

ROADRUNNER RAMBLINGS

Volume 32, No. 5. Sep.-Oct. 2010

A Time of Change

by David Griffin, outgoing MVAS President

Greetings. The title of this message says it all—we are in the midst of a great seasonal change for birds, plants, weather and day length. We all love the familiarity of our summer resident bird species, but let's face it, if you're an active birder, at some time in the middle of August you got a yearning for a good look at your first fall migrant. In the Mesilla Valley this usually means seeing one of our western wood-warblers such as a Townsend's Warbler, or perhaps a Cassin's Vireo, or a day when you see a Western Wood-Pewee in your yard or a multitude of Western Tanagers at the Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park.

And as we all know, changes occur within each of us—active birders and non-birders alike. This year I have been witness to a great number of changes in my own life, some good, some not so good. So it is with regret that I have to announce my resignation as President of the Mesilla Valley Audubon Society. This was a difficult decision to make, but one that has been on my mind for a few months now. I will miss working with all of you and for MVAS, Audubon New Mexico and for all that we do.

My resignation in no way means that MVAS will discontinue any of our regular activities. In fact I see my resignation as a means for the MVAS Board and membership to focus on our mission and core activities and actually increase the quality of work we all do. As a MVAS Member or non-member I encourage you to think of ways you can contribute to help fulfill our mission. I encourage you to participate on our field trips, monthly programs and help spread the word of the great things we do locally in the Mesilla Valley and beyond. Our core activities involve education, outreach, and conservation, and include field trips, monthly programs, Birdathon, the Christmas Bird Count, Audubon Adventures and our popular Beginning and Intermediate Bird Watching classes. These activities will continue as will our close associations and partnerships with other local and regional conservation partners.

I'm looking forward to the coming season and all it means in the Mesilla Valley. And I hope you continue or begin to become an active member in MVAS if only at the very basic level of talking to your family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers about what we do and why you're proud to be member. And while I won't be actively participating in my regular presidential duties and responsibilities, I do hope to occasionally see you out on the trail or at an event or monthly program.

Lastly, I would like to thank the MVAS Board and committee members—long time and newbies—you have all done excellent jobs. Your caring and commitment to the MVAS mission, but more so your passion for what you do, has been inspirational. I wish you well and all of my best!

Volunteers Needed at Broad Canyon Ranch

Join us on September 18th and help restore vital bird habitat by hand pulling exotic salt cedar seedlings from the riparian bottomlands at Broad Canyon Ranch. Broad Canyon Ranch is home to Swan Pond and is situated on 1.5 miles of the Rio Grande north of Radium Springs (for more details, see Field Trip descriptions on page 2).

September 18th is the first of six volunteer events at Broad Canyon Ranch that Audubon New Mexico will host over the next year under a Together Green grant to fund hands-on, local conservation on Broad Canyon Ranch's 90-acre wetland and riparian floodplain. Volunteer days at Broad Canyon will include pulling salt cedar seedlings, planting native riparian trees and shrubs, removing fence barriers to wildlife, conducting a BioBlitz and conducting a trash pick-up. Audubon's goal is to recruit 150 volunteers across six Volunteer Day events.

Want to join in the fun? To volunteer, call Beth Bardwell at 575-522-5065. For more information on Together Green, visit www.togethergreen.org

Welcome New Members

Stephanie Haan-Amato
Donna L. Muncrief
Cynthia Bailey
Dewitt Littell
Beverly Warnock
Gudrun Dambach
Jack L. Thomas
Susannah Skyer
David K. Rea
Ms. Elisabeth Huebel
Douglas Plattenberger



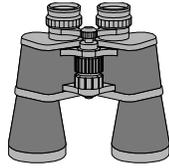
Steven D. Amato

Electronic Newsletter

Help MVAS save resources by signing up to receive *Roadrunner Ramblings* electronically, instead of in printed form. To sign up, email Nancy Stotz at

nstotz1@comcast.net

As each issue goes to press, you will receive an email indicating that a PDF version of the new issue is available for download at our website www.mvaudubon.org



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.

Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park.

September 4. At the riverine, wetlands, and upland/scrub areas of the park, fall migration has begun! Catching thermals will be raptors such as Northern Harriers; Cooper's & Sharp-shinned Hawks; and American Kestrels. Songbirds such as Yellow-rumped Warblers, Western Bluebirds, and White-crowned Sparrows could be arriving. We may also glimpse Rufous Hummingbirds on their way to their winter home in Mexico. The field trip will last approx. 3 hours, and hiking will be easy with frequent stops. Insect repellent, sunscreen, hat, and drinking water are strongly recommended. Meet at parking lot in front of town hall of Town of Mesilla by 7:30 AM at the latest. Carpool to MVBSP. Remember that State Parks charges \$5.00 per vehicle for day use fee unless you possess valid annual permit. For further information, contact Wayne Treers at way1mike@yahoo.com or 528-8696; or Mark Pendleton at mpendleton@zianet.com or 635-8711.

Together Green Service Field Trip to

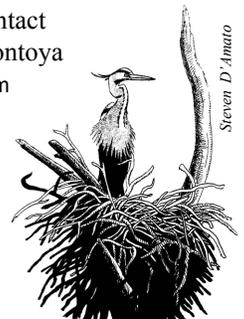
Broad Canyon Ranch, September 18. Join Audubon New Mexico, from 8 AM to 12 PM, to hand pull salt cedar seedlings and assist in native vegetation restoration vital for bird habitat at Broad Canyon Ranch, home to Swan Pond and 1.5 miles of Rio Grande riverfront. Bring a hat, sunscreen, water, bugspray, gloves, and ditch boots or shoes that can get wet (snacks will be provided; extra gloves, sunscreen, bugspray and water will be available as well). Directions: Take Interstate 25 north to Exit 19, Radium Springs. Turn left on Ft. Selden Rd. (NM Hwy 157). Take a right on Hwy. 185 (North Valley) and continue to mile marker 19. The ranch headquarters are a couple of hundred yards north on your right. Look for the Broad Canyon Ranch sign at the headquarters. For further info, call Beth Bardwell at 575-522-5065.

La Llorona Biking/Walking Trail.

October 2. Hiking through the riverine and wetland areas of the Rio Grande from Mesilla to the I-10 bridge, the fall migration will be well underway. We could possibly observe the arrival of various water fowl such as Mallards; Green-winged & Blue-winged Teals; and Northern Shovelers. Songbirds such as White-crowned Sparrows and Dark-eyed Juncos could be making their appearance. Also, our local residents will be here—Pyrrhuloxia, Western Scrub-Jays, and Curve-billed & Crissal Thrashers. The field trip will last approx. 3 hours, and hiking will be easy with frequent stops. Insect repellent, sunscreen, hat, and drinking water are strongly recommended. Meet at parking lot in front of town hall of Town of Mesilla by 7:30 AM at the latest. Car pool to trailhead at Calle del Norte Bridge. For further information, contact Wayne Treers at way1mike@yahoo.com or 528-8696.

El Paso Rio Bosque Park. October 23.

This 372-acre site in southern El Paso has undergone a remarkable transition since native wetland restoration efforts began more than a decade ago. Wetlands have been created, using treated wastewater, and acres of salt cedar have been cleared to make way for native shrubs and trees. Almost 230 bird species have been recorded at the park, including 79 species of waterbirds. Harris Hawks and White-tailed Kites nest at the park, and several other species of raptors winter there, including a Bald Eagle in some years. To participate in this field trip, meet at the Bank of the Rio Grande at the corner of Telshor and University at 6:30 AM. We'll carpool to the park, and should return by early afternoon. Be prepared for a cold morning, but wear layers in case the day heats up. Bring a hat, sunscreen, and something to snack on. We'll probably walk a few miles, but it should all be nice and flat. For more details, contact Jennifer Atchley Montoya at jatchley@zianet.com or 526-1320.



