



# ROADRUNNER RAMBLINGS

www.mvaudubon.org

Volume 37 No. 5, Sept.-Oct. 2015

Mesilla Valley Audubon Society Newsletter

*This Is Our Passion:*

## All Ages Benefit from MV Audubon Education Programs

### **\*\*\* Audubon Adventures \*\*\***

Mesilla Valley Audubon Society continues to provide Audubon Adventures environmental education materials for teachers in our region who request the program. "Action for Planet Earth" this year's theme, is targeted toward 3rd, 4th and 5th graders. C.J. Goin is taking orders from teachers for the 2015-16 Audubon Adventures kits.

The program covers four distinct topics. The kit contains full-color magazines for each student, plus an Educator's Guide. Audubon Adventures materials are aligned with state and national standards for science, language arts, and social science.

"Many generous MVAS members and friends have helped make MVAS support of this program possible through the years," said Goin. "Some of the funds raised by our spring Birdathon are also used.

Donations of any amount to support this program are always appreciated. Make checks to Mesilla Valley Audubon Society, MVAS, PO Box 1645, Las Cruces NM 88004. Send the following information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### **\*\*\* Introduction to Bird Watching at DACC \*\*\***

MVAS continues to offer our bird identification courses through the Community Education program of Doña Ana Community College. During our fall Introduction to Bird Watching Course, you can learn how to identify birds found locally, how to attract birds to your yard, and what to consider when buying binoculars.

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# MVAS Volunteering- It's All for the Birds!

By Jennifer Montoya  
MVAS Board Member

Throughout the year MVAS needs volunteers in various roles. These are If any of the opportunities listed below interest you, please contact one of our board members for more information (their numbers are on the back of this newsletter).

- **New Mexico Audubon Council-** MVAS is looking for volunteers to get involved with The Audubon New Mexico Council of Chapters. This organization helps to decide policy for Important Birding Areas (IBA) in New Mexico. Another is to advocate for important habitat for birds as part of IBAs conservation issues. Mesilla Valley, Southwest (Silver City), Central (Albuquerque) and Sangre de Cristo (Santa Fe) chapters belong. The Council meets three times a year at central locations, usually at the Bosque del Apache. The next meeting will be Nov. 7. Members should contact President Gill Sorg.
- **Environmental Education-** Lead bird hikes or classroom presentations, and develop educational material.
- **Palomas Marsh Bird Count-** Visit this wetland in Sierra County to document birds species.
- **Scholarship Committees-** Develop outreach materials, review submissions, meet with the committee.
- **Field Trips-** Lead trips, or help with organization and advertising of trips.
- **Newsletters-** Join our team to get the bimonthly publication ready for print and mailing.
- **Board-** Keep the chapter alive and energized.
- **Fundraisers-** Organize events to benefit our scholarship programs and special projects.
- **Christmas Bird Count-** Join a team and help identify, or record species at this yearly event in December.  
(Part Two of Three. Next time: How MVAS makes a difference)

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## \* \* \* DACC \* \* \*

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And most importantly, you'll experience the diversity of birds in our region on three Saturday field trips to nearby bird watching hotspots.

Classroom sessions will be from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on Oct. 27, Nov. 3 and Nov. 10. Field trips to local birding hotspots will be on Oct. 31 Nov. 7 and Nov. 14.

To register, visit the community college's website at [dacc.nmsu.edu/comed](http://dacc.nmsu.edu/comed) or call 575-527-7527.

## \* \* \*MVAS Field Trips \* \* \*

**Saturday, Sept. 19 Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park** Meet at 7:15 a.m. in the Town of Mesilla Offices parking lot on Avenida de Mesilla. Leave at 7:30 a.m. for the park, less than two miles west on Calle del Norte. Bring a NM State Parks Annual Day Pass if you have one. We will complete this easy walk around noon.

**Saturday, Oct. 24: Corralitos Ranch Road.** Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot of Thomas Branigan Memorial Library, 200 E. Picacho Ave. Leave at 7:45, and carpooling can be arranged as it is about 25-30 miles out to the Ranch Road. Bring a lunch and snacks as there are no food stops along the way. Some of the avian highlights include Great-horned Owls, Prairie and Peregrine Falcons, Horned Larks, Lark Buntings, various Sparrows and Sage Thrashers. This is also great habitat for grassland birds. Expect to return to Las Cruces by mid to late afternoon. For both field trips, bring binoculars and field guide, sun screen, hat, insect repellent and more water than you think you'll need.

