



Volume XXIII, No. 4
Jun - Oct 2005

**BEXAR
AUDUBON
SOCIETY**

**BEXAR
AUDUBON
SOCIETY**

SAN ANTONIO, TX



First Place, 2000 & 2002!
National Audubon Society
newsletter contest — large
chapter division

Batty Over Bats

or Why I Like Bats and You Should Too

Thursday, September 8, 2005 — Chapter Meeting

6:30 p.m. — Social Time; 6:45p.m. — Announcements; 7:00 p.m. — Program

Free and open to the public — Cowles Life Sciences Bldg 11 - Room 336 - Trinity U., Corner of Hwy 281 & Stadium. Take Hildebrand exit from Hwy 281 N, Turn left onto Hildebrand, then left (south) at first light west of 281&Hildebrand.

At our September meeting, local bat expert, Kim Hoskins, will share facts and dispel myths on one of nature's most misunderstood mammals: the bat — the only true flying mammal! Fossil records of bats go back millions of years. Throughout history humans tend to fall into two categories: those that fear bats or those who appreciate them. Kim's presentation will include a discussion of bats in general: where they live, what they eat, what they look like, why they are beneficial; and conclude by highlighting the bats found in our area, "Bat Central, USA." Kim will present slides, photographs, preserved bats, and equipment to locate and study bats to help convince those attending to leave with a positive "battitude." The program is open to all ages and time for questions at the end will be available.

Kim Graduated from Texas A&M with degrees in Wildlife and Fisheries Science and Range and Ranch Management. She worked as an education specialist at the San Antonio Zoo; as raptor technician and educator with Last Chance Forever, Inc.; and became a registered veterinary technician (Palo Alto College 2003). Presently Kim works as an environmental educator for Northeast Independent School District 5th grade and is an adjunct professor for Palo Alto College Veterinary Tech Program.

Kim is a Master Naturalist and is state-certified with Project WILD, Project Learning Tree, Leopold Education Project, and the Food, Land, and People Program. Kim has volunteered with Bat Conservation International for over 15 years and visited bats in twelve countries and three states.

**Change in Meeting room
- Cowles Life Sciences
Bldg 11, Room 336
See map, back page.**

Thursday, October 13, 2005 — Chapter Meeting — Same time and place as above

Gardening for Butterflies and Other Wildlife

October is a great butterfly month with the monarch migration going on. Come to our October meeting and find

out what you can do in your garden to help our 6-legged — and our furry and feathered — friends make their way.

Saturday, September 10, 2005 — 4 pm — Field Trip

Bats & Botanizing Outing

Join us for a "Bats & Botanizing" trip on Saturday afternoon to visit Dottie Leslie's property near Comfort, Texas, before heading to the Old Tunnel Wildlife Management Area to view the evening flight of the Mexican Free-tailed Bats. This former railway tunnel and surrounding acreage is now managed by TPWD. Both upper and lower viewing areas provide an excellent opportunity to experience these flying mammals. Entrance fees: adults: \$5, youth 6-16: \$2 (5 and under free) and seniors 65 and older: \$3. Bring a picnic supper. For details & reservations call Patty Pasztor at (210) 824-1235.

Saturday, October 22, 2005 — Field Trip

Mitchell Lake Wildlife Garden Tour and Plant Sale

Take a tour of the Butterfly/Hummingbird Garden at Mitchell Lake Audubon Center — all plants are native to South Texas and Mexico providing berries, nectar, and larval food for birds and butterflies. Call 824-1235 for details and carpool info. Also see back page for information on the First Annual Wildlife Plant Sale and Festival.

BEXAR AUDUBON SOCIETY

Chapter of the National Audubon Society

P. O. Box 6084, San Antonio, TX 78209
210-822-4503

GOALS

The Chapter's primary goals are to promote species and habitat conservation and environmental education in the community.

OFFICERS

President	Tony Wood	(tonywood@sbcglobal.net)	493-4684
Vice Pres.	Harry Noyes	(harrynoyes@satx.rr.com)	490-3124
Treasurer	Betty Minyard	(mink@texas.net)	344-6128
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Bexar Tracks is your newsletter.

