



Volume XXII, No. 4
September 2004

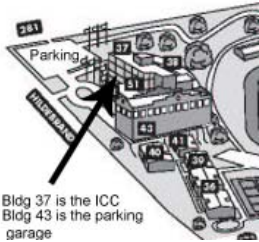
BEXAR TRACKS

**BEXAR
AUDUBON
SOCIETY**
SAN ANTONIO, TX



First Place, 2000 & 2002!
National Audubon Society
newsletter contest for
large chapters

Thursday, September 9, 2004, San Antonio Environmental Network Issues Forum



Bldg 37 is the ICC
Bldg 43 is the parking
garage

America's Greatest Wildlife Migration **HAWKS!**

6:30 p.m. — Social Time; 6:45 p.m. — Program
Free and open to the public—Parking adjacent to the Center

Grossman International Conference Center of the University of the Incarnate Word
Northeast corner of Hwy 281 and Hildebrand



John Economidy, a San Antonio attorney who has an interest in birds of prey, will discuss one of America's greatest wildlife migrations — the raptor migration through the Coastal Bend of Texas. Each fall, tens of thousands of birds of prey, including hawks, kites, ospreys, peregrine falcons, bald eagles, caracaras, and more, funnel through this area of south Texas on their southerly migration. John will specifically talk about the Hawkwatch at Hazel Bazemore County Park, just outside of Corpus Christi, which is, amazingly, the largest fall migration of birds of prey in the United States. This region serves as a geographical chokepoint for most of the North American birds of prey migrating to Central and South America.

What is hawkwatching? Hawkwatching is part science and part fun. Scientists, students, interested

laypeople, and those just curious, all gather to observe and tally the numbers of raptors migrating through an area. Hawkwatching began in the Eastern U.S. at Cape May, New Jersey, and Hawk Mountain, Pennsylvania, and spread to other locations throughout the U.S., Canada, Vera Cruz, Mexico, and Panama. Our Texas hawkwatch is significant in that observers often see more migrating birds on one day in south Texas than in an entire season at other U.S. locations!

John will share slides of his many years as head observer of the Hawkwatch at Hazel Bazemore and give an overview of Texas raptors, including some I.D. tips for identifying these birds on the wing.



Swainson's Hawk USFWS

Sunday, September 19, 2004 — Hazel Bazemore County Park

Hawkwatch Field Trip

Join as we head down to Hazel Bazemore County Park near Corpus Christi to experience the fall raptor migration. We will meet at the Ruble Center, 419 E. Magnolia Ave., for carpooling. **Call Patty Leslie Pasztor at 824-1235 for information** and directions. If you would like to go on your own the night before or another weekend, directions are as follows:

*Cross the Nueces River on IH-37. * Take US 77 to Robstown/Kingsville/LRGV. * Immediately take the exit marked FM 624/Up River Road. * After exiting, go to red light

and turn right on FM 624/Up River Road. * Go past CalAllen High School and its stadium. * At the first red light past the stadium, turn right onto "County Road 69." This takes you to the park. Turn left into ranger station. This traffic light is new from past years. There is no longer a wooden sign saying Hazel Bazemore County Park.

The park has water and restroom facilities. There are folks there to help you with I.D.

Bring: Chair, Sunscreen, Hat, Binoculars, Patience. Hawkwatching is like fishing. They *will* come: you just have to wait.

Note new day for our meetings - second Thursdays

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.

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Bexar Tracks is your newsletter.
We welcome your contributions.



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Visit Bexar Audubon's
Web Site:

<http://www.BexarAudubon.org>

Visit San Antonio Environmental
Network's Web Site:

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

Suggestions and contributions are welcome.
Please contact Bill Hurley at
billhurley@satx.rr.com

To report a polluting vehicle:

1-800-453-SMOG

(1-800-453-7664)

or www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/air/ms/smokingvehicles.html

Earth laughs in
flowers.

~Ralph Waldo Emerson~

BENEATH THE GAVEL

Dear Friends:

Seems there's life in the old gal yet! Following our August pulse-taking session, there's been a lot of activity within Bexar Audubon Society, especially by people who have been long-time members and supporters. Some of them may have been less active with BAS over the past few years (most have had other focuses in their lives — personal and/or volunteer), but their dedication to BAS — its history and its goals — has brought them forward again. I can't thank them enough.

