

# RIO BOSQUE NEWS

*A newsletter reporting on events at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park*

Center for Environmental Resource Management  
University of Texas at El Paso



No. 10

January 2004

## WATER STILL SCARCE

The drought gripping our region continues to affect availability of water for Rio Bosque Wetlands Park. The Park's wetlands and riparian areas held water for only 3.5 months in 2003, and 2004 promises more of the same. Water to Rio Bosque was cut off January 7; when it will return is not known.

We are pursuing several avenues for providing limited amounts of supplemental water to the Park. Of most immediate help will be one or more small wells we are installing with funding from the **U.S. Bureau of Reclamation**. The aim is to keep the Park's main channel wet at least intermittently during times when no other water is available.

## WILDLIFE NOTES

Once again, for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in the past 4, we were fortunate to have a **Bald Eagle** visit Rio Bosque. A first-winter bird was present from Dec. 3 to at least Dec. 19. Other avian visitors of note this fall included Ross's Geese, American White Pelicans, an immature Golden Eagle, and, in the Riverside Canal next to the Park, a Surf Scoter.

Working with protocols developed by Scott Cutler of UTEP's Centennial Museum, the Friends of the Rio Bosque are establishing monitoring stations and



Immature Bald Eagle, Dec. 11, 2003 (Bob Johnson photo)

making other preparations to start a long-term faunal monitoring program at the Park. Are you interested in helping monitor populations of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians or invertebrates at Rio Bosque? Please contact John Sproul (747-8663, [jsproul@utep.edu](mailto:jsproul@utep.edu)).

## FACILITIES UPDATE

The Bosque Trail is the hard-surfaced trail we expect to be the Park's main public-use trail. Thanks to support from the **Paso del Norte Health Foundation**, it is now nearing completion. Concrete curbing is currently being installed for the unbuilt portion of the trail and a second footbridge is being built across the Park's main water channel.



### Friends of the Rio Bosque Membership Application

Name:	<input type="checkbox"/> Bosque Buddy (12 and under)	\$4
	<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$8
	<input type="checkbox"/> Senior (62+)	\$8
Address:	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$10
	<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$15
	<input type="checkbox"/> Bosque Booster	\$50
	<input type="checkbox"/> Cottonwood Commando	\$75-\$249
E-mail:	<input type="checkbox"/> Restoration Patron	\$250-\$499
	<input type="checkbox"/> Wetlands Society	\$500+

Please make checks payable to *Friends of the Rio Bosque* and mail to: Maria Trunk, Treasurer, Friends of the Rio Bosque, 1100 Kelly Way, El Paso, TX 79902.

### Next Meetings

Thurs., Jan 29  
Thurs., Feb 26  
Thurs., Mar 25  
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.  
201 Burges Hall,  
UTEP  
Info: 915-545-5214

We are also getting tantalizingly close to starting work on a visitor-contact station/education shelter for the Park, a project funded by **The Meadows Foundation**. This facility will be of great value for all visitors but will be especially important for school groups using the Park.

## GRACIAS

The **Day at the Bosque** on Nov. 1 was a great success, well attended and enjoyed by all! For making it possible, special thanks go to: • the City of El Paso's Parks and Recreation Dept. for getting the site ready and providing support during the event; • El Paso County Water Improvement District No. 1 and El Paso's Streets Dept. for their work improving the access road to the site; • our exhibitors, trailside experts and chili-cook-off chefs, who made the day both enjoyable and educational for our visitors; and • the Friends of the Rio Bosque for organizing and spearheading the event.

## TOURS

Upcoming free walking tours at the Park:

3-5:30 p.m.	Sat., Jan 10	Birds
3-5 p.m.	Sun., Jan 18	Introductory
9 a.m.-noon	Sat., Feb 14	Birds
3-5 p.m.	Sun., Feb 22	Introductory
3-5:30 p.m.	Sun., Mar 7	Birds
9-11 a.m.	Sat., Mar 27	Introductory

The meeting place is a bridge crossing Riverside Canal. To get there from I-10, take Americas Ave. (Loop 375) to Pan American Dr., turn left onto Pan American and travel 1.5 miles to the bridge. Please be prompt.

## RIO BOSQUE WEBSITE

Want more frequent updates on Rio Bosque than this newsletter can provide? How about the latest on water conditions at the Park? Recent bird sightings? An online version of our biological management plan? A complete newsletter archive? Links to information sources about wetlands? Check out the Rio Bosque website (address below) for all this and more.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit us on the Web at:

<http://www.cerm.utep.edu/riobosque/>

Want to be added to the mailing list for this newsletter or ask a question about Rio Bosque? Contact:

John Sproul 915-747-8663 [jsproul@utep.edu](mailto:jsproul@utep.edu)

*Printing courtesy of Epson El Paso.*

## GET INVOLVED!

Want to get directly involved in shaping the future of Rio Bosque? Upcoming community workdays at the Park are:

**Sat., Jan 17    Sat., Feb 21    Sat., Mar 20**

Hours for all: 9 a.m. to noon. The meeting place is the same as for the tours: the bridge crossing Riverside Canal.

Also, each Thursday we work on projects needing volunteer help. Come any time; work as little or as long as you want. Call John Sproul (747-8663) for details.