We welcome your contributions.



Printed with soy ink on recycled paper.

Visit Bexar Audubon's Web Site:

<http://www.BexarAudubon.org>

Up-to-date environmental events and calendar can be found here

— check often for news!

Visit San Antonio Environmental Network's Web Site:

<http://www.sa-naturecenter.org>

Suggestions and contributions are welcome.

Please contact Harry Noyes at harrynoyes@satx.rr.com

Time flies like
an arrow.
Fruit flies like
bananas.

~Julius ("Groucho")
Marx~

CHAPTER NEWS

May 2005 SAEN Recap:

THE END OF SUBURBIA

The 2004 "The End of Suburbia" is a documentary that provides strong evidence that the growing energy demands associated with auto dependency and American suburbia will outstrip available energy supplies. Toronto independent producers Gregory Greene and Barry Silverthorn argue that the suburban way of life will soon become impossible to maintain. This is expected to happen within our lifetimes, perhaps within the next five years.

The San Antonio Environmental Network Public Issues Forum watched the 87-minute video on May 12 at Trinity University. Transportation planner and consultant Bill Barker presented the video and facilitated a discussion afterwards.

Despite the serious subject, the video is entertaining, and occasionally funny. With interviews with noted energy experts, the documentary is quite convincing that there is an impending energy problem. It is an eye-opener for those who haven't been following the energy situation.

Less convincing is the video's assertion that higher energy prices will mark the end of the suburbs. The American suburbs are projected as the slums of the future where people will plant vegetable gardens in their front yards for

food and multiple families will live in the large McMansions of today. *San Antonio Express-News* columnist Mike Greenberg recently questioned this outcome in his March 27 piece.

The projection that world oil production will soon reach its peak and decline thereafter is called "peak oil." The video suggests that the consequences of "peak oil" will include violence at the gas pump; unending economic depression; radical downsizing of various activities from manufacturing to education; a slump in food production; skyrocketing shipping costs; political upheavals; the election of demagogues; and continuous wars as the U. S. uses its military to maintain its disproportionate consumption of the world's oil.

After the viewing at Trinity University, the Forum attendees discussed the impacts of the growing economies of India and China on the world oil consumption situation. There was also some dialogue on the factors here in San Antonio that continually push for more suburban sprawl.

The website is www.endofsuburbia.com. The DVD can be rented from Netflix or purchased on Amazon.com.

-Bill Barker

Meet San Antonio's New City Council

Bexar Audubon welcomes San Antonio's new Mayor and City Council and expresses its appreciation to returning members. We are hearing loud and clear that Council members want to hear from citizens. Whether on a specific issue up for Council consideration (vested rights, recharge zone protection, greenways, etc.) or if you simply want to urge your Councilperson to stand fast in favor of sustainability and natural resource conservation in the San Antonio area, please contact your Councilperson and the Mayor. They won't know you care unless you tell them. -skh
Mayor Phil Hardberger: phardberger@sanantonio.gov; Phone: 207-7060; Fax: 207-4168. City Hall Office Hours: Monday - Friday 7:45 am - 4:30 pm. Address for all: P.O. Box 839966, San Antonio, TX 78283-3966. E-mail format for Councilpersons is: District#@sanantonio.gov. Fax for all Councilpersons is: 207-7027. For more information and Councilperson office hours, see: www.sanantonio.gov.

District 1 - Roger O. Flores — 207-7279
District 2 - Sheila D. McNeil — 207-7278
District 3 - Roland Gutierrez — 207-7064
District 4 - Richard Perez — 207-7281
District 5 - Patti Radle — 207-7043

District 6 - Delicia Herrera — 207-7065
District 7 - Elena Guajardo — 207-7044
District 8 - Art A. Hall — 207-7086
District 9 - Kevin Wolff — 207-7325
District 10 - Christopher "Chip" Haass — 207-7276

May 2005 Recap:

Birdathon! 2005

Mitchell Lake Audubon Center



Birdathon morning began for me at 5:15 am when I stepped outside to see if I could hear the call of a chuck-will's widow. No luck. Instead, I heard a distant, persistent yet varied call of a northern mockingbird. I drove around our neighborhood seeking the calls of a screech owl or the chuck-will's widow. Unfortunately, our area seems at last to be so developed there are fewer places where these birds are willing to hang out. There was the soft chirping of the purple martin.

