



ROADRUNNER RAMBLINGS

MESILLA VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

<https://www.mvasaudubon.org/> Vol. 46, Fall 2024 (May, June, July)

Fall MVAS President's Message

The peak of summer has gone by, and it's time for MVAS to return to our regular schedule: four bird walks each month, a meeting with a presentation, plus the two activities that kept going over our summer break — cleaning up Sagecrest Park, our KLCB Adopt-A-Spot, and Nature Journal Club outings.

If you're new to MVAS, welcome! There are plenty of ways to get involved in our organization, whether it's participating in a bird walk, attending presentations, joining our nature journaling activities, cleaning up the park, or taking part in the annual December Christmas Bird Count. We hope you become an active member of the MVAS flock!

One new activity we'll be doing in September is taking part in the Outdoor Economic Conference, Sept. 23 – 25 at the Las Cruces Convention Center. We'll be looking for volunteers to help staff a table and tell people about MVAS. We'll also be leading a bird walk for conference participants on the 25th about 1 p.m. I'll send out additional information and a way to sign up to help in August.

I also plan to get a nature book club up and running this fall. We've got some ideas and just need to select a few books to get started and set up a time and place to meet. We may be able to set up a fall field trip, too. Watch your email for information!

As you know, MVAS is a volunteer organization, and we are always seeking new volunteers. I encourage you to become as involved as you would like. Do you want to lead a bird walk? Let us know! Are you interested in conservation activities? We have a committee you could join! Want to do a presentation about a topic you're passionate about at one of our monthly meetings? We'd love to hear your proposal! In short, if you'd like to contribute your knowledge and skills to the organization, please reach out and we'll find a way for you to help.

Speaking of volunteers, let me thank the people who already help keep MVAS running. Our board members, listed in the newsletter, help steer the boat. Bird walk leaders, some of whom are also current or former board members, provide one of our most popular activities for members and guests alike. Let me take this opportunity to welcome back bird walk leader Mark Pendleton as the leader of the third-Wednesday-of-the-month Tellbrook Park walk and express my thanks to our substitute leader (and webmaster), Linda Miller, for keeping it going while Mark was out. The Christmas Bird Count, one of our biggest endeavors, is also led by Mark Pendleton with dozens of volunteer birders.

So, my gratitude goes to those who have helped guide our organization now and in the past! And for everyone else, decide how you want to be involved in MVAS because there's a role for everyone in our flock.

Cheryl Fallstead, MVAS President

THOSE !@@#%!! SPARROWS

by Mark Pendleton

Editor's Note: This article first appeared in a slightly different form in the August 2024 issue of *The Ink*.

Are you among the large number of birders to whom sparrows give fits? Have you often been tempted to clap your hands, wave your arms and shout so the sparrow you don't want to try and identify flies away? You needn't be the one or do the other. There are several distinguishing characteristics that can make identifying them easier. They are: **1)** habitat; **2)** relative size; **3)** flock or single **4)** head/crown plumage pattern; **5)** eye-ring/eye-line; **6)** clear or streak-chested; **7)** wing-bars. It's possible to list more, but these will do nicely for now.

We'll start with an example. Say you're walking along a ditch bank on a cool fall morning. As you pass a stretch of tangled brushy undergrowth (habitat), four or five (flocking behavior) relatively large (for sparrows) sparrows burst into flight and dive back into the brush 4 or 5 meters along the path. You stop and before you can focus your binoculars, there go 6, 7, 8, no, 10 more! You look where they took off and see 6 or 7 more perched in the bushes. Some of them have a black and white line patterned head, others sport chestnut and gray stripes. You're seeing White-crowned Sparrows (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*) and where you see 1 or 3, you'll almost certainly see more.

The ones with black and white stripes are adults; chestnut and gray strippers are immature birds. "White-crowns" are some of the most common wintering sparrows we have. They're on the larger end of the sparrow size spectrum at 6.5-7 in. or 15-19 cm. For size comparison, a House Finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*) is 5-6 in. (13-15 cm.) and Red-winged blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) are 7-9.5 in. (18-24 cm.) If you look closely, you can see that they have at least partial eye-rings and the bottom line of the head pattern forms somewhat of an eye line behind the eye. Their chests and underparts are clear and unstriped and two white wing-bars show.