As evident in this issue of Bexar Tracks, we have programs, field trips, and other activities for you to attend, participate in, and enjoy. Come and bring your friends. To keep this level of activity up and even growing, we must have your attendance and interest.

Remember that December will bring us elections at our annual holiday party. You'll see some new names on the ballot this year! Plan to attend and get them off to a great start, while enjoying some holiday cheer and camaraderie and our world-famous white elephant gift

exchange. Start digging through your closets now.

Among the important issues San Antonio will deal with in the coming year is the Aquifer Protection Initiative, which will appear on the May election ballot. Start talking about this issue with your friends and neighbors and make sure they come to vote FOR the API in May. It's the surest way we have to protect the Edwards Aquifer from the impending threats from growth over the recharge zone.

Mitchell Lake will be holding its official opening soon. Watch for more news and be sure to attend. What a jewel we have in Mitchell Lake, and how fortunate we are that it is well on its way to becoming a full-fledged Audubon Center — right here in our home town.

And, of course, there's the general election in November. There are important decisions to be made that will surely affect our nation's future and our hopes for sustainability.

Warm regards, and a hearty welcome to all of you who wish to participate in our programs and outings and to get more involved with Bexar Audubon.

-Susan Hughes, President

John Economidy Bio

John M. Economidy is a San Antonio attorney who has an interest in birds of prey. In 1980, he helped get John Karger's Last Chance Forever bird conservancy incorporated as a non-profit organization. From 1987 to 1996, he was head observer of the hawk watch at Hazel Bazemore County Park and Texas regional editor for *Hawk Migration Studies*, the publication of the Hawk Migration of North America. He recently researched the status and distribution of raptors for *Raptors of Western North America* and *Raptors of Eastern North America*, the Brian Wheeler Guides published by Princeton University Press.

JUNE SAEN RECAP - ROAD-BUILDING OVER THE RECHARGE ZONE

Over 30 people attended the San Antonio Environmental Network panel discussion on Road-building over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone, moderated by former San Antonio city councilmember and current Edwards Aquifer Authority board member, Bonnie Conner.

Joanne Walsh, director of the San Antonio-Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization (sametroplan.org), gave an overview of the issues regarding local transportation. Her committee is responsible for developing a coordinated transportation plan that incorporates all aspects of transportation, including roads, bicycle trails, and public transportation.

The first step is for local officials, business leaders, technical experts, and citizens to work together to identify and prioritize transportation needs as well as find innovative solutions. Thus, the trend is away from modular solutions that address one problem at a time, to a comprehensive land use plan that includes transportation planning to coincide with growth areas.

Another aspect of good transportation planning was the fact that access and mobility are not just about congestion relief, they're about economic development: on-time delivery, economic competition, delivery of emergency services, and access to jobs, schools, medical care, shopping, and recreation.

Geary Schindel, P. G., Chief Technical Officer of the Edwards Aquifer Authority, described what

the EAA was doing to address water quality issues. The EAA has appointed a citizen's group to review water quality issues concerning the aquifer. The EAA board has already begun to address practices that could affect water quality by prohibiting the construction of new fuel storage tanks over the recharge zone, by implementing stringent standards for well construction, and with a program to identify and plug abandoned wells. The EAA has in place an extensive water quality monitoring program throughout the aquifer, consisting of 80 wells per year.

Clay Smith, P. E., planning engineer of the San Antonio office of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), described the 2030 Transportation Mobility Plan. This plan is based on population growth and economic development. He noted that the 25 percent of the highway miles under TxDOT in San Antonio carry 65 percent of the traffic. Every project developed by TxDOT undergoes an environmental impact study and develops a water pollution abatement plan utilizing best management practices to reduce or contain pollutants.

George Veni, P. G., of Veni and Associates, a hydrogeologist who specializes in karst geology, emphasized that karst aquifers have NO filtering of their recharge, thus as drinking sources they are the most vulnerable to pollution.

Bill Barker, a transportation planning consultant, described a recent study, including cities of populations from 1 to 12 million, that show that average commute

times are 30 minutes. This means that the time that people budget for commuting is about 30 minutes each way, and that they move rather than put up with longer commute times. Bill thinks that focusing high dollar construction projects in areas over the recharge zone that are more than 30 minutes away from jobs may not be a good idea – there is little probability that significant jobs will move over the recharge zone.