My Birdathon cohorts, Harriet Wiygul and Blair Richter, arrived around 6:00 am, and we set out for McAllister Park. As we were getting in the car, Blair said, "Look, there is the International Space Station." And indeed it was – a bright, shiny pinpoint dot traveling across the sky overhead.

On the way to McAllister, we heard or saw most of the usual neighborhood birds: black-crested titmouse, northern cardinal, Carolina wren, great-tailed grackle, common nighthawk, black and turkey vulture, Carolina chickadee, eastern phoebe, Bewick's wren, house sparrow, and white-winged dove. We also saw a couple of western kingbirds doing a raucous, aerial dance. McAllister revealed only a few species: brown-headed cowbirds, red-shouldered hawk, chimney swift, and mourning dove.

On our way over to Friedrich Park, we saw rock dove, black-bellied whistling duck, and European starling. Friedrich Park parking lot gave us ladder-backed woodpecker, cedar waxwing, Inca dove, white-eyed vireo, blue-gray gnatcatcher, lesser goldfinch, house finch, and the spectacular painted bunting. The Water Trail gave us the scrub jay and our main target

species, the golden-cheeked warbler. A hummingbird (sp) zinged by us in the flower garden on the hill.

Our next stop was Olmos Park which had very little to offer in the way of bird life. We got the golden-fronted woodpecker, Nashville warbler, and the blue jay. Avenue A gave us a real treat. After hearing the yellow-billed cuckoo and seeing barn swallows, we spotted a male wood duck with mom and three babies nearby. A yellow-crowned night heron flew in, and we heard the unmistakable call of the black-throated green warbler. We also added a great egret to the list.

A pleasant lunch break in Brackenridge Park gave us a mallard and Muscovy duck. Harriet left us at this point, and Blair and I headed for Mitchell Lake about noon.

As we approached Mitchell Lake, we saw cliff swallows at the Moursund Road Bridge. A very welcome sound greeted us at the Mitchell Lake gate. The dickcissels were back on their way through to their breeding grounds. A red-tailed hawk was circling near the entrance. As we passed Bird Pond toward the parking lot, we saw a red-winged blackbird and a spotted sandpiper pumping its tail. As I was straining to confirm the call of clay-colored sparrows, I spotted a bird on the low branches of a nearby tree. The sound did not match the bird in my view. It was an orchard oriole.

A common moorhen with its brilliant red beak was swimming in Bird Pond. A brilliantly bright yellow warbler posed beautifully for us along the road, and a northern rough-winged swallow flew overhead. We spotted blue-winged teal, American coot, a

green heron on the nest, neotropic

cormorants and heard a common ground dove. We also saw a pied-billed grebe, least grebe, American goldfinch, and a scissor-tailed flycatcher.

Skips' Pond gave us cattle egret, black-necked stilt, and killdeer. On the way to East Polder, we saw a loggerhead shrike. The remaining time at Mitchell Lake gave us snowy egret, Wilson's phalarope, northern shoveler, savannah sparrow, American pelican, lesser scaup, ruddy duck, and lesser yellowlegs. A great treat was a group of yellow-headed blackbirds. It had been a long time since my last one.

As we were leaving the property, I mentioned to Blair that barn owls usually nested in the old cinderblock building. While I have rarely seen them there, Blair decided we should check. I was walking away as I did not see one, but Blair called me back. A young owl was peeking over a 2x4.

On our way back home, we stopped by Southside Lions Park hoping to pick up a few more species but all we got was a goose (sp). We got a total of 78 species plus a nice look at the International Space Station.

As in the past, all of the money I raise goes toward funding of *Audubon Adventures* in grades 2 through 6. If you have not already contributed, please make your check payable to Mitchell Lake Audubon Center. Your donations are tax-deductible if you itemize.

