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# THE RAVENS

## Newsletter

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

November — December 2020 Vol. 53, No. 5

### November 6th Program ON-LINE!

## *Thor's Homecoming*

On a windy early March day in 2013, an adult male golden eagle made what should have been a fatal mistake. Feeding on carrion beside Highway 180 close to Deming, he was flushed into the windshield of a car traveling at 65 mph, smashing the glass and denting the car's roof at the upper edge of the windshield. He was scooped up from the road by the following driver and taken to Gila Wildlife Rescue in nearby Silver City. Amazingly, a physical exam there revealed NO bone fractures, no nerve dysfunction...no permanent damage! And so "Thor's" next chapter with his human rehabilitators, and then watchful biologists and fans began. He still wears a functioning satellite transmitter today. He often returns to his winter range

in late October/early November, so join us for "Thor's Homecoming", a story telling program in honor of this extraordinary raptor. The story will be told by Dale Stahlecker (who fit Thor with the transmitter), Bob "Murph" Murphy (who has since tracked his movements and migration path), and Megan Ruehmann (who helped with recapture efforts). They are coworkers and biologists with the consulting company Eagle Environmental, Inc., founded by Dale in Santa Fe, NM. Please join us for this online program on Friday, Nov 6th at 7pm on Zoom. SWNMA members will receive an email invitation with a link to join the Zoom program approximately a week in advance.



### December 4th Program ON-LINE!

## SMALL MOUNTAIN OWLS

Author, Artist, Researcher, and director of the Colorado Avian Research and Rehabilitation Institute (CARRI); Scott Rashid will give a presentation on four of Colorado's most hard to find owls species (all of which can also be found in New Mexico). These owls include the

Northern Pygmy-Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Boreal Owl and Flammulated Owl. Scott will discuss his research on the natural history and nesting habits of these owls in Northern Colorado, including egg laying intervals, growth of the young owls, and the food items each species prefers.

Scott has worked with owls for more than 20 years through monitoring nests, rehabilitating injured birds, raising orphaned owls, and banding both adult and nestling owls. Scott has written and published five books: Small Mountain Owls, The Great Horned Owl (an in-depth Study), Northern Goshawk, The Gray Ghost, Exploring the World of the Barn Owl and American Kestrel, the diminutive raptor. He has also written and had published several papers on a variety of avian species.

Please join us for this online program on Friday, Dec 4th at 7pm on Zoom. SWNMA members will receive an email invitation with a link to join the Zoom program approximately a week in advance. This program will be an in-depth learning experience, held in a webinar style format the presenter uses for teaching.



## BIRD COUNTS

CBC Distancing rules suggested by National Audubon; Wear masks when less than 6ft apart—or in an enclosed space; carpooling only allowed with partners / family members or people that have arranged a situation they are comfortable with.

### Christmas Bird Count — SILVER CITY SATURDAY, December 12, 2020

The Silver City CBC covers a 15 mile diameter circle centered on the Silver City golf course. All levels of expertise are welcome, plus there is a need for drivers, recorders and feeder counters. Want to participate? To have an area assigned to cover, please email compiler, John Gorey: [johnpgorey@gmail.com](mailto:johnpgorey@gmail.com) Reports can be mailed to John Gorey, POBox 5071, Silver City NM 88062.

### Christmas Bird Count — GILA RIVER SAT. or SUN., December 19-20, 2020

Centered in Riverside, along the Gila River near Cliff is where the count takes place. The Gila River CBC will be the best weather-day the weekend of December 19–20, 2020. A final day will be chosen once the best forecast is known.

Please note the count will be somewhat restricted this year due to Covid precautions. Every attempt will be made to accommodate interested counters, drivers and recorders, while maintaining social

distancing and staying within established social 'bubbles'. Feeder observers are encouraged to participate. Please contact Linda by Monday, December 7th if interested in participating to allow time for route development. [raptors.linda@yahoo.com](mailto:raptors.linda@yahoo.com)

### Cornell FEEDERWATCH

November 14, 2020 — April 9, 2021

The FeederWatch season always begins the second Saturday in November and runs for 21 weeks, harnessing the power of backyard bird watchers to track trends among winter birds.

