

ROADRUNNER RAMBLINGS

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Historic Legislation Passes House

by Staci Stevens, Climate Change Outreach Coordinator
Audubon New Mexico

In an unprecedented effort, on June 26, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the American Clean Energy and Security (ACES) Act, a clean energy and climate change bill that will reduce our dependence on oil, put our economy back on track with millions of new clean energy jobs, shift energy production toward cleaner sources like wind and solar, and for the first time require limits on carbon pollution that causes global warming.

As many Audubon members in New Mexico have witnessed for themselves, global warming is already affecting the traditional range of many birds including the Common Yellowthroat, Steller's Jay, and Townsend's Solitaire, all of which have shifted their wintering range northward. The ACES Act is a vital first step addressing the worst effects of climate change in order to protect the birds and wildlife that we all love.

I am happy to report that all of New Mexico's delegation voted 'yes' to pass this landmark legislation. This was a particularly difficult vote for Congressman Teague given the dynamics of his district. If you haven't done so already, please consider taking a moment to contact Congressman Teague personally to let him know how much we appreciate his vote on the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009. He can be reached via his Las Cruces office at 135 W. Griggs, Las Cruces, NM 88001, Phone: (575)-522-3908, or via email at: http://forms.house.gov/teague/webforms/issue_subscribe.htm

As this bill moves to the Senate, please stay posted for updates on what you can do to help strengthen the ACES Act to ensure that New Mexico's citizens and wildlife reap the full benefits of America's clean energy future.

For more information, email Staci Stevens at sstevens@audubon.org.

Hummingbird Festival

July 25-26

at west end of Lake Roberts, north of Silver City

Hummingbird Banding 7-10 AM both days (weather permitting)
Educational Presentations 10 AM to 1:45 both days. Topics to include
Hummingbird Photography
Bats and their Value to Ecosystems
Hummingbirds of Latin America
Regional History and Culture



For more info: www.hummingbirdsofnewmexico.com

Birdathon Report

Our 2009 Birdathon fundraiser, held in early May, raised close to \$3000 for the Audubon Adventures environmental education program. We had more than 60 sponsors for Birdathon this year (see page 4), and MVAS is immensely grateful for everyone's generosity in these challenging economic times.

Five MVAS teams participated by soliciting pledges and birding this year. The team of David Griffin and John Douglas saw the most birds—151 species—in a "Big Day" of birding (24 continuous hours) that started in Las Cruces and ended at the Gila River. One of their highlights was a Common Ground-Dove at Percha Dam State Park. Another team, made up of Harold and Barbara Harrison, Amanda Skarsgard, and Aaron Hobson, got their best bird at Percha too, a Red-faced Warbler.

Two teams ventured to Arizona for their Birdathons. Lorraine Schulte, Eleanor Wootten, Barb Rodriguez, and Julie Magee tallied 120 species in the Gila, Chiricahua Mountains, and Sierra Vista area, while the team of Tim and Jonathan Lawton, Sue and Wally Hill, Mary Ann Beauchemin, and Gary Gray saw 138 species at several sites in the Willcox/Huachuca Mountains/San Pedro River area. Sue Hill thought their Elf Owl was probably their most exciting find, as it was a life bird for many team members.

One team, Nancy Stotz and Jennifer Montoya, experimented with a car-free Birdathon, spending the entire day on bike or foot within the city limits of Las Cruces. Thanks to high temperatures in the mid-90s, their species tally didn't break the 60-species mark, but the experience gave them plenty of good ideas for more efficient and productive routes to try next year!

Many thanks to all the participants and donors who made this fundraiser so successful this year.

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



Programs

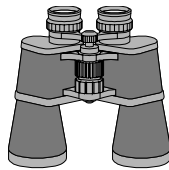
Membership meetings and programs are held each month. Meetings begin at 7:00 PM. Programs begin immediately following the business meeting and announcements.

Basic Animal Tracking. July 15. *Location: Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park (5000 Calle del Norte).* All animals that live in and around the Rio Grande bosque leave signs of their presence. Come learn the fundamentals of reading animal sign in the outdoors. Join ranger Kevin Hansen as he demonstrates how, where, and when to find and interpret animal tracks at the Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park. The program will include a short classroom orientation followed by an evening stroll to examine tracks.

eBird: What, Why, and How. August 19. *Location: Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park (5000 Calle del Norte).* eBird is a web-based database for bird sightings that is becoming increasingly valuable for birdwatchers, as well as for conservation efforts. During this program we'll find out more about its value and receive a quick training to learn how to use it.