Your support of this effort is appreciated. If you have any questions, please call me a 210-545-1822 or email me at birdwatcher@msn.com. *-Marge Lumpe*

August 6, 2005 Recap:

Can San Antonio's Conservation Groups All Work Together?

Whenever two or three San Antonio conservationists get together, one is apt to say, and the others will always agree, that the area's many and disparate conservationist groups really need to work together more.

While there is in fact a lot of cooperation on specific issues from time to time, there seems to be a universal longing for something more — for continuing interaction, communication and a joint strategy. But the devil is in the details: how to become more joint, while respecting the independence and different focuses of all the groups.

Bexar Audubon Society, deciding that even clumsy action might accomplish more than endless wishing, took a stab at kick-starting such a process by hosting an informal lunch meeting for conservationist leaders at the San Antonio River Authority headquarters building Sat., Aug. 6.

The selection process was somewhat haphazard. We started by working off the top of our heads,

identifying the “energizer bunny” types that we see over and over again whenever there is a conservationist meeting, hearing, issue, etc. The method was also informal: a casual exchange of ideas on what the hot local conservationist issues are and what strategies should be pursued to deal with them.

The group was not a comprehensive or scientific selection — some fine conservationist leaders were not there, for various reasons — but it was a pretty good sampling of about a dozen-and-a-half smart, experienced, energetic conservationist doers, thinkers and leaders.

The discussion was lively and creative, and numerous ideas were

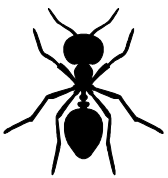


From left: Bill Barker, Michael Berrier, Allison Elder, Marianne Kestenbaum, Susan Hughes (standing), Steve Colley, Jerry Morrissey (standing), Harry Noyes (standing), Richard Alles, Erin Zayko (standing), Annalisa Peace, Francine Romero (hidden), Dean Bibles, Nettie Patricia Hinton, Bill Hurley, Paul Barwick, Mark Peterson.

collected. As we have a chance to digest them in the coming months, we will keep *Bexar Tracks* readers posted. We hope to be reporting exciting developments — the emergence of a viable format or mechanism for an enduring and efficient coalition of all the local groups that care about the conservation and enhancement of our environment.

-Harry Noyes, Vice President, BAS

Fire Ant Awareness Week Aimed at Promoting Proactive Treatment Efforts



Fall is a prime time for treating for fire ants in order to reduce the numbers that will appear in the spring, say experts. That's why, since 1998, *Fire Ant Awareness Week* has been held the second full week of September.

The awareness campaign encourages community-wide efforts, where all residents on a block apply fire ant treatment at the same time on the same day, to maximize its effectiveness. Studies in San Antonio showed the approach reduced fire ant mounds by 94 percent and reduced the cost of

pesticides by 84 percent.

A statewide cost savings for insecticides could be \$313 million. Communities should fight fire ants with the Texas Two Step Method, Kimberly Engler, Texas Cooperative Extension program specialist in urban integrated pest management, said. Step One is to broadcast a fire ant bait twice per year, in the fall and spring, when the yard has at least five fire ant mounds per quarter-acre, and to broadcast around 1 to 1-1/2 pounds per acre. That will place only a low level of insecticide in the environment.

Step Two is to re-treat individual mounds in high traffic areas, such as

along driveways and around mailboxes.

Fire ant bait methods of fire ant control take longer than individual mound treatments, Engler said, but their effectiveness can reach a 90 percent suppression rate for six to 18 months. The bait should get rid of the fire ant population in your yard, but it usually takes longer, on average, two weeks.

For a kit to use to organize your neighborhood, go to fireant.tamu.edu/materials/factsheets/FAPFS015.2002rev.pdf.

-Janet Gregg, j-gregg@tamu-edu

Editor's note: Always read and follow product labelling carefully for best effect and minimize the opportunity for contamination, especially over the recharge zone.