Another similar but less frequent winter visitor to the US southwest is the White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*). "White-throats" are much commoner east of the Mississippi River, but small numbers do winter with us, almost always singly or in small numbers among flocks of "white-crowns." So, keep a sharp lookout for them in flocks of their cousins. They have almost the same facial/crown pattern as "white-crowns", but the white stripe on the crown is usually very narrow, they have a conspicuous white throat (hence the name) and a bright yellow spot in front of the eye. They are sometimes slightly smaller than their white-crowned cousins, have fainter wing bars and streakier chests.

Another winter sparrow in the Southwestern USA is the Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*). They are usually also found in tangled undergrowth. But at least in our area, if there is some kind of water along with it, the chances of finding Song Sparrows is markedly increased. Song Sparrows are roughly the same size as "white-crowns" and "white-throats", but their tails often appear longer in relation to the size of their bodies than those of these other two. Song Sparrows in the southwest are, overall, smaller and paler (gray brown rather than chestnut) than those in other parts of the country. Wherever they are found, though, they have striped faces and the streaks on the chest often look like run-together ink with a blotch in the center of the chest. Unlike White-Crowned Sparrows, Song Sparrows are not usually flocking birds so seeing one or two doesn't mean there are more nearby.

Next time we'll talk about more sparrows. For now, get out there and try out your new skills!



Brewer's Sparrow photo taken by Robert Shantz



Townsend's Warbler

Names, Names, Names

Greater Words and Things ©by Mark Pendleton 2024

Greetings, Amigos y Readers Esteemed; Saludos, Estimados Friends and Lectores.

The American Ornithological Society (AOS), the body responsible for maintaining common English names of birds in the USA and Canada, is changing all eponymous (named after people) bird names within its jurisdiction. Changing names is not a new idea.

For more than a hundred years, controversy has surrounded the naming of birds. We haven't the space or time to go into it here, but anyone who's interested can follow this link

<https://academic.oup.com/auk/article/139/3/ukac019/6572201> to read more about it.

The renaming project is sparked by concerns for social justice and a desire to make birding and ornithology more inclusive. Many of the eponymous names commemorate white men who engaged in activities offensive to current sensibilities. Two examples suffice **1)** John James Audubon, the pioneering ornithologist and avian illustrator, with two birds—an oriole and a shearwater—named after him, was a slave owner. **2)** John Kirk Townsend (Townsend's Solitaire and Townsend's Warbler) robbed Native American remains from burial sites. Changing the names of these birds certainly seems the correct thing to do—a small step in the direction of redress and greater inclusivity.

Some in the ornithological/birding world only change names of birds whose namesakes engaged in activities manifestly outside the realm of acceptable behavior. All the examples cited in the preceding paragraph fall within those parameters. The AOS thought that changing the name of McCown's Longspur did as well. J.P. McCown was a prominent 19th century bird collector and Confederate general who also had fought the Seminole in Florida. In 2020 the name was changed to Thick-billed Longspur. But AOS does not want to be in the position of deciding which honorees are worthy and which are not.

Besides, there are other problems with eponymous names. For one, they imply ownership. Now, I hold Alexander Wilson (6 July 1766—23 August 1813) in esteem as the "Father of American Ornithology". I have no illusion, though, that he owns the storm-petrel, plover, phalarope, snipe or warbler named for him. Secondly, they lack any descriptive element, so are no help in remembering the bird. Third, they perpetuate an imperialist/colonial view of the world. These names were bestowed by mostly European men who "discovered" the birds. Much like the "discoverers" of non-European lands, such an idea seems arrogant. What about the people who lived in these lands and knew these birds pre-"discovery"? This argument applies to all names bestowed by the "discoverers".

Should the AOS change them, too? I don't know, but the re-naming project certainly seems like a good start.

I am encouraged that the renaming will have public input. I'm glad to see that professional ornithological opinion is also part of the equation.

Names, names, names (continued)

As you can probably imagine, I'm in favor of the renaming. In fact, I have some other names I'd like to see scrapped.