Field Trips

Field trips are free and open to the general public, although pre-registration is required. There may be entry fees to some areas, and driving costs are shared.



Sacramento Mountains. July 18. *Possible overnigher.* This trip will bring us up over 4,000' from Las Cruces into the pines and spruce-fir zone and cooler temperatures. We'll visit places like the village of Cloudcroft, where montane species such as Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Mountain Chickadee, Evening Grosbeak and Red Crossbill are possible; the Rio Peñasco (an Important Bird Area), where we'll likely find hawks (Cooper's, Zone-tailed, and Red-tailed), Wild Turkey, Olive-sided and Cordilleran Flycatcher, Western and Mountain Bluebird, and Western Tanager. We'll stop at Bluff Springs to look for uncommon New Mexico breeders like MacGillivray's Warbler, Green-tailed Towhee, and Lincoln's Sparrow. And we

may get lucky during the day and see something truly special like Magnificent Hummingbird or maybe even a Northern Goshawk.

To register for this trip notify David Griffin by July 16 at 575-382-2080 or GriffinBio@gmail.com. The trip will include easy to moderate walking and most areas are readily accessible to most people, but elevation will range from about 7,500 feet to over 9,000 feet.

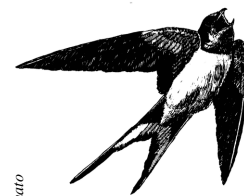
Pitchfork Ranch. August 22. *Possible overnigher.* Join us for a full day as we visit some of the areas we learned about at our June 17th chapter meeting. We'll explore this private conservation ranch with the owners and see conservation and restoration in action. We'll stroll along the flowing Burro Cienega looking for riparian specialty species like Northern Cardinal and Hooded Oriole, as well as vireos, warblers and flycatchers. Fall migration should be getting underway and we may find other exciting birds too. Our target species will be the rare Botteri's Sparrow, which if summer rains have been good, should be singing and undergoing its late season breeding in the tall native grasses.

For those hardy souls seeking additional southwestern specialty birds we may drive on to the Cave Creek and Portal area of the Chiricahua Mountains in Arizona. Conditions there will be hot and muggy, but birding at this time of year can be especially rewarding for hummingbirds and wandering birds from Mexico.

To register for this trip notify David Griffin by August 20 at 575-382-2080 or GriffinBio@gmail.com. The trip will include easy to moderate walking, but some rough terrain is possible.

Welcome New Members

Marisa Thompson
Joseph Somoza
Rusti Cutshall
Jesus Lopez
E. Wallace
Dick Mayes
Luis Peres
Paul Wells
E.C. Russ
Fred Smith
Ron Cook
Gail Abend
Donna Siminetti



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 _____

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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.