Managing for Wildlife in an Urban Island

The Sixth Annual South Texas Farm & Range Forum

September 15 & 17, 2005

Palo Alto College & Mitchell Lake Audubon Center



Thursday, September 15, 2005 - Palo Alto College

- 5:30 pm** Registration & Refreshments
- 6:00 pm** Welcome & Introductions
- 6:05 pm** **“What is this plant, and what good is it?”**
Patty Leslie Pasztor
- 6:50 pm** **“Butterflies and hummingbirds: Nature’s self-propelled flowers.”**
Michael Quinn and Mark Klym, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- 8:00 pm** Break
- 8:15 pm** **“Managing for wildlife: What do I need to do? Agricultural and wildlife property valuation update.”** *Jim Cathey, Texas Cooperative Extension*
- 9:00 pm** Adjournment

Saturday, September 17, 2005 - Mitchell Lake Audubon Center

- 7:00 am** Birding on your own
- 8:30 am** Registration & Refreshments
- 9:00 am** Welcome & Introductions
- 9:05 am** **“Our water futures: Quality and conservation.”** *Calvin Finch, San Antonio Water System*
- 9:55 am** Break
- 10:15 am** **“Mitchell Lake Audubon Center: Putting ecology to work for wildlife in an urban island.”** *Iliana Peña, MLAC Director*
- 11:00 am** **“What a well--managed fire can do to revitalize habitat.”** *Robert K. Lyons, Texas Cooperative Extension*
- 11:45 am** Questions & Answers
- 12:00 pm** Adjournment

Speakers & schedule subject to change without notice.

Recommended attire: country casual. Saturday’s events will be outdoors.

Questions? Call 800--TEX-WILD (210--826--2904) or email: h_holdsworth@texas-wildlife.org

Sponsored by: Bexar Audubon Society, Mitchell Lake Audubon Center, Natural Resources Conservation Service, San Antonio Water System, Small Agricultural Producers Committee, Texas Cooperative Extension, Texas Wildlife Association

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

Please register by September 12. Early registrations help us plan. PRINT LEGIBLY & mail or fax

NAME: _____ AC/PHONE: _____
FARM/RANCH/ORGANIZATION: _____
ADDRESS: _____ CITY/ST/ZIP: _____
E-MAIL: _____ PAY BY: Check (payable to TWA)

Thursday only: @ \$15 per person MasterCard Visa AmEx
Saturday only: @ \$15 per person Card # _____ Exp ___/___
Both days: @ \$25 per person Signature _____

Call for information on sponsorships or student registrations.