The Ring-necked Duck, the European Starling, the American Tree Sparrow come immediately to mind. That neck ring is almost impossible to see even on a duck held in the hand. Why not Ring-*billed*? That one is clearly visible. Although Introduced from Europe (in 1890), the Starling is now an established resident. How long does a name denoting geographic origin make sense after all? American Tree Sparrows breed mostly in treeless tundra areas of Canada. Yes, they breed in Alaska and winter in a wide swath of the rest of the USA, but the name still seems silly to me. Oh, there are more bird names that I think are less than apt, but those will do to make my point. Which is?

1) Re-naming goes on regularly. Unless it clearly contravenes a basic scientific principle (and the current project doesn't) why get up in arms about it? 2) No, it ain't perfect, but then not much is in this world. 3) So let the renaming begin! It may even produce some memorable names!

Mark Pendleton is an avid birder and retired librarian who has (thankfully) no birds named after him. He writes these lines (most of the time) from Las Cruces where he enjoys reading, his family, his dog, and good beer. He can be reached at mpndltn@gmail.com.



Ring-necked Duck



European Starling



American Tree Swallow

Name That Bird

Thanks to David Carmichael for this month's fledgling photos. Thanks also to Sara Kay for her photos of adult birds.

This leads me to a related item: *Roadrunner Ramblings* needs *your* bird photos for Name That Bird! So, if you have some photos of a bird or birds that you're not certain how to identify, send them in and our panelists will do their best to help you. Even if you *can* identify the birds involved, it's a safe bet that other readers will enjoy trying their skills, so I'd love to have you send them in. Send photos (preferably in .jpeg format) to: mpndltn@gmail.com and put **NTB photos** in the subject line. Remember, we need your photos to have a column!

***** Spoiler Alert *****

If you want to identify the birds in the photos yourself, please take measures to hide the printed identifications that follow the photos themselves.

PHOTOS:

In keeping with the time of year, the first three photos are of fledglings. The final two are of adults.



IDENTIFICATIONS:

For the fledglings, all three panelists agreed with the photographer when he identified them as: **1)** Pyrrhuloxia; **2)** Greater Roadrunner; **3)** Curve-billed Thrasher.

The panelists were also unanimous in their identification of the adult birds. The first one is a Spotted Sandpiper; the second, a Swainson's Hawk.

Again, thanks to our photographers for sending their photos. And, please remember, your photographs could also appear in Name That Bird!

Don't think yours measure up to the quality of the ones featured up until now? Not to worry! Photos need have no artistic merit whatsoever. If they're blurry/out of focus, so much the better. If there are branches and leaves obstructing our view of the bird, no problem, that's OK too. In fact, such artistic "defects" make identifying the bird closer to what birders encounter in the field. So, the photo's value in helping hone ID skills is increased.

Send photos—in .jpeg format, please—to mpndltn@gmail.com with **NTB photos** in the subject line. Thanks, and I look forward to seeing them!

Big Changes Anticipated for Management of Flow and Use of Rio Grande Water

By Sid Webb



Wildlife will feel the impact of Rio Grande water deprivation and habitat loss as much as the human population. This view is of the Rio Grande along the La Llorona Trail in mid summer.

All of New Mexico is at risk of running out of water, with the Southern District of the Rio Grande being one of the areas that will be most impacted. In 2023 the NM State Legislature passed the Water Security Planning Act which directed the NM Interstate Stream Commission to survey the situation in all the water districts within New Mexico. This July they came to the Southern Rio Grande district to alert the public to our situation and solicit our opinions on the best way to solve our problems. They held 2 public meetings at NMSU and an open house at the Las Cruces City Hall where they described the crisis here and solicited opinions about how best to solve it.

The first NMSU meeting, hosted by Beth Bardwell (previously an Audubon President at the New Mexico State Audubon Society's branch in Santa Fe), started with a movie, *Requiem for a River*, in its first viewing by a public audience. It is an engaging film about the history of the Rio Grande and how different communities adapted to it. As population increased and industrialization became synonymous with the 20th century, there were dramatic changes in how the New Mexican population dealt with their prized possession. After showing the film, the meeting organizers asked the audience "What is most important to you when you think about our region's water?" and "What taxpayer funded policies, plans and projects would you like to see prioritized in a regional water plan?" Audience responses, both in person and written, were recorded.

