

RIO BOSQUE NEWS

A newsletter reporting on events at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park

Center for Environmental Research and Management
University of Texas at El Paso



No. 36

July 2010

SECURITY MATTERS

Last year, vandalism and theft were unduly frequent occurrences at Rio Bosque's visitor center. With the help of many supportive donors, we are gradually recovering from those setbacks.

One big challenge has been to ensure our tools won't be stolen again in the future. Now, thanks to El Paso Water Utilities (EPWU), we have a solution.

Right from the start of the Rio Bosque project, the staff at the Roberto Bustamante Wastewater Treatment Plant has been fantastic, helping us in any way they could. Early on, we stored our tools at the plant. As our inventory grew, though, and our space needs increased, we moved many of those tools to the visitor center when it was built in 2004.

Now, EPWU is graciously allowing us to place a portable building on the plant grounds – the fenced and guarded plant grounds. We'll be able to keep all our tools and other equipment in one place in that very secure location. Thanks, EPWU! ✂

SUMMER WILDLIFE

Summer is always a fascinating time for wildlife at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park. Summer-resident birds like Yellow-breasted Chats and Painted Buntings are



A Western Screech-Owl peers out from a Wood Duck nest box at Rio Bosque, 8 May 2010.

singing everywhere. Coyotes and bobcats are on the prowl. Snake, lizard and arthropod activity are all high.

Since last fall, we've been finding Western Screech-Owls roosting intermittently in Wood Duck nest boxes at the park. No signs of nesting yet, but the day will likely come.

After last year's successful nesting, we weren't surprised to see a nesting pair of White-tailed Kites again this year. What did surprise us:



Friends of the Rio Bosque Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

- Bosque Buddy (12 and under)\$6
- Student or Senior (62+)..... \$10
- Individual \$15
- Family \$20
- Bosque Booster \$50
- Cottonwood Commando \$75-\$249
- Restoration Patron \$250-\$499
- Wetlands Society \$500-\$999
- Life Member \$1,000

Please make checks payable to *Friends of the Rio Bosque* and mail to: Friends of the Rio Bosque, CERM-UTEP, 500 W. University Ave., El Paso, TX 79968-0684.

Next Meetings

Thurs., July 22

Thurs., Aug 26

Thurs., Sep 23

6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

209-A Burges Hall
UTEP

Info: 915-747-8663

In mid-May, a second pair also began nesting! In addition, three groups of Harris's Hawks began nesting this spring. So far, we've seen no young in any of the kite or hawk nests. This may be related to low prey numbers. To date, as part of our faunal monitoring program, we've live-trapped just 22 small mammals in 2010, compared to 65 at this time in 2009. ✂

WATER WAGON UPGRADED

In spring-summer, when Rio Bosque is typically dry, we haul water to the park to help maintain plantings still getting established. This year, with many new plantings demanding attention, we've gone from watering one morning a week to watering three full days a week. Our water trailer is getting a workout!

Early on, we had a series of setbacks. The trailer's pump experienced repeated problems and spent more hours in the shop than pumping water at the park. The time had come for a new pump. As always, the Friends of the Rio Bosque stepped up. They provided funds for a new pump, installed it, and reconfigured the piping on the trailer to work with the new pump. Thanks, Friends! ✂

BOSQUE TRAILHEAD ACCESS

Along the east boundary of the park are 3 parking areas – the Tornillo, Wetland and Bosque trailheads. At the Tornillo and Wetland trailheads, access is direct from the Riverside Canal levee road. At the Bosque Trailhead, however, access now requires leaving the levee road and taking a short spur road to the trailhead. During this past dry spring, the spur road got quite soft and sandy in places. Recent rains

helped compact the road, but visitors to the Bosque Trailhead should still exercise caution. ✂

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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:

JULY

Sat., Jul 10	Bird Tour	7 a.m.
Sat., Jul 17	Community Workday	8 a.m.
Sun., Jul 18	Introductory Tour	8 a.m.
Sat., Jul 24	Faunal Monitoring	7 a.m.

AUGUST

Sun., Aug 8	Bird Tour	8 a.m.
Sun., Aug 15	Introductory Tour	8 a.m.
Sat., Aug 21	Community Workday	8 a.m.
Sat., Aug 28	Faunal Monitoring	7 a.m.

SEPTEMBER

Sat., Sep 4	Bird Tour	8 a.m.
Sat., Sep 18	Community Workday	8 a.m.
Sun., Sep 19	Introductory Tour	8 a.m.
Sat., Sep 25	Faunal Monitoring	8 a.m.

Meeting place for all activities 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.

Return Service Requested

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