During the Q & A session, George Veni noted that best management practices (BMP) required by water pollution abatement plans weren't necessarily the best way to minimize contamination, but probably were the most affordable ways to attempt to minimize contamination. In addition, if the various BMP features (catchment and/or sediment basins) are not maintained (have the filters cleaned or changed), they become useless or worse, they may concentrate the contaminants and then direct them into the recharge features.

Another question was about the existence and impact of access roads. They first appeared in Texas in the 1950s and have led to more accidents and very disorganized growth because of local development. George Veni noted that San Marcos bought 600 acres over the recharge zone and will extend Wonder Road as a parkway with no exit ramps, so that there will be a buffer over the vulnerable area. Limiting access over the recharge zone could be a way to minimize growth while addressing congestion problems.

-Jill Sondeen

How do birds get their names?

Birds get their common names in a variety of ways. Often birds are named for one of the pioneer ornithologists. Names may be derived from Latin, Greek or local terms, a name may be borrowed from Old World species, a name may suggest the bird's call.

John Cassin, a famous bird biologist from the early 1800s, has five birds named for him, one being our common Cassin's kingbird. Falcon is derived from the Latin "falco" meaning "sickle" for the curved beak and talons. Plover supposedly comes from the Latin word "pluvia" for rain, because the birds were thought to migrate in the rainy season or they live in rainy places.

Europeans who explored North America named some of our birds for birds that were familiar in their homeland. The American robin was named for the beloved "robin redbreast" of England. Both have a reddish breast, but they are very different and not closely related. Dove was a British term for wild pigeon, and the word likely came from an Anglo Saxon word meaning "to dive." Warbler originally meant to sing with trills and was used to describe Old World warblers, many of which are not good singers and are not related to our colorful wood warblers. Our orioles were named for the European golden oriole even though they are in a different family.

Many birds are named for the calls they make. The northern

bobwhite is named for its familiar "bobwhite" whistle; and the killdeer is named for its "killdee" call. Nightjars' nocturnal calls became their names. For example, the chuckwill's-widow says its name, although at a distance one only hears "will's widow," while the poorwill and whip-poor-will clearly pronounce their names.

It is said that "owl" is onomatopoeic, that is it is derived from the bird's call, although there is also an Anglo Saxon word "ule" meaning an owl and a Latin word "ulula," meaning a screech owl. Our willet's name is imitative of the bird's call; likewise the whimbrel calls "whim" and the "rel" is a diminutive suffix.

Some birds' names are derived from an Indian name for the bird. Anhinga, for example, means "water turkey" in a South American language and perfectly describes this bird found in swamps and lakes. The sora, a rail, living in similar habitat, is also from an Indian word.

At times a simple description is best. The gray catbird is gray and mews like a cat. The mockingbird mocks other bird calls, the ovenbird makes a domed oven-shaped nest, woodpeckers peck on wood, flycatchers catch flies and other insects, and the hummingbirds' wings hum with their rapid flight.

*-Carol E. Edwards
ceebird@overland*

Water Quality and Smart Growth

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has released a new report that aims to help communities protect water resources and achieve smart growth. The report documents 75 innovative approaches — including redeveloping abandoned properties, encouraging rooftop gardens, creating shared parking, and promoting tree planting — that state and local governments and water quality professionals can use to achieve their smart growth and water quality goals.

To receive a free copy of *Protecting Water Resources with Smart Growth*, send an email to: ncepimal@one.net or call 1-800-490-9198 and request EPA publication 231-R-04-002. The report and more information about smart growth are also available at: www.epa.gov/smartgrowth



Seed for major award planted by Horticulture Department



Each year, millions of people visit the San Antonio River Walk, enjoying its restaurants, bars, hotels and shops. With so much going on, visitors can miss the trees in a forest of entertaining distractions.

The horticulture faculty at Texas A&M University has taken steps to help change that. Working with the San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department, the horticulture faculty submitted a nomination to the American Society for Horticultural Science in Washington, D.C., to designate the River Walk a horticultural landmark. The horticulture society agreed.

A plaque commemorating the site as “a magnificent urban ecosystem where man and nature embrace a great engineering work that supports the rich diversity of South Texas plants” was unveiled on July 21 at a ceremony on the River Walk.

Dr. Dan Lineberger, a Texas A&M horticulture professor who had the idea of nominating the River Walk for the award, attended

the ceremony.