At the second meeting the audience was again asked these questions, along with a question about who should be involved in regional water planning and what role they should play. To help the audience address these issues there were two presentations. The first was a talk about Assessment of Climate Impact over Water Resources in New Mexico over the next 50 years. These talks elaborated on the distressing fact that in addition to our losing significant water resources (both surface water and groundwater) during the past century, we will probably fall another 25% below current water levels in another 50 years due to climate change, continued arid conditions, and our continued consumption.

Big Changes Anticipated for Management of Flow & Use of Rio Grande Water (Continued)

Surface water resources (meaning flow in the Rio Grande) are already completely under contract. The Rio Grande Compact of 1938 set limits to how water was to be divided between New Mexico, Texas, and Mexico. Water rights of citizens (mostly agriculturists) in the Rio Grande valley have laid claim to the rest during normal years of river flow. That resource cannot be increased.

The second talk was about groundwater. Our groundwater consumption has soared in the past 20 years, and it is projected that groundwater reserves may vanish during the next 50 years. In the 21st century the number of wells pumping groundwater has increased dramatically. Legal constraints on that growth currently in place are complex and limited, with differences in water law noted throughout the course of the Rio Grande.

The next step for our water district was for the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission to hold a session at the Las Cruces City Hall on July 24th, where it invited all interested citizens to talk with their representatives and fill out a complex questionnaire addressing how the state should incorporate their citizen's ideas going forward. The state wants to be sure it understands what the people in all districts want from their government regarding water management. It is trying its best to meet this goal and locally did a good job. However, there is still a long way to go before we can relax about our looming crisis.

Online Resource:

<https://mainstreamnm.org/> This is the website for NM State Interstate Stream Department that is promoting the entire project of management policies for the Rio Grande. It is very informative, with articles documenting the river's past and current situation, and is current on what the government is doing now and planning for the future.



Cattle Egret and

Sora photos taken by Robert Shantz



MVAS Conservation Committee Update, Fall 2024

Most of the activity of the MVAS Conservation Committee since the last *Roadrunner Ramblings* continued to be directed toward the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) 10-year management plan for Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument. This effort will result in redirection of how it approaches management of the monument for the next decade. MVAS attended the open-house discussion at City Hall. At our board meeting MVAS voted to support the BLM by endorsing their strict adherence to conservation principles throughout the monument (plan B, according to their plan). The BLM will study all the submissions received from the public and prepare a revised plan this fall that will also be (very briefly) open to public comment before it is finalized by year's end.

After submission of the MVAS report to the Desert Peak Planning Committee, attention was directed by an MVAS member to the issue of firearm usage by visitors to the monument. There are very few restrictions in place at this time, and notice is limited to signage at the trailhead in the Dripping Springs Natural Area stating "Firearms Prohibited for 1/4 Mile." I spoke with a BLM manager about this, and her response was to welcome comments from any visitors who have had an encounter with a hunter on public land, especially if there was any sense of increased risk. The BLM's attitude towards this issue is that if the public is silent on an issue, it means it is unimportant. They would appreciate an informed presentation from MVAS documenting any problems we have encountered. It would likely not, however, be part of their 10-year plan, which is now closed to further public input. If anybody reading this has had any untoward encounter, please let me know.

Elsewhere in Doña Ana County

For more than a year, Doña Ana County has been considering a proposal to place a public park along the Rio Grande where the Shalem Colony bridge crosses it, just outside of Dona Ana. Recently, the county received a grant of \$85,000 to design the project, and on June 20 held a public meeting at East Picacho Elementary School. It was an extremely well-attended meeting, with a packed presentation hall. Almost universally, attendees communicated they did not like the idea. Many (perhaps most) were concerned that creating a park with camping sites and amenities would lead to an increase in homeless encampments, vagrancy, and crime, and suggested the money would be better spent on increasing police patrols in the area. (Note, however, that the grant money cannot be used for other purposes than for what it was given.) Others didn't want an increase in "tourists," and advised, instead, that the money be spent on La Llorona Park, 10 miles to the south. It is uncertain at this time what the next step is for Doña Ana County.

