

ROADRUNNER RAMBLINGS

www.mvaudubon.org

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Mesilla Valley Audubon Society Newsletter



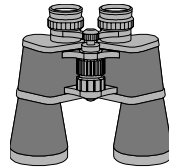
MVAS Programs

Membership meetings and programs are free and open to the general public. They are held the third Wednesday of each month at the **Southwest Environmental Center, 275 N. Downtown Mall.**

Meetings begin at 7:00 PM. Join the

board for refreshments at a 6:30 meet & greet.

Programs follow a brief business meeting. Questions? Contact Jennifer Montoya at 526-1320.



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, sunscreen, and binoculars. Announced trips subject to change—to receive updates and reminders, sign up for the field trip email list, by contacting Mark Pendleton at mpndltn@gmail.com.

New to the area? Curious about the plants and animals of the region? MVAS invites you to **Meet the Chihuahuan Desert**. Join us for a three-part series to learn more about the natural world (details for the March program, featuring plants, will be announced in our March-April newsletter).

Reptiles and Mammals. January 21. Noted Chihuahuan Desert zoologist Doug Burkett has spent his career documenting and researching the wildlife of White Sands Missile Range. Doug will provide an overview of the common reptiles and mammals you should expect to see as you explore the region.

Birds. February 18. Nancy Stotz is an accomplished regional expert on bird identification and distribution. She will provide an introduction to the common birds of southern New Mexico and describe the best places to find them.

Rosy-Finches at Sandia Crest. January 24. One of our state's claims to fame in the birding world is the flock of rosy-finches (all three North American species) that spend most winters (roughly November through March) atop the Sandia Mountains above Albuquerque. They're easy to see, as there are feeders maintained outside the windows at the Sandia Crest House. As a way showing our support for this effort, we suggest you buy some snacks and coffee there. Plus, it's an extremely civilized way to bird! The Sandia Crest House opens at 10:00 am, so you don't even have to get up at the crack of dawn to see the birds. For more info on the rosy-finches, visit www.rosyfinch.com.

Transportation and lodging arrangements are on your own, but there are a number of budget motels in ABQ, so that should be no problem. Some of us will be going up the late afternoon or evening of Friday the 23rd so there should be car-pooling opportunities. If you can take passenger/s or are looking for a ride, contact Mark Pendleton at mpndltn@gmail.com or 575.635.8711. When e-mailing, put Rosy Finches in the subject line. Mark will send out more info about lodging, transport, directions, what to bring, etc. as the date gets closer.

Destination TBA. February 21. Sign up to receive MVAS Fieldtrip notices and information. Send your name and e-mail address to Mark Pendleton at mpndltn@gmail.com. Please put MVAS FIELDTRIPS in the subject line.

Southwestern NM Raptor Count

A team of MVAS birders has been participating in this annual count, organized by the Southwestern NM Audubon Society, for several years. Each year, on the first Saturday of December, they drive a prescribed route on highways linking Las Cruces, Hatch, Deming, and Columbus, identifying and counting all the raptors they encounter. This year, they spent over 9 hours in the field and drove more than 260 miles, recording more than 150 raptors for their efforts. Red-tailed Hawks were the most abundant species (47 individuals), followed by American Kestrels (37) and Loggerhead Shrikes (31). In addition, they observed 13 Northern Harriers, 6 Ferruginous Hawks, 5 Prairie Falcons, 4 Cooper's Hawks, 4 Harris's Hawks, 4 Golden Eagles and a single individual of Sharp-shinned Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, and Greater Roadrunner.

If you're interested in helping the MVAS team next year, contact Wayne Treers via email at way1mike@yahoo.com or call 575-528-8696.

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ C5ZQ540Z

Send this form and your check to:

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

Questions about your membership status? Contact Nancy Stotz at 575-521-8087 or nstotz1@comcast.net.

Intermediate Birdwatching

MVAS will be teaching another bird identification and appreciation course through the community college this spring. The class will emphasize vocalizations, form and function, and bird behavior. Saturday field trips will reinforce skills learned in classroom sessions. Handouts and materials will be provided.

Classroom sessions will be Tuesday nights, from 6:30-8:30 PM, **April 7, 14, and 21**. Field trips to a variety of habitats, ranging from wetlands to desert foothills will be on **April 11, 18, and 25**.

For registration information visit the Doña Ana Community College Community Education program at www.dacc.nmsu.edu/comed or call 575-527-7527. **Space is limited: register now!**

Annual Elections

The slate of candidates for officer and board positions will be announced at the January MVAS program meeting and posted to our website. The annual election will be held at our February meeting.

Great Backyard Bird Count

Mark your calendars for this annual, global event: Friday, February 13 through Monday, February 16. Spend as little 15 minutes counting the birds out your window, or spend several hours trekking through your favorite birding hotspots. To learn more about how to submit your data and to explore last year's results, visit www.birdcount.org.

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 monthly, 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.

For contact information for officers and board members, visit our website at

www.mvaudubon.org

To receive this newsletter in electronic form, email nstotz1@comcast.net

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