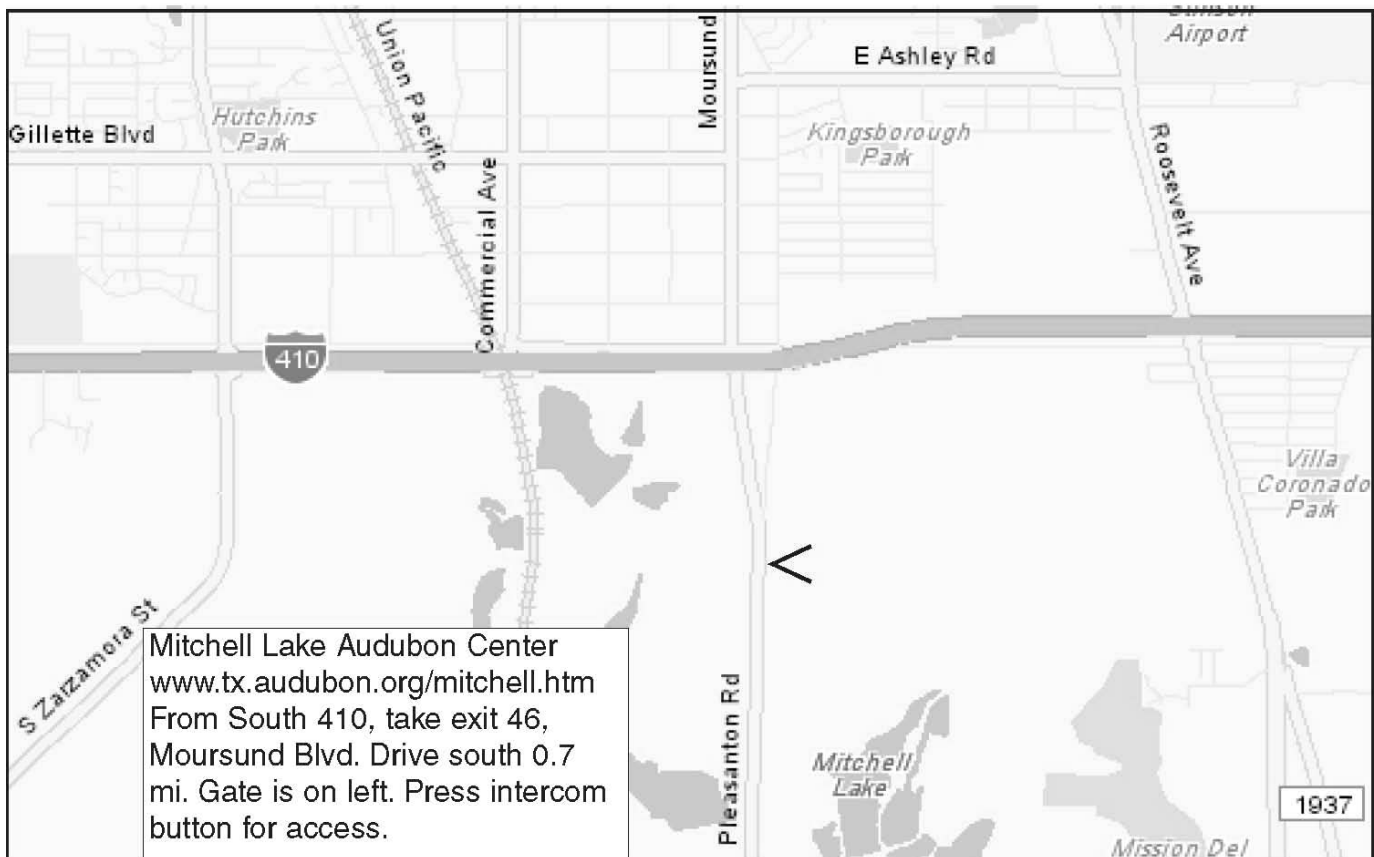
FAX TO: 210-826-4933

MAIL TO: Helen Holdsworth, Texas Wildlife Association,

Interested in CEUs? Yes No

401 Isom Rd., Ste. 237, San Antonio TX 78216

MAP FOR SOUTH TEXAS FARM & RANGE FORUM



SECOND SATURDAY PROGRAM

by Peggy Spring

SAN ANTONIO NATURALLY

September 10, 2005 — 10 am-2 pm
EISENHOWER PARK



A “family friendly” program with interactive presentations about nature in and around San Antonio sponsored by the San Antonio Natural Areas and Bexar Audubon Society.

- Continuous presentations by Texas Parks and Wildlife Master Naturalists Audubon Societies and many more.
- Come and go as you like
- Native American story telling by Emma Ortega at 12:00

Donation \$2.00/person. Call 698-1057 for information and reservations.

Directions to Eisenhower Park, Harris (Mass Pavilion), 19399 NW Military Hwy. Take FM 1535/Military Hwy/Shavano Park exit off Loop 1604 on the city’s northwest side. Go north on FM 1535/Military Hwy about 2 miles. Park entrance is on the left, just before Camp Bullis. The Pavilion is the gated one to the right. Gates open 9:30 am.

FIRST SATURDAYS INTERPRETIVE NATURE HIKES

Hikes start again September 3 at one of three places

Walker Ranch Historic Park — 12603 West Ave

Eisenhower Park — 19399 Northwest Military Drive

Friedrich Wilderness Park — 21395 Milsa Road

Information was not available at press time. Generally, **reservations are highly recommended**, as the hike will not be conducted if there are no pre-registered participants. Call (210) 698-1057 for particular park events.

Meet at the restrooms near the parking lot. A donation of \$2 per person is suggested. Participants are limited to 15 per hike. For groups of 8 or more please call to schedule a separate hike.

See www.sanaturalareas.org for more information.

July 2005 recap:

Super Serpents

We had a great Second Saturday program conducted by Miles Lindeburg and John Lowell of the South Texas Herp Society. They had numerous non-venomous and venomous snakes, mostly from the local area. Participants learned information about each specimen, were allowed to see most of them up close with some being hand carried amongst the crowd. And then anyone who wanted got a chance to pet the rather large (read 7 - 8 feet long) boa. We had 38 youth and 49 adults attending for a total of 87 participants. This continues to be a well attended program.