Written by Sid Webb

Skipper Butterflies

by CJ Goin

Skippers are a large and confusing group of butterflies. Roughly 1/3 of the butterflies in North America are skippers. Many of them are similar in appearance so identification can be difficult. They are small and they fly close to the ground so they are easily missed if you're not looking for them.

The three most common skippers in our area are the Checkered-Skipper (L photo), Eufala Skipper (center photo) and Fiery Skipper (R photo). Two species of Checkered-Skippers are common in New Mexico - the Common and the White - but they are identical in appearance so it's best to just call them Checkered-Skippers. All Checkered-Skippers have black and white checkered upper wings. The Eufala Skipper has brown upper wings with white forewing spots. The Fiery Skipper is yellow-orange with black "toothed" margins and black markings on the upper wings. This photo is a male, the females are more heavily marked on the upper wings. Be careful when trying to identify skippers, there are numerous other species which are less common here but may show up occasionally, and identification can be difficult. If you see a skipper you can't identify, try to get a photo and, if you succeed, send it to me and I'll try to identify it.

Checkered Skipper



Eufala Skipper



Fiery Skipper

The Trials and Tribulations of a Sports Photographer Who's Gone to the Birds!

A recent transplant from Falls Church, Virginia, the now-retired Charlie Agel has almost 20 years of experience as an Associated Press freelance sports photographer under his belt. With his burgeoning interest in birds, Charlie naively thought, "How difficult could the switch be from shooting big Hulk-like pro athletes to 'cute little bird' photography?"

"Ha!" notes Charlie. The cute little birds proved to be faster and seemingly far less predictable than the pro athletes.

Like most of us, Charlie was quickly humbled by his failures at securing on his SD cards that which he saw in his mind. A typical day with the birds went something like this: wait, wait, wait, see a bird. Spin the lens to frame and focus the scene. Send the message to his finger to release the shutter . . . and watch the little cute bird dart off, leaving the shutter to fire at 1/2000 second and perfectly freeze . . . nothing! ("Cute my foot!" adds Charlie.)

Finally, it dawned on him. Good sports photography requires the photographer to predict what the athlete is going to do and get there first. He realized that as long as he was *chasing* the cute little birds, he'd never get the shots he was after. It was only when Charlie correctly predicted their action — and got there first — that the number of keepers on his SD cards increased.

The following cute little birds (and other) photos were shot by Charlie Agel with his trusty Nikon D7500 and 500mm 5.6 PF lens at Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park in May 2024 and other nearby locations.



Black-throated Sparrow



Gambel's Quail

Unusual Sightings at Sonoma Ranch Golf Course

by Margaret Lengas

Margaret Lengas has always been what you would call a “passive birder”, but she vowed to get more serious once she was retired. Well, she is almost retired, and almost a more serious birder.

She was surprised and thrilled when she was walking her dogs past the Sonoma Ranch Golf Course in late May and saw a strange bird. She has only been living in New Mexico for a little over 2 years, so there is still so much that is new for her.

She first spotted an unusual bird at twilight flying over the golf course. Since all she had to go on was a quick silhouette, she just filed it away to keep an eye out during the daytime.

The next morning and for about a week or so after, she saw it almost every day walking around the 6th fairway of the golf course. She got some iffy photos and started researching and asking her friend Cheryl Beymer (who is a much more experienced birder). Each day Margaret got slightly better photos with her phone and determined that the unusual bird was a Long-billed Curlew. She reached out to the Mesilla Valley Audubon Society to see how unusual it was, and started corresponding with Cheryl Fallstead and sending her photos and the location information.

Each time she saw it, she was hoping to see that it had a mate. On May 27th she thought she saw it with another Long-billed Curlew...only to realize that they were actually two Black-crowned Night Herons on the same fairway of the golf course.

Margaret did not see the Curlew again after the 27th or 28th of May, but as a person from the Midwest, it still amazes her what interesting birds you can see in the desert.