Contact Mark Pendleton at [mpndltn@gmail.com](mailto:mpndltn@gmail.com) with either Sept or Oct MVAS Field Trip date in subject line or call 575-635-8711.

[www.mvaudubon.org](http://www.mvaudubon.org)

[www.facebook.com/MesillaValleyAudubonSociety](https://www.facebook.com/MesillaValleyAudubonSociety)

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## *Autumn Speaker Series*

### **Birds of the Southwest U.S.**

Our Fall Speaker Series will celebrate the birds of our area. Three highly accomplished bird experts will share with the open-to-the-public audiences three different groups of birds: Raptors, Pigeons and Doves and Hummingbirds.

This is an opportunity to dig deeper than the field guide. Learn about research, tips for identification and the behavior of our regional avifauna. And be sure to join us for refreshments before the talks.

#### **Raptors, Sept. 16**

Brian Millsap, a wildlife biologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and NMSU Doctoral Candidate, will give an exciting look into the masters of the sky.

#### **Pigeons and doves, Oct. 21**

Professor Scott Carleton- Assistant Unit Leader for the NM Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit at NMSU, will discuss band-tailed pigeons and other members of the more peaceful Dove family.

#### **Hummingbirds plus book signing, Nov. 18**

Marcy Scott is co-owner of Robledo Vista Nursery and an accomplished birder. She has recently published *Hummingbird Plants of the Southwest*. Her book will be available for purchase during before and after the talk.

The presentations are free and open to the public. Mesilla Valley Audubon Society meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Southwest Environmental Center 275 Main Street, Las Cruces, NM 88004. Presentations follow a brief business meeting. Visit our website for more information on MVAS: [www.new-mexico-birds.com](http://www.new-mexico-birds.com).



#### ***Identify Bird of the Month***

CJ Goin submitted this month's mystery bird photo. Can you name it? The bird likes grassy areas with water such as golf courses and parks. It is common during the summer in this area and often can be seen during late spring and fall. Last month's mystery bird was a fledgling House Finch. For a few days after they leave the nest the young birds retain a few downy feathers on their crown, giving them the appearance of having horns.

#### **Calling all fledging bird watchers**

On Sept. 16, join our bird walks at Tellbrook Park on the third Wednesday of the month — guided by a member of the Mesilla Valley Audubon Society — and observe the ever changing birdlife that lives and visits here. Meet at 7:45 a.m. at the entrance to Tellbrook Park, 4290 E. Winchester Rd. This is a residential neighborhood with limited parking, so please be courteous and do not block driveways.

Lasting about an hour, these walks are appropriate for beginners and are done from the paved path that winds through the park.

No prior experience necessary, although a pair of binoculars would improve the experience. Dress for hot weather and bring drinking water. And bring your curiosity and thirst for the outdoors!

# Asombro Institute's first Bioblitz on Sept. 19

The Asombro Institute for Science Education, located in Las Cruces, will host its first 'Bioblitz' at the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park on Saturday, Sept. 19 from 7 a.m. to noon. Biological surveys will take place all day to get accurate information on the flora and fauna in the park. Mesilla Valley Audubon Society will be represented by C.J. Goin, who will lead a bird survey



Asombro is the Spanish word for "wonder," which its programs work to bring to thousands of children and adults who participate each year. The institute (formerly the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing scientific literacy by fostering an understanding of the Chihuahuan Desert.

Located in the northern Chihuahuan Desert, the 935-acre Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park is a topographically and biologically diverse example of this beautiful desert. The nature park encompasses a small section of the Doña Ana Mountains northeast of Las Cruces and holds spectacular views of the Organ Mountains, San Andres Mountains and the Jornada Basin. For more information and the Bioblitz schedule, visit the institute's web site at [www.asombro.org](http://www.asombro.org).

Enjoy this newsletter as a full-color PDF via email. Contact Judy Wilbur at [jkwilbur@gmail.com](mailto:jkwilbur@gmail.com) or (512)560-4717.

## OFFICERS

President	Gill Sorg	208-4457 c
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Board 2015-17	CJ Goin	202-1354 c
Board 2015-17	Mark Pendleton	635-8711 c
Board 2014-16	vacant	
Board 2014-16	Jennifer Montoya	640-6907 c
Board 2013-15	Jay Wilbur	512-632-4196 c
Board 2013-15	vacant	

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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