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THE RAVENS

Newsletter

Southwestern New Mexico Audubon Society
is a Chapter of National Audubon Society, Inc.

May — June — July 2020 Vol. 53, No. 3

May 1 Program to be ON-LINE!



*Melissa Amarello photographing Alice and her babies
(Arizona Black Rattlesnakes).* Jeff Smith photo

“Rattlesnake Family Life”

Sure elephants, whales, and birds have families and take care of their kids, BUT SNAKES? In fact they do and we will show you videos of wild rattlesnakes caring for their kids, their neighbor’s kids, and exhibiting other behaviors you probably didn’t know snakes do.

Melissa’s lifelong fascination with snakes led her to work on a variety of projects on natural history and conservation of reptiles in Arizona, California, and Mexico. After witnessing how negative attitudes can stifle conservation efforts, she incorporated education and outreach into her research to foster appreciation for snakes by sharing stories and videos of their behavior in the field. In the spring of 2014 she co-founded Advocates for Snake Preservation (ASP) with Jeff Smith, to change how people view and treat snakes. In 2017 they received the Jarchow Conservation Award for commitment and creativity in studying snake behaviors and tireless and continuous efforts to use scientific knowledge to advocate for snake conservation through outreach and social activism. Melissa received her B.S. in wildlife, watershed, and rangeland resources at the University of Arizona and

her M.S. in biology at Arizona State University, where she studied rattlesnake social behavior.

Please join us for an online edition of SWNMA’s monthly program on Friday, May 1st at 7pm. This will be held in two simultaneous formats: both ZOOM and Facebook Live. SWNMA members will receive an invitation to join the ZOOM program approximately a week in advance, which you will then RSVP to receive instructions for joining. Facebook Live will be broadcast from the Advocates of Snake Preservation Facebook Page.

SWNMA Supports



NM Wild's local Grassroots Outreach Coordinator, Simon Sotelo invited us to participate in this week-long event to be held in Silver City and The Gila National Forest from July 18-26th. Rachele Bergman, Lisa Fields and Emily Pollom will be assisting on a field trip that will focus on birds and their habitat.

The SWNMA Board of Directors is also pleased and proud to be signed supporters of the Latino Conservation Week Resolution, created by the Hispanic Access Foundation with partners New Mexico Wild, and locally, SWNM Audubon. It's intent is to promote diversity in the users of public lands and to honor the Hispanic and Latino cultures across New Mexico. With more than half of Silver City's population being of Hispanic or Latino heritage, there is the need to highlight the importance of their traditional uses of outdoor spaces here in the Gila National Forest. Stay tuned as this initiative moves forward!

SWNM Audubon Members and supporters:

We are holding the May program on-line in keeping with health and safety protocols.

There are no programs scheduled during the summer months of June, July and August.

Look for updates and events on our website:
swnmaudubon.org

VIRTUAL EVENT

May 20th Is Give Grandly 2020



Give Grandly, the annual Grant County fundraising event for local nonprofits, is coming around again on Saturday, May 9th. This year it will be held as an online event, due to Covid-19 impacts in our community. Donations will be accepted at <https://givegrandly.civcore.com/SWNMA>. Any contributions made between May 9th and May 19th count toward meeting our as-yet undetermined match provided by the event sponsors.

Your contribution helps support ongoing programs, such as youth education in local schools on the biology of birds and their habitats and observation of birds with binoculars. Education for adults and families includes Birds and Brews, field trips and our free programs featuring experts on a variety of subjects.

We are extremely grateful to those who made donations to us in past years, your support strengthens our ability to make a difference!

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*Emily Pollum and Wendy Graves with
SWNMA Board member Megan Reumann
at the Jardín Etnobotánica de Oaxaca.*

SWNMA Members Visit Oaxaca Mexico

SWNMA in Mexico! Chapter members Don & Wendy Graves, Emily Pollom and Megan Ruehmann met up in Oaxaca, Mexico for a week of birding, admiring cacti diversity, and touring arts and cultural sights of the area. They were delighted to find their target species, the



gorgeous Red Warbler (photo), as well as good views of Slate-throated Redstart, Gray Silky-flycatcher, Collared Towhee, and Chestnut-capped Brushfinch. Spotting the Mexican endemic Boucard's Wren at the Archeological Site of

Monte Albán was another highlight. Even with such natural diversity around every corner, they all agree the food was just as exciting!

