



ROADRUNNER

RAMBLINGS

Mesilla Valley Audubon Society

www.mvaudubon.org Vol. 39, No. 2, Spring 2017

LAS CRUCES CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT WET & WILD

The 2016 annual bird count on Dec. 17 is one to remember! Birds were observed and counted, as usual, in spite of horrible weather conditions. Our intrepid 13 teams of citizen scientists suffered winds of 40 mph with gusts of 60 mph, dust and sand clouds and rain off and on all day. Meanwhile, the birds were smart enough to “hunker down” in bushes and trees. The local teams counted a total of 19,959 birds, a third less than last year’s 33,770.



Look behind
you, Folks
CBC participants
Jay Wilbur, Jay
Lloyd, Cheryl
Beymer and
Suzie Trumble
eventually turn
around

Photo by Judy Wilbur

More Winning Photographs

Local photographers submitted more than 20 entries. At left is the First Place Winner Barbara Jackson’s Yellow-throated Warbler, taken in her backyard near Arrey, NM. (See third page.) Contest rules are on last page. Deadline for next issue March 31.



Spring Programs: Wings of Wonder

February 15- Dr. Kathryn Stoner, Department Head of Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Ecology at NMSU, will discuss the amazing lives of bats. Learn about the importance of the nectarivorous bats and their role in pollination in our region.

March 15- Steve Carey, long-time friend of MVAS and retired from NM State Parks, will give us a presentation on Monarch Butterflies and the importance of documenting their presence in southern New Mexico. Steve will recruit volunteers for Monarch surveys. Training at a subsequent workshop will be provided.

April 19 – Matt Boggie, NMSU PhD student in biology, will speak on Greater Sandhill Cranes in New Mexico. Matt is our 2016 recipient of the Richard Bischoff scholarship. He is studying the winter habitat conditions and survival along the Rio Grande.

Annual Election Results

The MVAS annual election of Officers and Directors was held January 18. Officers re-elected for 2017 are President Jennifer Montoya, Vice-President Ken Stinnett, Secretary Jay Wilbur, and Treasurer Diane Moore. Re-elected to the Board of Directors for 2017-2019 are C. J. Goin and Mark Pendleton. Directors Judi Schultz, Aaron Lucas, Gill Sorg, and Wayne Treers continue in on-going terms. MVAS leadership contact information is listed on our website, www.new-mexico-birds.com.



Honorable Mentions

Top: Say's Phoebe, Frank Wilson, Holloman Lake
Above: American Coots by Jay Wilbur, Las Cruces Dam Constructed Wetlands

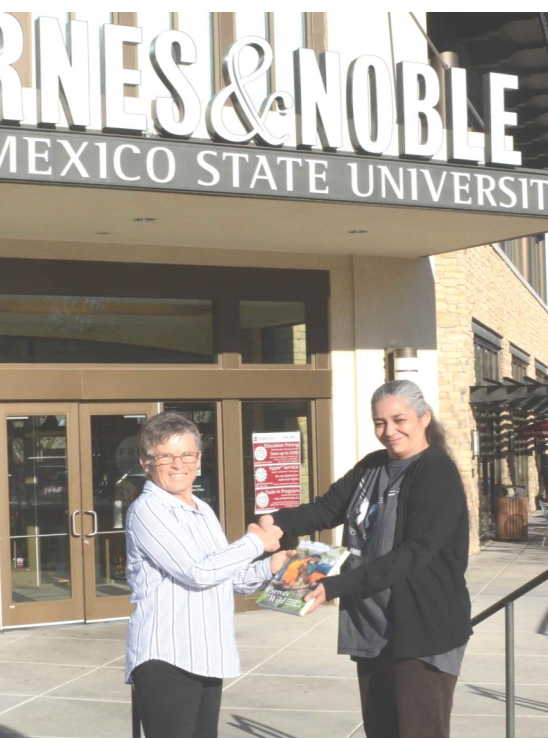
Class Learns To Recognize Common NM Waterfowl

MVAS members attended a waterfowl identification class presented by MVAS Secretary Jay Wilbur on January 18. Participants learned key field marks and other ways to recognize duck, geese and swan species common in New Mexico. Then on January 21 and 22, Jay led the class on a tour of the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge to put their new skills into practice. The group saw over 40 species, including a family of four Tundra Swan.



