

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. 29

October 2008

SUMMER BIRDS

As native habitat continues to develop at Rio Bosque, we continue to see exciting changes in the Park's bird populations. Among the summer 2008 highlights: **Bell's Vireos**, present for the first time as a nesting bird just 3 years ago, took advantage of the Park's expanding tornillo, or screwbean mesquite, bosques to maintain at least 5 active territories. A pair of **Summer Tanagers**, a bird sporadic in summer in the past, was present consistently in the cottonwoods and tornillos on the east side of the Park, next to the Riverside Canal. Finally, **Painted Buntings**, long a mainstay at Rio Bosque, continued to establish new territories in the Park's tornillo bosques. What better signs of progress for our habitat-restoration efforts! ✂

WELL (ALMOST) DONE!

In July, El Paso Electric Company installed an overhead power line to our long-awaited water-supply well at the Park's inlet, and Western Dewatering installed a pump in the well. We're now anxiously awaiting a service pole and service connection so we can put the well in operation.

This project represents an important step forward in our efforts to establish and maintain wetland and riparian habitats at Rio Bosque. Currently, the Park



White-tailed Kite (Sep 10), a bird very rare over most of the El Paso area but seen often this year at Rio Bosque.

only reliably receives water in late fall and early winter. It is dry most of the year. Now, in years when no other water is available, the well will allow us to provide some water at least intermittently during the critical growing season to help support wetland and riparian vegetation.

Efforts to install the well began in 2004, and they have involved the help and support of many partners. Hearty thanks are due the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, El Paso Water Utilities, El Paso

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
E-mail: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Family \$15
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Bosque Booster \$50
_____	<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 23
Thurs., Dec 4
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
411 Burges Hall
UTEP
Info: 915-545-5214

County Water Improvement District No. 1, Western Dewatering, El Paso Electric Company, and the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society for their roles in making this project possible. ✕

ON THE FENCE

In mid-August, construction began on the 56.7 miles of border fence planned along the Rio Grande between El Paso and Arroyo Diablo, near McNary in Hudspeth County, Texas. At this writing, the work is moving steadily towards Rio Bosque. Visit the [border-fence page](#) on our website to learn the current status. At the Park, the visual impact of the fence will be immediate and obvious. The ecological impact will be gradual and more subtle, but no less real. For many animals, the fence will be a barrier to movement between the Rio Grande and the Park and a barrier to genetic exchange. Over time, the fence will affect what species get established at Rio Bosque and, for some species, the long-term health and viability of the populations present. ✕

ACCESS UPDATE

Current access to Rio Bosque is via the levee road along the Riverside Canal, which forms the east boundary of the Park. In August, El Paso County Water Improvement District No. 1 gated off a portion of this road due to continuing damage from vehicles driven at excessive speeds. Park visitors still have access via this road to the Tornillo Trailhead at the north end of the park, but not the Wetland and Bosque trailheads. Getting to the Park's visitor center at the Bosque Trailhead now requires a 1-mile walk from the Tornillo Trailhead. ✕

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 4	Bird Tour	8 a.m.
Sun., Oct 12	Introductory Tour	9 a.m.
Sat., Oct 18	Community Workday	9 a.m.
Sat., Oct 25	Faunal Monitoring	8 a.m.
Sun., Oct 26	Bird Survey	sunrise

NOVEMBER

Sat., Nov 8	Bird Tour	8 a.m.
Sat., Nov 15	Community Workday	9 a.m.
Sun., Nov 16	Introductory Tour	3 p.m.
Sat., Nov 22	Bird Survey	sunrise

DECEMBER

Sat., Dec 6	Bird Tour	9 a.m.
Sun., Dec 14	Introductory Tour	3 p.m.
Tu., Dec 30	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. For bird surveys, meet at the Tornillo Trailhead.

Return Service Requested

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