

# 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. 25

October 2007

## SUMMER DAYS

Again this year, UTEP's Center for Environmental Resource Management and Department of Geological Sciences, with support from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, sponsored an environmental summer camp for kids. Each week-long session had the participants on campus the first 4 days of the week, learning about ecosystems, water, soils, air quality and dust storms. On Day 5, they visited Rio Bosque and got to experience in the field what they had studied on campus. The kids were sharp-eyed observers and enthusiastic explorers of the Rio Bosque landscape. We hope they'll be back many times. ✂

## COOL WEATHER

In early 2005, through the Texas Clean Rivers Program, the Friends of the Rio Bosque obtained a weather station for the Park. For 2.5 years, it languished in its box until the Park's visitor center could get electric service. When that finally happened, the Friends sprang into action. They installed the station, and, on Sept 20, we finally began recording weather data at the Park! Thanks go to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the International Boundary and Water Commission, and the Friends of the Rio Bosque for making this great addition possible. ✂



Summer-camp naturalists explore Rio Bosque, June 22, 2007 (Maria Trunk photo).

## RETURN OF A NATIVE

In the western United States, the **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** is a rare and declining bird dependent on riverside-forest habitat. The population in the West, including the El Paso area, is currently a candidate for federal listing as a threatened or endangered species.

Yellow-billed Cuckoos were once one of the signature birds of Rio Bosque Park, nesting in the Park's dense saltcedar stands. Many of these stands were cleared as



### Friends of the Rio Bosque Membership Application

Name:	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Bosque Buddy (12 and under)	\$4
Address:	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$8
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Senior (62+)	\$8
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$10
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$15
	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Bosque Booster	\$50
E-mail:	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Cottonwood Commando	\$75-\$249
	_____	<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., Oct 25  
Thurs., Nov 29  
No mtg. in Dec.  
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.  
411 Burges Hall  
UTEP  
Info: 915-545-5214

part of the wetland project in 1997, and no cuckoos had been seen at the Park since then...until this year.

On June 26-28, we were elated to find a cuckoo at Rio Bosque for the first time in 14 years. It is the first small step towards what we hope will be their eventual return as a nesting bird at the Park. And it is a clear sign of progress for our ecological restoration efforts at the site. ✖

## **BORDER SECURITY**

Historically, a major impediment to establishing native plant communities at Rio Bosque has been unauthorized off-road-vehicle traffic. The biological management plan for the Park recommended a fence or other suitable barrier along the east and north edges of the Park to address this problem.

After almost 5 years of effort, we now have a post-and-cable barrier completed in these areas. Low and unobtrusive, it prevents vehicle traffic but is not a barrier to wildlife movement. Thanks are due the City of El Paso Parks and Recreation Department, El Paso Water Utilities, El Paso County Water Improvement District No. 1 and the Meadows Foundation for their help in making this project possible. And thanks go to the many, many volunteers who installed dome posts over the years. We installed the first post on Jan 6, 2003; the 661<sup>st</sup> and last on Aug 1, 2007. ✖

### **Rio Bosque: 10 Years in the Making**

Coming next spring to UTEP's Centennial Museum, an exciting exhibit telling the story of Rio Bosque Wetlands Park. You won't want to miss it!

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

<http://www.riobosque.org>

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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:

### **OCTOBER**

Sat., Oct 6	Bird Tour	9 a.m.
Sun., Oct 14	Introductory Tour	9 a.m.
Sat., Oct 20	Community Workday	9 a.m.
Sat., Oct 27	Faunal Monitoring	8 a.m.

### **NOVEMBER**

Sat., Nov 3	Bird Tour	9 a.m.
Sat., Nov 17	Community Workday	9 a.m.
Sun., Nov 18	Introductory Tour	3 p.m.
Sat., Nov 24	Bird Survey	sunrise

### **DECEMBER**

Sat., Dec 1	Bird Tour	9 a.m.
Sun., Dec 9	Introductory Tour	8 a.m.
Fri., Dec 28	Bird Survey	sunrise

Meeting place for all activities except bird surveys is a bridge crossing the Riverside Canal. 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. Bird surveys start at the Park's visitor center.