The class spots a female Hooded Merganser at the Bosque del Apache.

Photo by Judy Wilbur



Winning photographer Barbara Jackson (left) receives her prize, 'Parrots of the Wild' by Toft and Wright, from Margaret Sanchez in front of Barnes and Nobles at NMSU. Next issue 's prize is a \$50 gift certificate for photo framing donated by Picture Frame Outlet and Gallery, 382 S. Walnut, Las Cruces.

Photo: Jay Wilbur

Spring Field Trips

Saturday February 18: Las Cruces citizen scientists will become part of the Great Backyard Bird Count, conducted by Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society, by exploring the wetlands and other areas east of the Las Cruces Dam. Meet at Sagecrest Park, 601 N. Roadrunner Pkwy at 7 a.m.

Saturday March 18: We will explore some of the diverse habitat near the village of La Luz, north of Alamogordo. Meet at the northwest end of town near the Shell station and in the parking lot of K-Mart off U.S. Highway 70 at 7 a.m. Carpooling is encouraged for this all-day trip.

Professor plans birding trip to his native Sri Lanka

Dr. Nirmala Khandan, Professor of Environmental Engineering at NMSU, is planning an eight-day photo expedition to his native Sri Lanka, in August 2017. The small tropical island has 33 endemic birds and more than 220 breeding species. This expedition will focus on birds and wildlife during a full day trek through the Sinharaja Reserve, a UNESCO World Heritage site which harbors 30 of the endemic species; and safaris in three National Wildlife Parks.

Participants in this private small-group expedition will share equally the total costs. Prof. Khandan welcomes members of MVAS to this unique opportunity. For more information, contact him at (575) 520 - 0004 or via email at nkhandan@nmsu.edu. Khandan is a member both of the MVAS and the Doña Ana Photography Club.

JOIN AUDUBON NOW!

☐ National Membership (special for new members only): Join both the National Audubon Society and Mesilla Valley Audubon Society for the introductory rate of \$20 for your first year of membership. This is a \$15 savings. You'll receive both *Audubon Magazine* and *Roadrunner Ramblings*. Make check payable to National Audubon Society.

☐ Local Chapter Membership: Join, or renew your membership in, Mesilla Valley Audubon Society for \$15 per year. You'll receive *Roadrunner Ramblings* and be eligible for member-only events such as bird identification classes. Make check payable to Mesilla Valley Audubon Society.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____, State _____ Zip _____

eMail _____ C6ZQ540Z

Send this form with your check to:

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

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.

Board meetings are held on the Thursday before the 3rd Wed at 5:30 pm at the Southwest Environmental Center on the downtown mall. All Audubon members are welcome.

Roadrunner Ramblings is published quarterly. Submissions are welcome. Please email copy to Judi Schultz, judi626@earthlink.net. Next deadline: April 15, 2017.

To be added to the distribution list, contact Judy Wilbur, jk wilbur@gmail.com or 512-560-4717.

Photo Contest Rules: Photos submitted must have been taken in our local area, i.e., Sierra, Otero, or Dona Ana Counties only, and during the past 12 months. Our publications committee judges entries based on photo quality, subject interest, and subject variety. Please include the location taken and name of species in your email. Our newsletter editor makes the final selection for publication. From these, one is chosen as the First Prize winner.

By submitting your photo you automatically grant Mesilla Valley Audubon Society (MVAS) publication rights for one year. MVAS may use your photo in any of our publications, including newsletters and our annual calendar. Photos should be submitted electronically as a high resolution jpg file to this email address judi626@earthlink.net.

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P.O. Box 1645
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