Nature Journal Club Outings

Sunday, Aug. 11: Nature Journaling at Leasburg Dam State Park

Let's explore one of our closest state parks, Leasburg Dam, which is a stone's throw from historic Fort Selden. The park offers much to explore with your journal, such as a small native plant garden, riverside bosque, dam with wetlands, birds and other wildlife, and more. Those attracted to old buildings can opt to sketch at Fort Selden Historic Site (\$5 per person admission or use an NM CulturePass). Leasburg Dam also has a \$5 per vehicle fee (or use your annual state park pass).

We'll meet at Ashley Furniture at the north end of the parking lot to carpool at 8:30 a.m., and meet up at the Leasburg Dam visitor center at 9 a.m. If you'd rather not carpool, just meet us at the visitor center at 9 a.m.. After our nature journaling adventures, the plan is to socialize over a meal or beverages at the nearby Blue Moon Bar & Grill (they open at noon, so we can take our time exploring the park and/or Fort Selden).

Saturday, Sept. 7: Nature Journaling at NM Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum

The only state-operated museum in Las Cruces celebrates New Mexico's agricultural heritage. It opens at 10 a.m. and there is a \$7 fee per adult (\$6 if you are 60 or older). You can journal the cactus garden in front of the museum, stroll the grounds and find sheep, goats, cows, and horses to sketch, or explore the outdoor areas to find plants or native animals that capture your curiosity. The resident Great Horned Owls may even be waiting for us at the entrance!

Sunday, Oct. 27: Nature Journaling at La Cueva Picnic Area at Dripping Springs

Meet at La Cueva Picnic Area at 4 p.m. for nature journaling and a potluck. Bring something tasty to share (if you'd like) after we've journaled and shared our pages. We can enjoy a lovely fall afternoon, journal the plants, animals, and even La Cueva itself.

Sunday, Nov. 10: Nature Journaling at White Sands National Park

We'll travel to our closest national park and explore its unique ecosystem on a late fall afternoon. Since the admission fee is by carload, we'll carpool from Ashley Furniture's parking lot and make sure each car (hopefully!) has a Golden Age Pass for free admission. We'll meet at the parking lot at 1 p.m. and gather at the visitor center at 2 p.m. to decide on an area to explore. Sunset will be around 6:30 p.m., so we'll have plenty of time to journal this fascinating location.

Saturday, Dec. 7: Nature Journaling at Aguirre Spring

For December, what could be better than some pine trees to journal and get us into the holiday spirit? Nearby Aguirre Spring Recreation Area fits the bill. We'll meet at 2 p.m. at a location TBD. After journaling, we'll have a holiday potluck. Admission is \$5 per vehicle and the gate is open until 6 p.m.



Lesser Goldfinch photo taken by Charlie Agel

Upcoming MVAS Bird Walks, Butterfly Walks, and Sagecrest Park Cleanup for August, September, October 2024

Bird Walks

August 5 (Monday) Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park. 8:00–10:15 a.m. Meet at the visitor center at 8 a.m. There is a \$5 day use (vehicle) fee at MVBSP unless you have a state parks annual pass. Your walk leader is Dylan Osterhaus .

August 10 (Saturday) Sagecrest Park 8:00-10:15 is at Roadrunner and Frontier. Meet at the park entrance on Frontier at 8 a.m. Your walk leader is John Brooks.

August 21 (Wednesday) Tellbrook Park. (4290 Winchester Road) 8:00am-10:15a.m . Meet at the park entrance. Your walk leader is Linda Miller

August 31 (Saturday) Leasburg Dam State Park. 8:00–10:00 a.m. Last Saturday of the month. Meet at the visitor center and plan to carpool to the day-use picnic area on river. Walk leader is Dylan Osterhaus. The walk goes along the Mogollon Trail for approximately one mile (flat) and based on sightings will return along the same trail or the upper road.

September 2 (Monday) Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park. 8:00–10:15 a.m. Meet at the visitor center at 8 a.m. There is a \$5 day use (vehicle) fee at MVBSP unless you have a state parks annual pass. Your walk leader is Danny Tipton.

