

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. 16

July 2005

RESTORATION REPORT

The Rio Grande and its floodplain once supported a diverse mosaic of native habitats, all shaped by a living, dynamic river. In some areas, where conditions were suitable, extensive stands of tornillo, or screwbean mesquite, predominated. At Rio Bosque Wetlands Park, tornillo is again becoming a dominant part of the landscape.

When Rio Bosque became a City park in 1973, it got its name from 1) its location next to the Rio Grande and 2) the bosques, or woodlands, that covered much of the tract. The exotic tree saltcedar predominated, but tornillo was also present. In some places, it held its own with the saltcedar.

When the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) built the wetland complex at Rio Bosque in 1997, it removed much of the saltcedar. At the same time, IBWC personnel took care to minimize damage to native vegetation, including many tornillo. Freed of competition with saltcedar, those tornillo are thriving.

In addition, since 1997 tornillo seedlings have been colonizing many upland areas at the Park. Now, many of those seedlings are sturdy young trees. The shape of the future Rio Bosque landscape is starting to emerge. As in the historic river valley, tornillo bosques will be prominent in that landscape. ✂



Three soon-to-fledge Harris's Hawks, May 6, 2005

WILDLIFE NOTES

Birds of prey provided several highlights at the Park this spring. **White-tailed Kites**, very rare in the El Paso region, made multiple appearances: 1 bird on April 24, 2 on June 7-8, 1 on June 13. And in mid-May, the Park's resident **Harris's Hawks** delighted observers by successfully fledging 3 young from a nest in saltcedar along the Bosque Trail. ✂

BOSQUE TRAIL COMPLETE

April 21 was a banner day for Rio Bosque Wetlands Park. With a final flourish, we completed surfacing the Bosque Trail, the Park's



Friends of the Rio Bosque Membership Application

Name: _____	___ Bosque Buddy (12 and under)	\$4
Address: _____	___ Student	\$8
_____	___ Senior (62+)	\$8
_____	___ Individual	\$10
E-mail: _____	___ Family	\$15
	___ Bosque Booster	\$50
	___ Cottonwood Commando	\$75-\$249
	___ Restoration Patron	\$250-\$499
	___ 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., Jul 28

Thurs., Aug 25

Thurs., Sep 22

6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

411 Burges Hall
UTEP

Info: 915-545-5214

hard-surfaced loop trail. Work on this trail began in 2001. Its construction was made possible by funding from the Paso del Norte Health Foundation and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department; by assistance from the City of El Paso's Parks and Recreation Department, its Street Department, and the National Park Service's Rivers & Trails Program; and by lots and lots of hard work by UTEP students and Park volunteers. Thanks to one and all for a job well done! ✂

GRACIAS

Dedicated partners and dedicated volunteers make the Rio Bosque project possible. More thanks go to:

- The **IBWC** for providing, through its Friends of the Rio Grande program, a weather station, an outdoor table and Lexan display-panel windows for the Park's visitor center.
- The City of El Paso's **Street Department** for making the Park easier to find by installing directional signs to Rio Bosque along Pan American Dr.
- **Carolina Welding** for fabricating and installing the lock systems for the gates at the Bosque and Tornillo trailheads.
- **El Paso Electric Co.** for scrap poles being used to delineate roads near the visitor center.
- The **Texas Parks and Wildlife Department** for 2 bat houses now in place at the Park.
- **Art Harris** for giving the Friends of the Rio Bosque a workshop on mammal identification in preparation for faunal monitoring activities this year.
- **Tony Gandara** for his help with arthropod identification for the faunal monitoring program.
- **Leslie Lambert** and **Marty Morrow** for staffing our exhibit at the Native American Arts and Crafts Festival in Socorro, Texas, on June 11-12. ✂

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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

Join us at the Park for a free walking tour or to help with habitat management, Park maintenance or faunal monitoring. Coming up:

JULY

Sat., Jul 9	Bird Tour	8 a.m.
Sat., Jul 16	Community Workday	8 a.m.
Sat., Jul 23	Faunal Monitoring	8 a.m.
Sun., Jul 24	Introductory Tour	8 a.m.

AUGUST

Sun., Aug 7	Bird Tour	8 a.m.
Sat., Aug 13	Introductory Tour	8 a.m.
Sat., Aug 20	Community Workday	8 a.m.
Sat., Aug 27	Faunal Monitoring	8 a.m.

SEPTEMBER

Sat., Sep 10	Bird Tour	8 a.m.
Sat., Sep 17	Community Workday	8 a.m.
Sun., Sep 18	Introductory Tour	3 p.m.
Sat., Sep 24	Faunal Monitoring	8 a.m.

The meeting place for all of these activities 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.