~Sumner Dana ~

Sumner Dana III was an expert bird bander who trapped and tracked migratory birds at Mitchell Lake and other parts of San Antonio. He died of cancer April 13 at the age of 66. He will be missed by all who knew him. He taught us so much.

Sumner, who had been a San Antonio College biology professor from 1965 until 1998, had a federal banding permit. He started an upland bird study project at ML in the fall of 1994. Working with volunteers, he collected data on band numbers, age and sex of birds, and dates banded, and sent it to the Bird Banding Laboratory in Laurel, MD. Sumner reported that by the summer of 2001, more than 2,600 birds representing 87 species had been banded by volunteers at ML.

Sumner graduated from Notre Dame and earned a master's degree from Texas Tech University. He was a director of the Inland Bird Banding Association, was a member of Mitchell Lake Wetlands Society and the Texas Bird Banders Association

RECURRING EVENTS

San Antonio Audubon Society's Beginners' Birdwalk is held at 8 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month. Visitors are welcome. There are binoculars to lend.

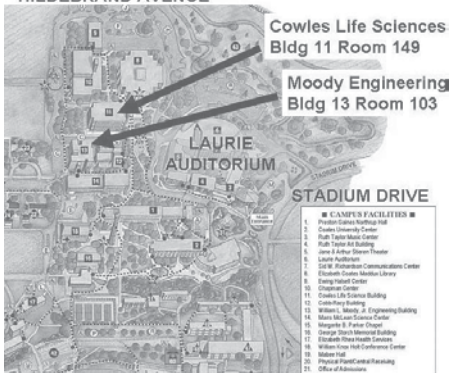
Meet at the Judson Nature Trail next to the Alamo Heights Swimming Pool on Viesca St. From the 5900 block of Broadway, turn west on Ogden to Greeley St., turn left one block, then right again to the parking lot on the left. More information at 210-342-2073.

MITCHELL LAKE ACCESS



Call the Mitchell Lake Audubon Center at 210-628-1639 for information for birding and other events.


HILDEBRAND AVENUE



Trinity U. Map of Chapter & SAEN Meeting places. See P. 1 for program info.

Bexar Audubon Society, Inc.
P. O. Box 6084
San Antonio, TX 78209

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Earth Share of Texas represents the Audubon Foundation of Texas and the National Audubon Society in payroll deduction plans for charitable giving. For information, call 1-800-GREENTX or email <estx@earthshare-texas.org>.

Saturday, Oct 22nd, 2005 (Rain Date: Oct 23rd) — 9 am – 3 pm

Mitchell Lake Audubon Center's First Annual Wildlife Plant Sale and Festival

Create your own Butterfly and Hummingbird Garden with native and adapted Plants available for sale. You can purchase the plants found in our Center's Garden. For more info, please call 210-628-1639.

Activities include:

- Lectures held throughout the day by experts in the field!
- Raffle with exciting nature-oriented prizes!
- Free plant give-away courtesy of the San Antonio Water System!
- Hay-rides for the kids and nature walks and birding tours led by docents!

2005 South Texas Farm and Range Forum "Managing for Wildlife in an Urban Island" Meeting Sep. 15 - 17.
Details and registration form on pages 5 and 6.

Membership Form Chapter Donation Form National Audubon Society Bexar Audubon Society

Membership rates are:
Student/Senior \$15 Basic \$35
Introductory 1-year \$20 (2-year: \$30)

Name _____
 Address _____

 City _____ State ____ Zip _____
 Phone: () _____

Email: _____

For a new membership, mail this coupon and your check—payable to "National Audubon Society, Chapter W19" to:
Bexar Audubon Society
P. O. Box 6084
San Antonio, TX 78209
W19, 7XCH

Opt out for other mailings

By using this form, 100 percent of your first year's dues will benefit the chapter.

For Contributions to BAS: \$ _____
 Make your check payable to Bexar Audubon Society