

RIO BOSQUE NEWS

A newsletter reporting on events at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park

Center for Environmental Resource Management
The University of Texas at El Paso



No. 57

April 2016

BOSQUE IN BLOOM

Please join us at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park on **Sunday, April 17** for [Bosque in Bloom](#)! It's a celebration of both our annual spring wildflower display and the "blooming" of the park made possible by the water El Paso Water Utilities (EPWU) can now deliver to Rio Bosque in spring and summer via the new pipeline from the Roberto Bustamante Wastewater Treatment Plant. The event, sponsored by the Friends of the Rio Bosque, with support from EPWU and UTEP's Center for Environmental Resource Management, takes place from **1 p.m. to 5 p.m.** Park at [Pan American Dr. and Winn Rd.](#), then take a free shuttle to the park.

Join us for a free event with fun activities for the whole family. Learn about our river-valley environment through tours, presentations, exhibits and interactive fun for kids. After a quiet year last year, bright yellow carpets of bitterweed are again gracing the landscape at Rio Bosque. You won't want to miss the show! ✨



Post-Christmas snow gave Rio Bosque a different look...and helped set the stage for lots of wildflowers this spring. Photo: Jeff Crabtree, Dec 27, 2015.

WATER UPDATE

Last fall, water deliveries to Rio Bosque from the new pipeline began Oct 18. They ended 126 days later on Feb 21, our longest fall/winter run since 2009-10. The wetland cells were consistently flooded. More than 2,000 ducks were present, along with many shore and wading birds. In mid-February, migrating White-faced Ibis began arriving. The peak number roosting at the park was 400 birds on Feb 29. But, by then, the water in the wetland cells was already dropping. By March 19, the cells were completely dry, and the water birds were gone.

With steady groundwater pumping in the area, Rio Bosque's water table has also dropped since Feb 21. We look forward to water deliveries resuming from the pipeline on May 1, which will return water to the wetlands and, we hope, reverse the water-table decline. Unfortunately, water in the wetland cells is one thing you won't see April 17 at Bosque in Bloom. ✨

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., Apr 28
Thurs., May 26
Thurs., June 23
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
206 Kelly Hall
UTEP
Info: 915-747-8663

¡GRACIAS!

We continue to enjoy superb help at the park. We greatly appreciate and thank:

- The members of **Girl Scout Troop 50251**, who planted coyote willow poles along the old river channel on Jan 23.
- The **Destination Imagination Team** from Mission Early College HS, who cleared a sizeable accumulation of old broken glass on Feb 13.
- **Epson El Paso**, who printed much-needed new interpretive posters for the display panels at the park's visitor center, a major upgrade over the previous sun-bleached, weather-beaten material.
- The **Friends of the Rio Bosque**, whose generous support made possible the printing of updated

editions of the self-guided tour brochures for the three loop trails at the park. ✨

WILD NOTES

Last year, after fledging their second set of young in August, Rio Bosque's nesting pair of **White-tailed Kites** remained at the park through mid-September. After Sep 14, just one bird was being seen. On Oct 6, a massive hail storm hit the area, flattening vegetation, stripping leaves off trees and destroying the kites' second nest. The lone remaining bird was seen once more, on Oct 13, then it was gone. This year, we've seen a lone bird Jan 5 and on three dates in early March, each time near last year's two nest trees. Will the pair be back in 2016? Stay tuned. ✨



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Return Service Requested

RIO BOSQUE CALENDAR

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

APRIL			MAY			JUNE		
9 (Sat.)	Bird Tour	8 a.m.	14 (Sat.)	Bird Tour	7 a.m.	5 (Sun.)	Introductory Tour	8 a.m.
16 (Sat.)	Workday	8 a.m.	21 (Sat.)	Workday	8 a.m.	11 (Sat.)	Bird Tour	6:30 a.m.
17 (Sun.)	Bosque in Bloom	1-5 p.m.	22 (Sun.)	Introductory Tour	8 a.m.	18 (Sat.)	Workday	8 a.m.
23 (Sat.)	Faunal Monitoring	8 a.m.	28 (Sat.)	Faunal Monitoring	7 a.m.	22 (We.)	Faunal Monitoring	7 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.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.riobosque.org

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

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