Field Trip Reports

Bird Notes

Species	Date	Location	Observers
Lazuli Bunting	4/24; 5/4	Las Cruces; Tularosa	RC; RB
Bewick's Wren	4/24	Las Cruces	RC
Anna's Hummingbird	4/25	Buena Vida	HH
Scott's Oriole	4/25	Las Cruces	HH
Hooded Oriole	4/25	Las Cruces	HH
Osprey	4/25; 5/26	WSTF; Caballo	HH; BJ
Barn Owl	4/25	WSTF	HH
Golden Eagle	4/25	WSTF	HH
Bronzed Cowbird	4/25, 5/8	Las Cruces	DG
Cassin's Vireo	4/25	Las Cruces	DG
Virginia's Warbler	4/25	Las Cruces	DG
Wilson's Warbler	4/25	Las Cruces	DG
Hermit Warbler	4/26	Las Cruces	LH
Black-throated Gray Warbler	4/27; 5/10	MVBSP	JD; CJ
Ash-throated Flycatcher	4/27	WSTF	HH
Western Tanager	4/27; 5/4	WSTF; Tularosa	HH; RB
Bell's Vireo	4/27	Las Cruces	SWH
Plumbeous Vireo	4/27	Las Cruces	SWH
Orange-crowned Warbler	4/27	Las Cruces	SWH
Lucy's Warbler	4/27; 4/30	Las Cruces	SWH; DG
House Wren	4/27	Las Cruces	SWH
Hermit Thrush	4/27	Las Cruces	RC
Willet	4/29; 5/9	Swan Pond; MVBSP	JD; NS
Townsend's Warbler	4/30	Las Cruces	DG
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	4/30; 5/4	Las Cruces; Tularosa	SS; RB
White-tailed Kite	5/3	MVBSP	CJ
Bullock's Oriole	5/4	Tularosa	RB
Black-headed Grosbeak	5/4; 5/8	Tularosa; Las Cruces	RB; DG
Indigo Bunting	5/4	Tularosa	RB
Bullock's Oriole	5/8	Las Cruces	CK
Red-faced Warbler	5/8	Las Cruces	CK
Yellow Warbler	5/8	Las Cruces	DG
Orange-crowned Warbler	5/8	Las Cruces	DG
Yellow-rumped Warbler	5/8	Las Cruces	DG
Virginia's Warbler	5/8	Las Cruces	DG
Plumbeous Vireo	5/8	Las Cruces	DG
Blue-grey Gnatcatcher	5/8	Las Cruces	DG
Chipping Sparrow	5/8	Las Cruces	DG
White-crowned Sparrow	5/8	Las Cruces	DG
Western Tanager	5/8	Rio @ Stahmann's	DM
Wilson's Phalarope	5/13	Caballo Lake	BJ
White-faced Ibis	5/22	Pancho Villa SP	CA
Macgillivray's Warbler	5/26	Las Cruces	JMRH
Western Grebe	5/28	Leasburg Dam SP	CJ
Ruddy Duck	5/29	MVBSP	CJ
American Bittern	5/29	MVBSP	CJ
Black Tern	6/3	Holloman	NS
Franklin's Gull	6/3	Holloman	NS
Eared Grebe	6/3	Holloman	NS
Green Heron	6/5	Tularosa	RB

Observers: Carol Anderson, Richard Ballew, Rick Castetter, John Douglas, CJ Goïn, David Griffin, Harold Harrison, Sue & Wally Hill, Landy Hinesley, Barbara Jackson, Clare Kapner, Jackye Meinecke/Robert Hull, Darrell Mott, Storm Sermay, Nancy Stotz

Please report interesting sightings to Robert Hull at 575-523-8009 or, preferably by email: rwhull@zianet.com

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

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

Florida Mountains. May 16. Eleven people braved a windy day to bird Spring Canyon and Rockhound State Parks. We got great views of Black-headed Grosbeaks, Townsend's Warbler, Prairie Falcon, and Gambel's and Scaled Quail. The group got a chance to study an Olive-sided Flycatcher through a spotting scope, as well as viewing an Empidonax species flycatcher—and learning how hard it can be to determine species within this group. For several participants, many of the 47 species seen were life birds. Also, a life species of a mammalian sort, a young ibex, took its time foraging on a rocky slope, giving everyone a chance for good views of this introduced animal. Even though we visited near midday, the Deming cemetery yielded such birds as colorful Western Tanagers, Blue Grosbeaks, a Hammond's Flycatcher, and a nesting Swainson's Hawk, who, like us, was checking out the little birds, but with a much different intent! If the birding there is this good at noon, what must it be like early in the morning?

Percha Gradient. June 20. Eight birders braved the hot, windy weather to explore the birds at Percha Dam State Park and points west following the creek. People were able to see adult Vermilion Flycatchers feeding young and also had time to study Summer Tanagers. Many people got their first long looks at Yellow-breasted Chats and learned to identify the song. Among the 70 species seen that day, people were able to see the difference between Western and Cassin's Kingbirds. We went to Animas Creek road where a few birds were spotted, including Yellow-billed Cuckoo and a possible sighting of a Gray Hawk. We then proceeded up to Hillsboro and then to N. Percha Creek Rd. The forest road area was hot and dry and only had a few birds active at the time. We ended the trip at the road into Kingston, and along the creek had good views of 2-3 species of vireos and Painted Redstarts. For many of the people, this trip exposed them to new areas to bird. A long day, but fun for everyone.

Thanks to all for participating and sharing vehicles and sightings.

John Douglas

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.

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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

Thanks to our Birdathon Sponsors!

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		Jenny Zappone

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