



Bird Calls

Newsletter of the Bastrop County Audubon Society

Program for June

Shelia Hargis on a Favorite Bird: Purple Martins



Purple Martins and humans have an uncanny connection that goes back hundreds of years. Purple Martins thrill people in a variety of ways throughout their life cycle. Hargis will dispel some of the myths surrounding martins, touch on some of the recent research findings, and highlight some of the ways that birders and non-birders alike can connect with this spectacular bird.

Hargis spends most of her free time birding or thinking about birds, and her passion and enthusiasm for birds and birding is infectious. She teaches Travis Audubon's Introduction to Birds and Birding, regularly gives presentations on a variety of bird topics, surveys birds for the City of Austin and the USGS Breeding Bird Survey as well as for private landowners, leads birding field trips, and is Past President of Travis Audubon. She is currently on the Travis Audubon Board of Directors (again!) and is President of the Texas Ornithological Society. Special to BCAS, she now manages the annual State Parks Christmas Bird Count.

A special invite will also be extended to visit the stunning migration roost in Austin. Come learn more!

Come for dinner with our speaker before the meeting at 5:00 p.m. at Cedars Mediterranean Restaurant in Bastrop. RSVP ssimon1021@yahoo.com.

Doors open for the meeting at First National Bank on Hasler Blvd. at 6:30. The public is invited.

BCAS Annual Meeting

Besides the regular educational program, in the final meeting each year of the Bastrop County Audubon Society, we hold the Annual Meeting. Keep in mind that our operational year begins July 1st and ends June 30th. During this meeting we conduct business related to the governance and operation of our chapter. Arguably, the two most important items we consider each year at this meeting are the election of new officers and committee chairs, and voting on any amendments to our bylaws as recommended by your board of directors. At the June 2017 meeting we will cast votes in both areas, so I urge everyone to attend and participate in the operation of your chapter.

Per our bylaws, officers and committee chairs are elected to two year terms. During the 2016 Annual Meeting, our five elected officers (President, VP, **Continued, p. 2**

Our Mission:

To promote the conservation, restoration, and enjoyment of natural resources and habitats for birds and other wildlife.

May 22 News Release by National Audubon

“Here We Go Again: Birds in the Crosshairs of White House”



Bird at Risk: A Reddish Egret dances at the edge of the surf.

CEO David Yarnold responded to the White House proposed budget: “This proposal completely ignores a bipartisan majority of Americans who strongly support protecting water, air and our outdoor spaces.”

In Texas: The proposed budget cuts 80% of the funding from the public Land and Water Conservation Fund. Besides cuts to National Wildlife Refuges, most disastrously the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the budget cuts support for Working Land Conservation programs, and, for Texas, Coastal Conservation programs.

“Audubon leases and manages 15 islands protecting critical nesting habitat for more than 20 species of birds, including the Reddish Egret. These islands lie within the Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve along the Texas coast.”

These islands of rookeries are the special areas of Audubon Texas’ conservation efforts.

See audubon.org: news.

Annual Meeting: Continued from p. 1

Treasurer, Recording Secretary, and Membership Secretary) were voted into office, and so have another year left in their terms. It is in the area of committee chairs that we have some work to do.

Chapter bylaws empower the creation of seven Standing Committees with an elected chair for each: Conservation, Education, Field Trips, Programs, Communications, and Fund Raising & Special Events. We have an incumbent for Conservation (Jan Goebel), and the Education Chair David Mitchell is willing to move over to Program Chair, subject to an approving vote by the chapter. This leaves us with five committee chair positions to fill with no current candidates. If we do not fill these positions our chapter will simply not be active in these areas, and our Audubon experience will be less rich than it could be.

So I urge you to consider serving as chair of one of these committees. Should you wish to chair a committee, please email me at micraygoe@yahoo.com, and I will place you on the ballot, or we can discuss via email or phone call. You can also self nominate from the floor at our June 20th meeting.

Let me say more. You think, perhaps, that you are not qualified to chair a committee, that you won't know what to do. Were you qualified to ride a bike the first time you stepped into one? No, but with practice and support you learned. We as a board offer that support and a chance to practice and to learn. And, isn't that one of the reasons you joined Audubon, to learn new things? If you are willing and interested, you are qualified.

Mike Goebel, President

Proposed Amendment to BCAS Bylaws

This year we have one proposed amendment to our bylaws. The purpose of this amendment is to allow the board of directors the ability to conduct business by mail or by email, a situation not covered by our current bylaws. The board of directors recommends approval of this amendment.

THE AMENDMENT:

All voting pursuant to Articles I (Section 4), Article IV (Section 3), Article V (Section 1) and Article VIII may be done by paper ballot (postal service) or electronically (e.g., fax, email or SOCIETY website). Also, the Board of Directors shall have the power to conduct business by means of mail or electronically providing there is a quorum and the vote is returned within the deadline set. Other business, when appropriate, may also be conducted by the President, Vice-President, individual Committee Secretaries and the Communications Committee by mail or electronically.

Posters for Birds

We've set the deadline for hanging all posters, termed Phase 1, as June 20 culminating at the BCAS meeting. Phase 2 involves going back to each venue with a brief "exit" questionnaire for responses to the posters.