Bird-centric acronyms for social distancing during the coronavirus pandemic.

SFW is *six-foot-wingspan* for distance we keep around other people, and **FOF** is *flock of five* for the maximum group size.

Last May, more than 35,000 people took to fields and forests around the world, reporting more than two-thirds of the world's bird species in a single day—Global Big Day. Wherever you are in the world, you can be a part of birding's next world record!

On 9 May, will you join birders from more than 175 countries and be a part of Global Big Day? You don't have to commit to birding for 24 hours—an hour or even 10 minutes of watching birds makes you part of the team. *With the spread of COVID-19, please follow recommendations from local health officials and avoid unnecessary travel. Global Big Day is still a fantastic opportunity to connect with birds in your backyard or local reserve.*

Get an eBird account: eBird is a worldwide bird checklist program used by millions of birders. It's what allows us to compile everyone's sightings into a single massive Global Big Day list—while at the same time collecting the data to help scientists better understand birds. [Sign up here.](#)

Enter what you see and hear in eBird: You can enter your sightings <https://support.ebird.org/support/solutions/articles/48000957911-enter-sightings-on-the-ebird-website> or download the [free eBird Mobile app](#), which makes adding what you see even easier. You can enter and submit lists while out birding, and the app tracks how far you've walked so you can focus on enjoying the birds. While you're downloading free apps, try out the Cornell Lab's [Merlin Bird ID](#) app for help with identification. Please enter sightings before 13 May to be included in our initial results announcement. Watch the sightings roll in: During the day, keep an eye on how the lists are growing in different parts of the world. Follow along with sightings from more than 170 countries. Stats will be updated in real-time on our [Global Big Day page](#)

Results of New Mexico Winter Raptor Census 2020

The weekend of January 18th found 9 teams of raptor enthusiasts out identifying and counting as many raptors as they could find on mostly pre-determined routes. The teams chose what day they participated in the count, from the 18th through the 20th. Some of the routes produced great results, while others were surprisingly lacking in raptor numbers.



Prairie Falcon USGS

Over 1300 miles were driven in search of raptors, and 63 hours spent straining many pairs of eyes. The 10 routes surveyed produced a total of 13 species and a total of 295 individual birds.

Here are the total results by species from the surveys: Northern Harrier 20; Coopers Hawk 7; Red-tailed Hawk 182; Ferruginous Hawk 9; Bald Eagle 4; Golden Eagle 5; American Kestrel 59; Prairie Falcon 1; Merlin 3; Peregrine Falcon 1; Raptor species 1; Great Horned Owl 2; Turkey Vulture 1.

Also counted just because they are interesting birds and raptor like in many ways: Greater Roadrunner 7; Loggerhead Shrike 69.

I would like to thank all the participants in this year's count who volunteered their time and expertise. The count area was expanded this year thanks to Frank Wilson who surveyed part of Otero County, and Mark Pendleton's group from the Mesilla Valley Audubon Society.

Let's do it again next year! The dates will be January 16, 17, 18, 2021 – Martin Luther King Jr holiday weekend.

Linda Moore, Compiler



Samantha Funk photo

Summer campers investigate the bee hotel at the Randall Davey Audubon Center & Wildlife Sanctuary.

Open Up A Bee Hotel

Just like birds, bees are in search of a safe nesting site each spring. We often think of all bees as raising their young in a hive, but most of New Mexico's native bees are solitary and prefer to nest in small, tight spaces all on their own. Insect "hotels" or "bee houses" can follow many different designs, so you can decide which one is best for your backyard. One easy option is to drill different sized holes in an old log or some scrap wood.

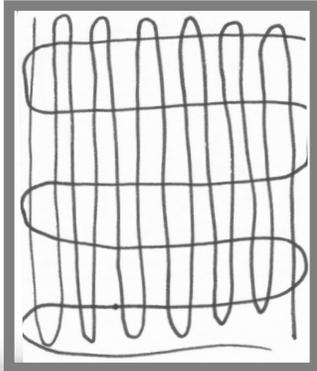
When you see mud covering the entrance, you know someone is nesting in there! Once a bee has laid her eggs, she will leave layers of pollen and nectar for her young to eat. Another option is to bundle up some paper straws or hollow reeds inside some PVC pipe or a coffee can and hang it outside.