Steven D. Amato

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 **Mesilla Valley Audubon Society** for \$15. You'll receive *Roadrunner Ramblings*. Make check payable to Mesilla Valley Audubon Society.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

C0ZQ540Z

Send this form and your check to:

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

RENEWALS

National Members: NAS will send you renewal notices.

Chapter Members: Check your mailing label. If you see a C followed by a month and year code, you are a Chapter Member. The month and year code indicates the month your membership expires.



MVAS Programs

Membership meetings and programs are held each month at the Village at Northrise, Hallmark Building, 2882 N. Roadrunner Pkway.

Meetings begin at 7:00 PM. Programs begin immediately following the business meeting and announcements.

The Blessings of Bats. September 15.

Presented by Ken Abalos, Park Ranger, New Mexico State Parks. Discover some interesting facts about bats and the important role they play in our lives.

Ligon's New Mexico Bird Surveys.

October 20. Presented by author Harley Shaw. Illustrated with Ligon's own photographs, taken between 1909 and 1913, this presentation describes J. Stokley Ligon's early years in New Mexico and his long ride around the state during his first assignment with the Biological Survey—1200 miles with a horse and two burros, on a quest to locate nesting migratory birds.

6th Annual Gila River Festival

September 16–19, 2010

Silver City, NM

The Gila River represents the lifeblood of a biologically diverse landscape to which humans are intricately tied. Several thousand plant and animal species call the Gila River and its headwaters home, making the mountains of southwestern New Mexico a North American biodiversity hot spot—many species found in the Gila occur nowhere else in the world.

Given that 2010 marks the International Year of Biodiversity, the 6th annual Gila River Festival will celebrate the Gila's extraordinary web of life, highlighting the importance of New Mexico's last free-flowing river in sustaining an ecologically diverse and connected landscape. Participants to the Festival will see, touch and feel what biodiversity is all about, and why it matters to human welfare.

The Gila River Festival will kick off with a keynote speech entitled "Connections:

The Marvelous Complexity of Place" by writer-teacher-activist Mary Sojourner. The River Lecture Series will feature a variety of renowned biodiversity researchers and conservationists, while numerous field trip and workshop opportunities will provide attendees the opportunity to directly experience the area's incredible biodiversity. In historic downtown Silver City, enjoy museum and gallery tours featuring the art and photography of the Gila River, and on Saturday, the Gila River Festival teams up with the Red Hot Children's Fiesta to provide hands-on children's activities to allow kids the opportunity to explore the wonders of nature right in downtown Silver City! On Saturday evening, enjoy the Wild and Scenic Environmental Film Festival, North America's largest environmental film fest, and on Sunday, join us for a panel discussion of the economic benefits of maintaining a healthy, free-flowing Gila River.

This year's festival promises to instill a sense of wonder and connectedness to the Gila River, as well as promote an understanding of the human role in sustaining this remarkable, yet fragile ecosystem. Please join us September 16-19 in celebrating the Gila's web of life. For more info, visit www.gilaconservation.org/6thhighlights1.shtml

Field Trip Report

Percha Dam State Park. August 21. Five people braved the heat and bugs, not too bad for the most part, to see over 45 species at Percha. Everyone got great looks at Lazuli Buntings, both grosbeaks of all ages, both tanagers and many Olive-sided Flycatchers. Warblers included Common Yellowthroat, Wilson's Warbler, Yellow Warbler, and Yellow-breasted Chats, and we had both Chipping and Lark Sparrows. We also saw many Vermilion Flycatchers and 3 species of hummingbirds. All in all a good trip for this time of year. On our return trip, a Golden Eagle and Red-tails, along with Swainson's Hawks, helped the raptor list.