“As a horticulturist, I felt the site deserved to be recognized for the unique beauty of the plants and trees growing there,” Lineberger said. “I’m glad the horticulture society felt the same way.” The ASHS is an international association

of horticulturists, founded in 1903. It commemorates horticultural sites of “historical, scientific, environmental and aesthetic value” by designating them as horticultural landmarks. The River Walk is the eighth site to earn this distinction.

The plaque designating the site a horticultural landmark is on permanent display at Peak’s Park, located off River Walk’s Commerce Street entrance near the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce.

“The San Antonio River Walk is a unique horticultural environment,” said Lynn Rawe, Texas Cooperative Extension agent for horticulture.

“There you can see a collection of plants and trees you won’t find in any other urban setting,” she said. “And lot of the flora has been there for centuries, so it has a strong historical significance too.”

The San Antonio River Walk was initially designed by landscape architect Robert Hugman. From its

beginning as the “San Antonio River Beautification Project” in the late 1930s, the area was intended to blend the commercial and entertainment portions of downtown San Antonio with the area’s natural beauty. Over the years, the River Walk has grown into a 2.5-mile-long stretch within the heart of downtown San Antonio, but its original purpose has remained unchanged.

The flora around the San Antonio River Walk is unusually diverse, he added. “Trees like palm, lemon, banana, papaya and avocado grow well in this zone. They are planted among the more typical trees of the region, such as oak, pecan and bald cypress.”

According to Lineberger, the River Walk provides a growing environment which supports hardy native trees and plants, as well as a number of different and less-hardy plants. “And because it’s below street level, it creates a microclimate that can be five to seven degrees cooler than normal in the summer and warmer in the winter. That makes it more pleasant.”

Now the site has been designated a horticultural landmark, the horticulture faculty at Texas A&M hopes more visitors will take time to smell the roses — or honeysuckle and night-blooming jasmine—along the River Walk.

-Paul Schattenberg

Black bear Guzzles Rainier But not Busch

BAKER LAKE, Wash. (AP) - When state Fish and Wildlife agents recently found a black bear passed out on the lawn of Baker Lake Resort, there were some clues scattered nearby — dozens of empty cans of Rainier Beer.

The bear apparently got into campers' coolers and used his claws and teeth to puncture the cans. And not just any cans. "He drank the Rainier and wouldn't drink the Busch beer," said Lisa Broxson, bookkeeper at the campground and cabins resort east of Mount Baker.

Fish and Wildlife enforcement Sgt. Bill Heinck said the bear did try one can of Busch, but ignored the rest. The beast then consumed about 36 cans of Rainier.

A wildlife agent tried to chase the bear from the campground but the animal just climbed a tree to sleep it off for another four hours. Agents finally herded the bear away, but it returned the next morning.

Agents then used a large, humane trap to capture it for relocation, baiting the trap with the usual: doughnuts, honey and, in this case, two open cans of Rainier.

That did the trick. "This is a new one on me," Heinck said. "I've known them to get into cans, but nothing like this. And it definitely had a preference."



Mitchell Lake Audubon Center Landscape - Volunteers Needed

The landscape next to the Mitchell Lake Audubon Center is beginning to take shape. The plantings include those native to South Texas and Mexico attractive to songbirds, hummingbirds and butterflies.

If any of you are interested in joining us to plant, pull weeds and/or spread mulch, we will be meeting out there Saturday mornings in September (Sept. 4, 11 and 18) to prepare the area for the opening on the 24th. We also need some people to water the landscape until it is established (weekdays or weekends). If you would like to help in any way, call Patty Leslie Pasztor at 824-1235.

SECOND SATURDAY REPORT

by Peggy Spring

July 10th Recap:

How the Possum Lost His Furry Tail

In this second Saturday program, Emma Ortega, a Lipan Apache storyteller, shared wonderful stories of animals and Native American tradition around the evening campfire. Forty-five people were present to hear her presentation — even a pair of whistling ducks circled the clearing several times during the program, their whistles adding credibility to the ambience of the evening.

This sought-after speaker is always very popular with the audience; we had several people attending who returned specifically to enjoy Emma's stories after hearing her in our second Saturday series last year!

Webpage for Hawkwatch

The web site for the hawkwatch is www.ccbirding.com/thw/ or www.ccbirding.com/ and click "Texas Hawk Watches."