Sally Maxwell

Bird-window Collisions (BWCs) Are the Largest Human-Caused Bird Mortalities

It is estimated that in the United States alone nearly a billion birds are killed annually from BWCs. (e.g. a bird will mistake the reflection of a tree for the actual tree.) While the birds are spending time attacking their reflection in the window glass they are not out gathering food or raising their young.

Here are a few different ways you can help avoid these window collisions, by David Sibley, ornithologist, author and illustrator;



The “Flourescent grid” method

- Clean the inside of window.
- Use a flourescent yellow hi-lighter.
- Draw lines on inside glass 2" vertically, and 4" horizontally. This can be done freehand or with a straight edge for a guide. Re-

apply every couple of weeks when the flourescent fades. *Ed. note: Go artistic!*

Sibley also has had success using monofilament line. “Continuing my own experiments I’ve had over a month of 100 percent success with an array of monofilament stretched between two wooden boards outside the window. The monofilament is suspended a couple of inches in front of the window in vertical lines about three inches apart. It is very inconspicuous from inside, and has worked perfectly under some very busy conditions.”

Alex Sally recommends using a pen for ‘writing on glass.’ It washes, but can get scraped off. Draw 4" vertical lines. with straight edge as a guide, or freehand. www.birdsavers.com

From [abc birds.org](http://abcbirds.org)

“Acopian” method uses lengths of parachute cord hanging every 4” from top of window. Can tie a knot at the end and let it dangle.

Bird Crash Preventer

The Bird Crash Preventer is a ready-to-hang "curtain" of fine nylon monofilament lines. Brackets and screws included for self installation. Available from www.birdsavers.com

Feather Friendly® DIY

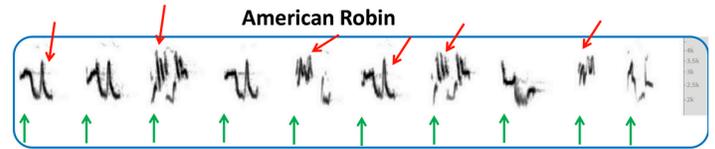
These adhesive dots applied to the outside of your win-

Learn to “SEE” Bird Songs

Birding by ear is perhaps one of the most difficult skills to master as a birder. Each species has its own unique tune, but some of them are next to impossible to tell apart.

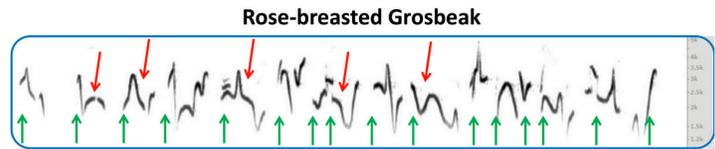
One of the joys of spring is hearing the beautiful songs of returning migrant birds. Avian voices are works of art that can help us know what’s around and lead us to the species we most want to see.

A technique using audio spectrograms “pictures of songs,” can help you “see” the songs in a way that makes recognizing the differences easier than ever before. Learn to see the differences in the songs of 10 spring migrants and take your birding to a whole new level.



Many, rapid pitch changes
Some sounds “wuhhlv” ↑

Generally steady, “conductive” rhythm ↑



Most elements have slower,
more slurred pitch changes
than the robin ↑

Uneven, “unconductive” rhythms ↑

<https://www.audubon.org/news/10-common-bird-songs-made-less-confusing>

dows create an effective “frit” pattern. The dots should be 4” horizontally and 2” vertically. From abc.com

Bird’s Eye View Decals can help reduce birdstrikes by making the glass more visible to our feathered friends.

The unique geometric lenses refract UV light and have proven highly effective in reducing bird window collisions. It is recommended to place (2) 6” pieces or (4) 4” pieces in the center of the window about 4” apart. Place on the inside of the glass. There is no absolute as to the number of pieces required since each condition will vary but this is a good starting point. The film will fluoresce and be effective beyond the surface area of the film. <https://abcbirds.org/get-involved/bird-smart-glass>

From Frederick Dunn

How to stop birds from annoying you while they continuously attack their reflection in your windows. Also stop birds from just running into your windows, thinking it’s a way through or out... Fishing line... it’s that simple! Attach your thin fishing line vertically, four to six inches apart... fasten a paper clip top and bottom, leave enough slack in the fishing line, to allow for movement side to side.