

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. 59

October 2016

THE CHANGING RIO BOSQUE LANDSCAPE



Wetland Cell 2, July 21, 2014.



Wetland Cell 2, August 6, 2016.

From 2003 to 2014, the wetland cells at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park were almost always dry throughout spring and summer, tough conditions for establishing wetland and riparian habitat. Now, we've just completed our second year with water flowing to these areas from May through September via the new pipeline from the Roberto Bustamante Wastewater Treatment Plant. The changes have been dramatic. Large areas of emergent wetland vegetation are developing in both wetland cells, and an impressive stand of young Goodding willows now rings the core flooded area in Cell 2.

Over the years, the Rio Bosque landscape has seen many changes: loss of an old bend of the Rio Grande due to channelization; the rise of saltcedar; extensive clearing and grading in 1997 to prepare the site for the wetland project; and recovery of the vegetation since then, especially the native tree tornillo. But one element of the pre-channelization landscape was still largely missing. Lack of water throughout the growing season in most years stymied efforts to establish wetland habitat. Now, the next big change at Rio Bosque – the return of extensive areas of wetland and riparian habitat – is underway.

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., Oct 27
Thurs., Dec 1

6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
206 Kelly Hall
UTEP

Info: 915-747-8663

¡GRACIAS!

Thanks go to the **El Paso Zoological Society**, the **El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society** and many generous individuals for their recent donations to the Rio Bosque Wetlands Park Gift Fund, a big help for our bottom line. Hearty thanks are also due **El Paso Water** (EPW) as it continues to make major contributions to the success of Rio Bosque. EPW is now covering operating costs for the park's two electric-powered wells. It is getting our lightning-damaged well operating again. And the terrific staff at the Bustamante Plant brought our water-transfer pump back to life this summer after 14 years of rust-inducing inactivity, giving us an additional option for moving water into dry areas at the park. ✂

ON THE WILD SIDE

After exceptional nesting success last year, **White-tailed Kites** have appeared only sporadically at Rio Bosque in 2016, and they did not nest. Why the change? Our small-mammal live trapping suggests an answer. With just 1 month left in this year's trapping, we've caught only 15 small mammals in 259 trap-nights. Last year at this time, we had caught 90 in 259 trap-nights. The prey base needed to support nesting kites just wasn't there in 2016. After a quiet 2015, **subtropical tamarisk beetles** (*Diorhabda sublineata*) surged again at Rio Bosque this summer, turning many saltcedars brown as they fed on the foliage. By late summer, though, most of the trees were green again with new growth. ✂



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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:

OCTOBER			NOVEMBER			DECEMBER		
15 (Sat.)	Workday	9 a.m.	12 (Sat.)	Introductory Tour	9 a.m.	4 (Sun.)	Introductory Tour	3 p.m.
16 (Sun.)	Introductory Tour	4 p.m.	19 (Sat.)	Workday	9 a.m.	10 (Sat.)	Birding Tour	8 a.m.
22 (Sat.)	Faunal Monitoring	8 a.m.	20 (Sun.)	Birding Tour	3 p.m.			
29 (Sat.)	Birding Tour	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.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.riobosque.org

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