John Douglas

Bird Notes

Species	Date	Location	Observers
Eurasian Collared Dove	6/21	Mesilla Park	BP
Bronzed Cowbird	6/23	Las Cruces	LS
Hooded Oriole	6/24	Las Cruces	LS
Great Horned Owl	6/25	Las Cruces	BR
Rufous Hummingbird	7/13; 16	Las Cruces; Tularosa	SWH; RB
Calliope Hummingbird	7/19; 25; 31	Las Cruces	SWH; LH; LS
Spotted Sandpiper	7/26	LC Dam	NS
White-tailed Kite	7/28, 8/18	MVBSP	CJ
Greater Peewee	7/29	MVBSP	CJ
Peregrine Falcon	7/30, 8/20	LC Dam	NS
Peregrine Falcon	8/11	MVBSP	CJ
White-faced Ibis	7/31; 8/15	MVBSP; Holloman Lake	CJ; LS, BR
Solitary Sandpiper	8/6; 14	LC Dam; MVBSP	NS; CJ
Broad-tailed Hummingbird	8/11	Las Cruces	LS
Anna's Hummingbird	8/12; 20	MVBSP; Las Cruces	CJ; NS
Lark Bunting	8/15	Holloman Lakes	LS, BR
Lark Sparrow	8/15	Holloman Lakes	LS, BR
Wilson's Phalarope	8/15	Holloman Lakes	LS, BR
Baird's Sandpiper	8/15	Holloman Lakes	LS, BR
Yellow Warbler	8/18	MVBSP	CJ

Observers: Richard Ballew, CJ Goin, Sue & Wally Hill, Landy Hinesley, Bruce Pearson, Barb Rodriguez, Lorraine Schulte, Nancy Stotz

Please report interesting sightings to Robert Hull at 575-523-8009 or rwhull@zianet.com

New Mexico Rare Bird Hotline
<http://www.nmbirds.org>

Rare Bird Alerts for NM and other states: www.birder.com

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		
Vice-president	Alan Krueger	532-1036
Secretary	Frankie Lerner	373-0857
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Past President	Gill Sorg	541-0577
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Board (09-11)	Sue Hill	382-9758
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Board (10-12)	Ken Stinnett	649-3781

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Field Trips	vacant	
Programs	Katie McLane	523-6317
Membership	Guy Powers	373-1891
Membership Records	Nancy Stotz	521-8087
Newsletter Editor	Nancy Stotz	521-8087
Publicity	Storm Sermay	382-3348

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

SAVE THE DATE
"Audubon Round Up"
Audubon Chapters' Learning Conference
November 11-14, 2010

Consider yourself invited! Join other Auduboners! Experience the Sonoran Desert along the beautiful Salt River at Saguaro Lake Ranch (only 30 miles from Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport).

Featuring: Learning opportunities to benefit your chapter's projects and your chapter's sustainability, networking, "down time" for fun and relaxed friend-making and excellent Sonoran Desert birding.

Participants: Audubon Chapter Members in Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Nevada and Colorado.

Costs: Event registration fee of \$65.00 per person. Lodging and meals at the Ranch (www.saguarolakeranch.com) range from \$115 per person per day to \$140 per person per day. Camping available nearby.

For On Line Registration and information on accomodations, go to www.sonoranaudubon.org and click on "Audubon Round Up Registration".

CONTACT: Karen LaFrance, Sonoran Audubon Society, Glendale, AZ, Together Green Fellow and Event Coordinator; klaf@cox.net or 602-809-0947 (cell and voice).

Roadrunner Ramblings is published six times a year: January, March, May, July, September, and November. Submissions welcome; please email copy to nstotz1@comcast.net, or call for mailing information. **Next deadline: October 15.** Printed on 100% PCW recycled paper by **insta-copy printing**. Image credits: roadrunner, Dale Zimmerman; clip art, IMSI's Master Clips/Master Photos® Collection.

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