Here's a listing of about half of the venues throughout the County where one of the ten poster designs was welcomed:

Cedar Creek Post Office
VFW Hall Hwy. 20
Lytton Springs General Store
Jalisco's, Cedar Creek
Elgin Depot Museum
Elgin Public Library
Elgin Local Goods, Market & Cafe
The Owl
G&M Dry Goods
Lucy's Kitchen
Bloomer's Garden Center
M-N-J Gas/Grocery, McDade
Citgo Market, h. 95N,
Las Cocinas Mexican Grill, Hwy 95
Riverside Veterinary Hospital, Hwy 71 E
Lost Pines-8 Theater/Bowling
Cedar's Mediterranean Restaurant
Schlotzsky's Deli
Baxter's on Main
Bastrop Post Office
Body Toners
Garcia's Mexican Restaurant
China Buffet
Bastrop Copier
Bassano's Italian Restaurant,
Liberty Glenn Home Decor
Coffee Dog
First Methodist Church, Bastrop
Bastrop Chamber of Commerce
Kelly-Moore Paint
Main Lane Auto Service
Tomasu Cleaners
Garner & Riley Physical Therapy
First National Bank, Central
Whole Pet Market
Sophisticates Hair Salon
Bastrop Gold & Silver Smith
First National Bank office, Main St., Bastrop
Democratic Party Bastrop HQ
Anita's Mexican Restaurant

Mary Ellen Branan, Posters Committee

President's Perch

Have you ever been to the National Audubon Society web page? You know, *audubon.org*, that website you're always meaning to look at but never quite do? Well, if you haven't checked it out, you're missing out.

There's news about nature, conservation, climate, culture, advocacy, and Audubon In Action. As one example, there is a story about "Old Man Plover," pride of the Great Lakes. At fifteen years of age, he has outlived most Piping Plovers by a decade. The Old Man is almost single handedly reestablishing Piping Plovers in his area, having fledged 36 chicks. And, doing this with a peg leg. See what you're missing!

Also on the website is the terrific new "Plants for Birds" section. Here, you can research native plants for your yard or property by zip code. It's a huge database with detailed information on each plant.

What about birds you ask? How about The Audubon Guide to North American Birds, with detailed information on each bird, photos, and a range map? It's not Audubon without John James Audubon, and there is an entire section devoted to his paintings and drawings, with descriptions of the birds and their habitat from his own journal. There is a section on "priority birds" that are threatened and in need of conservation efforts on their behalf. Read all about them. Want a bird ID app for your phone? Download the Audubon Bird Guide app for free.

Interested in climate change and how it's affecting our birds? It's there. Want to know more about conservation, what's being done, and how you can help? Covered. Would you like to learn how to take better photos of wildlife and birds? Tips from the pros are on tap. What about information on Bird Friendly Communities, Important Bird Areas, working lands, and how to advocate for the environment and our birds? One stop shopping, it's all at *audubon.org*.

I hope you get the idea, Once you give the website a try, I think you'll go back regularly.

Have a great summer, and remember to bird early and bird often!

Mike Goebel, President -

Bird Calls is published by Bastrop County Audubon Society monthly except during July and August. We invite letters, articles, news tips, reviews of books and events, poems, cartoons, and photos appropriate to the mission. The deadline for the next issue is noon on the penultimate day of the preceding month. Material is submittable at Contact, bastropcountyaudubon.org or by mail. to the Editor, 216 Schaefer Blvd., Bastrop TX 78602, ph. (512) 303-2734, or mbranan@austin.rr.com. Editor, Mary Ellen Branan, PhD.

Notice: *Bird Calls* is seeking an additional editorial person. Anyone interested in desk top publishing, writing, and/or photography, please call or email as above.

Calendar

June 20, Tuesday, 7:00 p.m., BCAS Annual Meeting and Program. First National Bank in Bastrop, 2nd floor. Doors open 6:30.

June 20, Posters for Birds deadline. Turn in data form and any posters.

June 24, Saturday, Field Trip to Yegua Knobs Preserve (Pines and Prairies Land Trust). Meet at McDade Post Office at 8:30 or go directly to YKP. Easy walking.

July 18, Saturday, 9-12:00 a.m., Learn-to-Fish, with Bill Brooks (512-581-0377), at Buescher State Park, lake near Smithville entrance gate. Equipment and bait provided, raffle prizes. For children ages 6-13, parents included. Learn basics, safety, knots, and regulations. Free.

September 19, Tuesday, 7:00 p.m. Next General Meeting, BCAS.



PLANT FOR BIRDS: Turk's Cap, a Native Plant for your garden, provides nectar for butterflies and hummingbirds, fruit for birds, and shelter for lizards. Photo from Native Plant Society of Texas.

Whooping Crane Report

In early April, the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge estimated the wild Texas flock at 329. They noted 38 juveniles. The cranes are now completing their migration north during March and into April to Canada's Woods Hole National Park.

This number is a healthy increase from recent seasons when the number declined below 300 due to drought. The changes in salinity, etc., reduced the food supply of blue crabs and wolf berries on the Texas coast.

At our web site bastropcountyaudubon.org, under Visual Resources, YouTube Videos, you can access Michelle Belden's video she made in February, 2016, of Aransas NWF cranes.