



# Bird Calls

Newsletter of the Bastrop County Audubon Society

## Calendar

**April (month of): H-E-B \$1, \$3, \$5** tear-off contributes to Audubon Foundation of Texas and other conservation orgs in Earth Share. Shop and help.

**April 12:** Annual Tri-county Wildlife Management **Extravaganza**, River Bend Park, Hwy. 71: **BCAS booth**, exhibits, auctions, and BBQ.

**April 12:** 7-11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.-sundown, Hornsby Bend Monthly **Bird Survey**, all levels, [www.hornsbybend.org](http://www.hornsbybend.org).

**April 13:** BCAS **Board Meeting**, 4:00 p.m., Priscilla Jarvis, call 281-2762 for directions.

**April 15: General Meeting**, 7:00/7:30 p.m., Bastrop, First National Bank Bldg., Hwy. 71 @ Hasler.

**April 19:** Hornsby Bend/Travis monthly **field trip**, 7:30-11:00 a.m.

**April 19: Earth Day.** Festival in Austin, 4<sup>th</sup> @ Guadalupe, 9 - 5:00.

**April 22: Grand Opening**, Colorado River Refuge, Pines and Prairies Land Trust, 4:00 p.m., foot of Riverside Drive, Tahitian Village.

**April 26:** Yegua Knobbs Preserve **Spring Field Day**, 10:00 a.m. till. [www.pplt.org](http://www.pplt.org). for info.

## Birders to Experience Mexico's Copper Canyon Train Journey

Barbara Baggett of Panama Boutique has invited any BCAS members interested to join the unique week-long travel package they put together for Travis Audubon. The trip begins at Los Mochis, ends at Chihuahua, May 23-31.

The itinerary includes a native guide, and excursions in the canyon itself, which is larger and deeper than the Grand Canyon.

Details and registration at [www.panamaboutique.com](http://www.panamaboutique.com) or call (512) 217-4836, 217-4841.

Fees include a \$100 donation to BCAS and some also to the Sierra Madre Alliance.

Passport required!

## April, 2008, Program:

# All About the Colorado River Corridor Efforts

Our speakers for the meeting on Tuesday, April 15, are well-known environmentalists and BCAS members Jeremiah Jarvis and Margie Crisp. Their joint presentation will describe the goals and work of the Austin-Bastrop River Corridor Partnership (ABRCP) we've been hearing about. Jarvis and Crisp have been participating in the ABRCP group for several years.

They will inform us of the goals and history of the ABRCP, and share the inside story of our stretch of Colorado River.

They will consider the effects of the unprecedented growth in eastern Travis County and all of Bastrop County region into the foreseeable future. Such growth dramatically affects us and the river.

The Partnership actually is a gathering of non-profit organizations, governmental agencies, businesses, schools, landowners and other local citizens concerned with the future of the Colorado River corridor from Austin to Bastrop and on through to the east County border. Its mission is to support sustainable development and a healthy riparian ecosystem along this portion of the Colorado River.

Margie Crisp, long-time Bastrop County resident, artist, and former *Bird Calls* editor, has also been participating in the monthly river surveys of birds and wildlife on the Austin to Bastrop section of the river. She is currently writing and illustrating a book about the river, to be published by the Texas A&M University Press.

Dr. Jarvis, Vice President of the Pines and Prairies Land Trust, one of the nonprofit "partners," will talk about the Colorado River Refuge and the opportunities for making the river more accessible to everyone. There are organized volunteer opportunities to join in, usually involving kayaking/canoeing.

Bastrop County Audubon meets the third Tuesday of every month (except July & August), 7:30 pm at the new First National Bank Training Room in the new First National Bank at 489 Hwy. 71 West (across N. Hasler Blvd. from the HEB). There are both stairs and an elevator to the second floor meeting room.

**Learners' Corner:** Sharon Finlay's presentation "Four Plovers," will go at 7:00 p.m..

# "How can I use my computer to help my birding?"--

by Alan Jaeger

That's a question that many birders with computers might ask. Here are some of the many ways:

**Communication.** Wouldn't you like to learn about those "once in a lifetime" birds that pop up from time to time? And to brag about your prize sightings? There are tools that can let you do just that.

**List keeping.** (Almost) all birders keep lists: location lists, year lists, life lists, and so on. Several tools facilitate keeping your list(s) up-to-date.

**Location.** When preparing to bird, you can find out where the birds are reported to be.

**Species identification.** Go beyond your field guide to get help identifying a species, and use either locally-installed software or a web site to get more help.

Now here are the tools that you can use. I've identified each by one or more of the categories above.

**AviSys** Birding Software ([www.avisys.net](http://www.avisys.net); list keeping) produces AviSys, which has been around for ever and is now at Version 6+. It does its job well.

**Thayer** Birding Software ([www.thayerbirding.com](http://www.thayerbirding.com); list keeping, species identification), in conjunction with the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, produces many packages including "The Birds of North America" and regional and local packages that include Canada. The species entries have photos (and some videos), range maps and song recordings.

**eBird** ([www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org); communication, list keeping, loca-

tion) is an online listing site that is sponsored by CLO, National Audubon Society, and other organizations. In addition to helping you maintain your lists, eBird helps you contribute to the scientific database of bird distribution and vitality. The data from eBird is available to everyone immediately, and it is also used by Birdingonthe.net to populate a Google map that is updated hourly with sightings.

**TexBirds** (Communication, location) is an email list server. When you send an email to TexBirds it is forwarded to all of the subscribers. You, in turn, will get email from all of them as well (this is not as bad as it might seem: on a busy day you might get 20 emails). This is how you can learn about the "once in a lifetime'ers." You subscribe by sending an email to [listserv@listserv.uh.edu](mailto:listserv@listserv.uh.edu) saying "subscribe texbirds." You participate by sending your emails to [texbirds@listserv.uh.edu](mailto:texbirds@listserv.uh.edu).

There are other software packages, including some that will work on your **ipod, PDA, smart phone, or GPS**. At [www.birdwatching.com](http://www.birdwatching.com) is a popular supplier. For your iPod; check out Bob Ekblad's write-up at <http://www.birding-minnesota.com/iPod.htm>. These fit just about all of the categories I've mentioned.

Besides all of these tools, there is the **Cornell** Laboratory of Ornithology ([www.birds.cornell.edu](http://www.birds.cornell.edu)). CLO is the ultimate resource, and it's fun just to check this place out to learn what's going on bird-wise.

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