September 14 (Saturday) Sagecrest Park 8:00-10:15 a.m. is at Roadrunner and Frontier. Meet at the park entrance on Frontier at 8 a.m. Your walk leader is John Brooks.

September 18 (Wednesday) Tellbrook Park. (4290 Winchester Road) 8:00am-10:15 a.m. Meet at the park entrance. Your walk leader is Linda Miller

September 28 (Saturday) Leasburg Dam State Park. 8:00–10:00 a.m. Last Saturday of the month. Meet at the visitor center and plan to carpool to the day-use picnic area on river. Walk leader is Dylan Osterhaus. The walk goes along the Mogollon Trail for approximately one mile (flat) and based on sightings will return along the same trail or the upper road.

October 7 (Monday) Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park. 8:00–10:15 a.m. Meet at the visitor center at 8 a.m. There is a \$5 day use (vehicle) fee at MVBSP unless you have a state parks annual pass. Your walk leader is Danny Tipton.

Bird Walks (continued)

October 12 (Saturday) October 12 (Saturday) Sagecrest Park 8:00-10:15 is at Roadrunner and Frontier. Meet at the park entrance on Frontier at 8 a.m. Your walk leader is John Brooks.

October 16 (Wednesday) Tellbrook Park. (4290 Winchester Road) 8:00am-10:15am . Meet at the park entrance. Your walk leader is Mark Pendleton.

October 26 (Saturday) Leasburg Dam State Park. 8:00–10:00 a.m. Last Saturday of the month. Meet at the visitor center and plan to carpool to the day-use picnic area on river. Walk leader is Dylan Osterhaus. The walk goes along the Mogollon Trail for approximately one mile (flat) and based on sightings will return along the same trail or the upper road.

Butterfly Walks

Butterfly walks TBD: During summer months CJ Goin leads walks to several locations that are known to attract a butterfly population. Details will be posted on the Calendar and Events pages when butterflies are in season.

Sagecrest Park Clean Up

September 14 (Saturday) Sagecrest Park Cleanup from 8:00—9:00. Every 6 weeks MVAS has committed to keeping Sagecrest litter free. Join other birders to make this happen. Supplies provided by MVAS.

October 19 (Saturday) Sagecrest Park Cleanup from 8:00—9:00. Every 6 weeks MVAS has committed to keeping Sagecrest litter free. Join other birders to make this happen. Supplies provided by MVAS.



Special Thanks to the folks who contributed articles and photos for this Fall's MVAS Newsletter. They include Elaine Stachera, Cheryl Fallstead, Mark Pendleton, Sid Webb, CJ Goin, Charlie Agel, Margaret Lengas, David Carmichael, Sara Kay, and Linda Miller.



Yellow-bellied Chat photo taken by R. Shantz

Officers and Board

President: Cheryl Fallstead
Vice-president: vacant
Secretary: Julia Osgood
Treasurer: Diane Moore

Directors (elected with three-year terms)

Director 2022–2024 Sid Webb
Director 2022–2024 Gill Sorg
Director 2023–2025 CJ Goin
Director 2023–2025 Annie Mitchell
Director 2023–2025 Marcia Wilson
Director 2023–2025 Linda Miller
Director 2024–2026 Dylan Osterhaus
Director 2024–2026 Whitney Watson

Committee chairs

Conservation: vacant
Education: vacant
Field Trips: Linda Miller
Programs: currently managed by President
Newsletter: Marcia Wilson
Website: Linda Miller
Membership: Annie Mitchell
Christmas Bird Count: Mark Pendleton
Facebook admin: Dylan Osterhaus
Climate Watch Coordinator: Mark Pendleton

Roadrunner Ramblings is published quarterly and is distributed via [the MVAS website](#), with a copy emailed to all MVAS members and friends. All members of MVAS are encouraged to submit articles of interest and any bird photograph recently taken. Please email your contributions to Marcia Wilson at sleepingsafe@yahoo.com. To be added to the distribution list, contact Cheryl Fallstead at mesillavalleyaudubon@gmail.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.

Mesilla Valley Audubon Society

A chapter of the
National Audubon Society



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