This web site has extensive photographs of different raptor species plus data from past years' watches. There is an excellent section on how to count kettles with hundreds/thousands of raptors.

While there, to get a map to the park, click "History of the Watch/Info on the Park." Click "map."

Upcoming Events

San Antonio Water System and Audubon Texas
cordially invite you to attend

Mitchell Lake Audubon Center Press Day

Friday, September 24, 2004

7:30am – 10:00am

Mitchell Lake Audubon Center
10750 Pleasanton Road



Tours of the refuge will run every fifteen minutes from 7:30a.m. to 8:15a.m. The ceremony begins at 9:00am. Speakers will include John Flicker, President, National Audubon Society, SAWS Trustee Douglas R. Leonhard, and representatives and

community leaders. Light refreshments will be served.

For those who can't attend on Friday, an informal Open House will be held on Saturday, September 25, 8am – 12noon.

If you will be attending the Friday event, please RSVP by

Friday, September 17; call Iliana Peña at the Mitchell Lake Audubon Center, 210-628-1639. More information is also available at this number.

SECOND SATURDAY PROGRAM - Sep. 11, 7-9 pm

by Peggy Spring

Welcome to my Web

A lively spider hunt with Cary Guffey of Our Lady of the Lake University



Come and find out about the true nature of two kinds of insects, Daddy Longlegs and venomous spiders. Why are the former so funny looking and are they dangerous and how dangerous are the latter and how will I know if I'm in trouble? To provide answers to these questions and hopefully find some, Cary Guffey, Ph.D., Associate Professor of biology at Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio, will lead us on a merry hunt. Guffey holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Missouri at Rolla, a master's from SW Missouri State University, Springfield, and a Ph.D. in ecology and evolution from the

University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

Call 210.698.1057 for reservations and information. Walk-ins accepted on a limited basis. Suggested donation: \$3.00 each/\$5.00 per family. Eisenhower Park, Harris (Mass Pavilion), 19399 NW Military Hwy. Take FM 1535/Military Hwy exit off Loop 1604 on the city's northwest side. Go north for 2 miles. Park entrance is on the left, just before Camp Bullis. Gates open 6:30 pm. Web site: www.sanaturalareas.org Sponsored by San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department and the Bexar Audubon Society.

MITCHELL LAKE ACCESS



Birding trips to Mitchell Lake are still occurring. Information appears on the Mitchell Lake Wetlands Society's web site www.mlws.org.

RECURRING EVENTS

San Antonio Audubon Society's Beginners' Birdwalk is held at 8 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month. Meet at the Judson Nature Trail in Alamo Heights. Visitors are welcome.

There are binoculars to lend. Meet at the Nature Trails 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.

Mark your calendar

Feb. 25-26 — 2005 South Texas Farm and Range Forum

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

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Upcoming Second Saturday Programs

· October 9 — 10:00 am - 2:00 pm.
San Antonio Naturally

Our second annual celebration of nature; numerous presenters. Watch for details; family friendly.

· November 13 — 10:00 am - 12:00 pm. Fur and Feathers

Join members of the Texas Wildlife Association for a fun program on the Hill Country's white-tailed deer and turkey.

· December 11 — 10:00 am - 12:00 pm. Tuna, Nopales and More!

Local experts will share their knowledge of native plants and their uses by past and present people; family friendly.

Saturday, October 2, 2004 — BEXAR AUDUBON OUTING

BEAU CHEYE RANCH

We hope you can join us on Saturday, October 2, for a field trip to the Beau Cheye Ranch near Nixon, Texas. Owned by Audubon members, Rolan and Margo Brown, this property has rolling terrain, a creek, wildflowers, and over 250 oak trees. They also have some cows and a burro. Plan on enjoying a morning of leisurely walking, birdwatching and general nature observation. Tennis shoes, long pants and sleeves are recommended attire. We will finish with a Bar-B-Que catered

by Texas Pride at \$5.99 per person. If we don't have at least 25 ordering Bar-B-Que we will bring our own sack lunches. We will meet for carpooling at 7:30 am at a location to be determined (it takes approximately 1 hour to drive from San Antonio). Call Patty Leslie Pasztor for reservations & directions at (210) 824-1235. Rolan will call in the Bar-B-Que orders on the afternoon of **Monday, September 27**, so let us know soon!



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>.

Membership Form
National Audubon Society
Bexar Audubon Society

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

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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.