost is \$40 and space is limited. Registration deadline is March 27.

Contact Nancy at 575-521-8087 for more information and to register for the course.

La Luz, Caballo CBC Highlights

On December 28, four parties conducted the La Luz Christmas Bird Count. The results were a respectable 85 species, with Ovenbird, Blue Jay, and Common Grackle representing new species for this count. Other good numbers were 7 Harris's Hawks and 5 Golden Eagles. As with other counts, this year, many land birds were in short supply. Many of the high elevation birds, such as Steller's Jay, were missing, and we tallied low numbers of nuthatches.

The Caballo CBC, held January 2, again had good species numbers—128 total—with Rusty Blackbird, Yellow-shafted Flicker, good numbers of Sandhill Cranes, and both California and Herring Gulls among the highlights. As with the other counts, the dry conditions made some of the normal land birds in short supply. In areas away from the Rio Grande we were hard pressed to find the normal numbers of sparrows. An example of low numbers also included species such as Spotted Sandpiper (1 only), along with low numbers of Northern Mockingbirds and Verdins. With good conditions, I feel this count could hit 150 species soon.

John Douglas, Compiler

JOIN NOW!

- National Membership (one year):
Join **both** the **National Audubon Society** and **Mesilla Valley Audubon Society** for the introductory rate of \$20 (a \$15 savings!). You'll receive both *Audubon Magazine* and *Roadrunner Ramblings*. Make check payable to National Audubon Society (NAS).
- Chapter Membership (one year):
Join just the **Mesilla Valley Audubon Society** for \$15. You'll receive *Roadrunner Ramblings*. Make check payable to Mesilla Valley Audubon Society.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ C2ZQ540Z

Send this form and your check to:

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

Questions about your membership status? Contact Nancy Stotz at 575-521-8087 or nstotz1@comcast.net.

MVAS Offers Teacher Award

Mesilla Valley Audubon Society wants to recognize the efforts of teachers in encouraging children to care for the environment, and is offering the **15th Annual Lorraine Schulte Excellence in Teaching Award**. **This award is \$250.**

Any person who is aware of a teacher who they feel excels in this area can nominate the teacher for the award by completing a brief description of the program. Also, any teacher of kindergarten through 12th grade can nominate him or herself by submitting an application.

Applicants are asked to list the objectives of the program they would like to be considered, with a brief description of the techniques of the program activities and a simple evaluation of the program.

The deadline for applying is March 15, 2012. For more information or to obtain a copy of the application, call Lorraine Schulte at 524-7029, or email her at mjls47@gmail.com.

New CBC Circle! If you're just itching to get out and do some more citizen science, consider getting in on the ground floor of a new Christmas Bird Count Circle! Mark Pendleton and Wayne Treers are seriously considering starting a CBC circle in Deming for the 2012/2013 CBC. If you're interested, please contact either Mark or Wayne at mpndlt@gmail.com 575.635.8711 or way1mike@yahoo.com 575.528.8696

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

President: David Griffin 640-0029
Vice-president: Gill Sorg 541-0577
Secretary: Laurie Keaton 522-3710
Treasurer: Nancy Stotz 521-8087

BOARD MEMBERS (2-yr terms)

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Ken Stinnett (10-12) 649-3781
Sean Barham (11-13) 644-2680
Mark Pendleton (11-13) 635-8711
Carol Campbell (12-14) 640-1660
Tim Lawton (12-14) 522-2056

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.mvaudubon.org

To sign up for this newsletter in electronic form, email nstotz1@comcast.net

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