While we are all thrilled by unusual sightings and high counts, it's the everyday observations of common birds that are so important for monitoring bird populations. **Want to be a Feeder Watcher?** Visit [www.feederwatch.org](http://www.feederwatch.org)

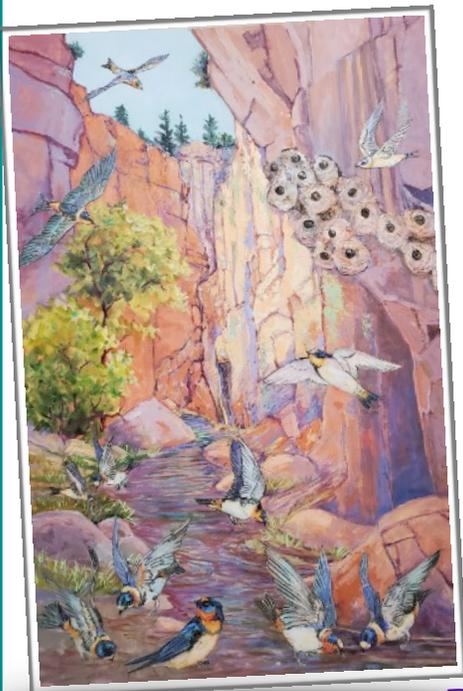
### CRANE FESTIVAL at Bosque del Apache — Nov. 18-21, 2020



The annual Crane Festival in Bosque del Apache near Socorro, NM offers a variety of events; tours, classes, hikes, horseback rides, photography classes, wildlife art show and exhibits. Family Fun during Festival of the Cranes weekend is a free event, no reservations required. More information at [www.festivalofthecranes.com](http://www.festivalofthecranes.com)

## YOU CAN WIN this Elli Sorensen Painting of Cliff Swallows on the San Francisco River!

Now on display at Leyba & Ingalls Art Gallery  
315 Bullard Street, Downtown Silver City



This generous gift from the artist, a 2' x 3' mixed media painting valued at \$3,000. shows Cliff Swallows building their nests along a segment of the San Francisco River that is included in the "Dutch Salmon Wild & Scenic Rivers Act" proposed by Senator Heinrich and Congressman Udall.

15% of Ticket Sales will be donated to the Youth Mural Project. Help us support this educational program that connects youth from school districts in our region to artists, community leaders and the natural world.

- Virtual tickets are \$7 apiece or 5 for \$30.
- Five additional prizes are a 1 year SWNMA membership or 1 year extension for current members.

Buy tickets via PayPal at: [swnmaudubon.org](http://swnmaudubon.org)

# Merger of Audubon Arizona and Audubon New Mexico

Earlier this summer, these two organizations that are part of National Audubon merged to combine their budgets and administration, and are now Audubon Southwest. The staff remain employees of National Audubon, and Jon Hayes, formerly the Executive Director of Audubon New Mexico is now in that position for Audubon Southwest. No staff have been laid off, although some roles have changed.

The merger will make operations more efficient, and allow for better coordination of conservation efforts. Regional water policy will be a continued focus. Southwestern New Mexico and much of Arizona are in the Lower Colorado watershed, so we share many water policy concerns.

Southwestern New Mexico Audubon remains a Chapter affiliate of National Audubon, and we are still an all-volunteer organization that primarily depends upon dues and donations from our members and supporters.

By Lisa Fields

## 2020: The Year of The Covid Quetzal



Bryan Calk photo

By Megan Ruehmann

Hearing news that Eared Quetzals were reported in the Gila National Forest was such a shock that had it not been for a photo, many would have a hard time believing it. But when a photo attached to an eBird report quickly circulated the birding community on September 28th, jaws were collectively dropping across the country and birders across the state were immediately making plans to try for a look themselves. The following two mornings, a dozen or so people were lucky enough to lay eyes on a female bird, and a handful more have heard the distinctive “squeeee-Chuck!” bursting from the dense tree canopies of Little Cherry Creek north of Pinos Altos\*. There are now two reports of two individuals detected simultaneously, so this female doesn't seem to have travelled alone.

Eared Quetzals (*Euptilotis neoxenus*) are a part of the Family Trogonidae, more closely related to quetzals of the tropics than the Elegant Trogon. They inhabit pine-oak woodlands of the Sierra Madre Occidental of Mexico and are known to be a far-wandering species. Two, maybe three individuals have been lingering in the Chiricahua Mountains near Portal, AZ since June of this year, where they have been encountered sporadically since 1977. Until now, they had never been confirmed with a photo and/or audio recording across the border in New Mexico.

\*Explore eBird.com for location, date, and sighting information. If scouting for these birds, take great care to not create disturbance. They are known to be extremely wary of humans and even certain colors, and can fly great distances when disturbed.

Free Download!



