

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. 15

April 2005

TRAIL WORK RESUMES

Thanks to funding from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, we are now on the verge of completing the Bosque Trail, the Park's hard-surfaced loop trail. In March, the Friends of the Rio Bosque and personnel from the City of El Paso's Parks and Recreation Department installed the sub-base for the final unsurfaced section of the trail. At our April workday (see back), we hope to install the surface. Work on this trail began in 2001; its completion is now in sight! ✂

NATURE NOTES

Merlins were among the more noteworthy residents at the Park this past winter. These small falcons nest in Canada and the northern U.S., mainly in boreal forests and on the arid northern Great Plains. They are rare in winter in the El Paso area and have been recorded sporadically at Rio Bosque in years past. This winter, Merlins were regulars at the Park, with 1-3 present all season.

Last year, bitterweed (*Hymenoxys odorata*) carpeted large areas of Rio Bosque in bright yellow. Will we have a similar display this year? Visit the Park between mid-April and mid-May to find out. Our wildflower walk on April 24 (see back) offers the perfect opportunity to see the bitterweed at its peak.



Bitterweed in Wetland Cell 1, April 23, 2004

Painted Buntings nest in El Paso only at Rio Bosque. Interested in looking for them at the Park? Over the past 5 years, their average arrival date has been May 12, with the earliest date being May 6 last year. Odds are good they will be present for our bird walk on May 14 (see back). ✂

ECOLOGICAL MONITORING

With spring now here, the Friends of the Rio Bosque and Environmental Advocates (EA) have resumed ecological monitoring at the



Next Meetings

Thurs., Apr 28

Thurs., May 26

Thurs., Jun 23

6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

411 Burges Hall
UTEP

Info: 915-545-5214

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.

Park. The first session on March 26 proved very productive, with pitfall traps yielding a diverse mix of arthropods and live traps capturing 8 mice of 2 species.

For the next 7 months, monitoring will take place on the 4th Saturday each month. The April session will start at 9 a.m. In May, the start time shifts to 8 a.m. Want to help? Please contact Maria Trunk with the Friends (545-5214, mtandck@elp.rr.com) or Joel Reyes with EA (747-5501, joereyes@utep.edu). ✂

THE RIO BOSQUE WEBSITE

If you've visited the Rio Bosque website recently, you know it seems to be frozen in time – November 19, 2004, to be exact. The Park's information-technology staff has not had access to it since that date. UTEP is currently standardizing websites campus wide, and Rio Bosque's dedicated website-design team is working day and night to build a new

TOURS

Upcoming free walking tours at the Park:

Spring Wildflowers	Birds
Sun., Apr 24 (3 pm)	Sat., Apr 9 (9 am)
Introductory	Sat., May 14 (8 am)
Sun., May 22 (9 am)	Sun., Jun 5 (8 am)
Sat., Jun 11 (9 am)	

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.

site. An initial version is now up and running. Check it out at this easy-to-remember URL:

<http://research.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=18875>

This is the site you'll want to visit for the latest information about tours, workdays, meetings, current water conditions, recent bird sightings, or any breaking news about the Park. For things that are not time-sensitive, such as the online version of our biological management plan, education lesson plans or past newsletters, visit the old site:

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

Please bear with us as we adjust to this change in our cyberworld. ✂

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Want to help us save postage and paper by only receiving this newsletter via e-mail? Let John know.

Printing courtesy of Epson El Paso.

COMMUNITY WORKDAYS

Upcoming community workdays at the Park:

Sat., Apr 16 Sat., May 21 Sat., Jun 18

We start at **8 a.m.** 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.