### WARBLER ID GUIDES

#### Warbler “Quick Finders”

Warblers are among the most challenging birds to identify, with their seasonally changing plumages and often-confused songs and calls. Download eight illustrated plates for free, provided by the authors of The Warbler Guide. Use these "Quick Finders" to help you identify any of the 56 species of warblers in the United States and Canada. Included in This Download: Warbler faces, Side views, 45° views, Undertail views, Warblers by region, Spring/fall warblers. Thanks to Cornell University researchers Maren Vitousek, Conor Taff and Monique Pipkin.

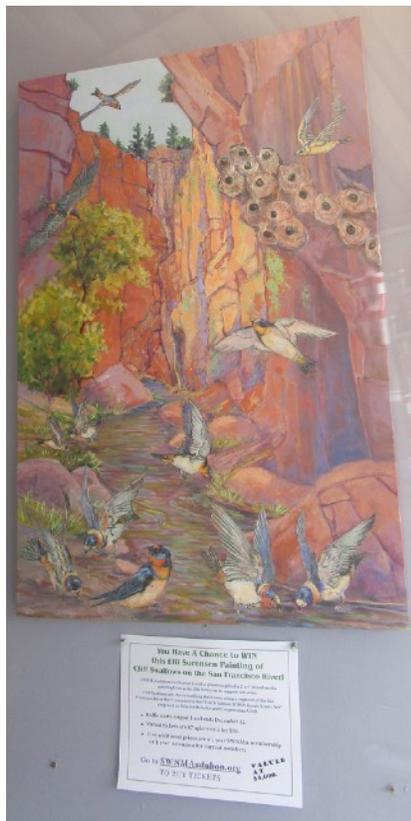


## **PAINTING** **RAFFLE NEWS**

### ***15% of Proceeds will go to the Youth Mural Project***

The Covid-19 restrictions mean suspension of our work to educate and inspire elementary school youth about birds. In the spirit of supporting an important educational program that remains active, we are donating 15% of the Painting Raffle gross

proceeds to the Youth Mural Project. Many of the murals connect students to the natural world, and they all involve education about the topic portrayed in paint or tile. The students are immersed in a creative process that forever contributes to the beauty and appeal of our local communities, as well as a permanent record of their accomplishment. We are proud to step up and support this important program and hope you are inspired to help us by purchasing raffle tickets!



*Displayed at Leyba & Ingalls gallery*

## ***Live bird migration maps***

Real-time analysis maps show intensities of actual nocturnal bird migration as detected by the US weather surveillance radar network between local sunset to sunrise. There is a yellow line moving east to west representing the timing of local sunset. Areas with lighter colors experienced more intense bird migration. Orange arrows show directions to which birds flew.

Cornell Lab of Ornithology currently produces these maps. Support for this research came from NASA, Edward W. Rose Postdoctoral Fellowship, and Amazon Web Services. The BirdCast project was created by grants from the National Science Foundation and supported by additional grants from Leon Levy Foundation.

[birdcast.info/migration-tools/live-migration-maps/](http://birdcast.info/migration-tools/live-migration-maps/)

## ***Yellow-billed Cuckoo Still Protected***

Despite a petition submitted to the US Fish and Wildlife Service in 2018 to delist the Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo, and thanks to comments submitted by Audubon, our network, and countless partners, the Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo's Federally Threatened status stands! This decision to maintain the Cuckoo's protected status is a great step toward conserving this emblematic western species and its habitat.

"We're grateful that this wondrous bird will continue to receive the life-saving protections of the Endangered Species Act," Michael Robinson of the Center for Biological Diversity said in a news release. "Now it's time to designate critical habitat to ensure that when the cuckoos migrate here each summer from South America, they'll still have places to nest and fledge their chicks."

## ***A New Resource for Bird Sounds Of Southeast Arizona/Sonora***

Makes an excellent addition to the audio library of intermediate to advanced birders who wish to boost their knowledge of and expertise with rare and local birds specific to the Arizona borderlands and northern Sonora.

About one quarter of the audio files are Diane Doyle's own recordings and the remaining are sourced from Xeno-Canto. This digital 117-track, 75 species, 5 disc collection is available as a free download. The audio files can be loaded on a smartphone, tablet, laptop or desktop computer. Since the audio files are edited, each "disc" is only the size of a few high res photos.

Free download available at: [aba.org/seaz-tracks](http://aba.org/seaz-tracks)

American Birding Association



## ***SWNM Audubon is now on Facebook!***

[www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/)

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

Share a story, photo, sighting, or announcement—please message the page directly.

We hope this creates a fun way of sharing all things birds and conservation!