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## **New Mexico Ornithological Society Bulletin**

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**RECENT CHANGES IN THE AOU CHECK-LIST AS THEY RELATE TO NEW  
MEXICO ORNITHOLOGY**

STEVE WEST  
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The most recent changes (AOU 1989) to the 6th edition of the AOU Check-list (AOU 1983) include several species which occur in New Mexico. These changes, which relate to taxonomy and/or common names but not to changes in distribution, are given below.

The Yellow-crowned Night-Heron is now Nyctanassa violacea instead of Nycticorax violaceus.

The common name for the Common Barn-Owl (Tyto alba) is changed back to Barn Owl.

The Western Flycatcher (Empidonax difficilis) of earlier editions has been split into two full species. Empidonax difficilis is now the Pacific-slope Flycatcher, while the species that occurs in New Mexico becomes the Cordilleran Flycatcher (Empidonax occidentalis).

The Water Pipit (Anthus spinoletta) of the 1983 edition has been split into Old World and New World species. The one that occurs in New Mexico is now called the American Pipit (Anthus rubescens), while the Water Pipit (A. spinoletta) is the species that occurs in Eurasia.

The familiar Brown Towhee (Pipilo fuscus) of the 1983 edition has also been split into two full species: the California Towhee (Pipilo crissalis), occurring from Oregon to Baja California, and the Canyon Towhee (P. fuscus), found from the southwestern United States, including New Mexico, into Mexico.

The results of these changes are relatively minor as regards New Mexico ornithology. No new species have been added to the state list, and no "lumps" have occurred that would have resulted in a loss. Nyctanassa violacea is merely a reversion to the name that was used for years prior to the 1983 edition. Likewise, Barn Owl was the name used for years before the 1983 edition changed it. The reversions to American Pipit and Canyon Towhee also represent returns to names used in the past; Bailey (1928), for example, used both these names in her classic work on New Mexico's birds.

## LITERATURE CITED

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American Ornithologists' Union. 1989. Thirty-seventh supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union check-list of North American birds. Auk 106: 532-538.

Bailey, F. M. 1928. Birds of New Mexico. New Mexico Dept. of Game and Fish, Santa Fe.

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## SITE GUIDE UPDATE: BIRDING FORT SUMNER

DAVID J. CLEARY  
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Fort Sumner just barely made the New Mexico Bird Finding Guide, showing up on page 128 as the last locality entry in the book. Nevertheless, the town offers an excellent opportunity to view several of New Mexico's less common breeding species. Three highly visible breeders in the area are the Blue Jay (Cyanocitta cristata), the Red-headed Woodpecker (Melanerpes erythrocephalus), and the Northern Bobwhite (Colinus virginianus), while the Dickcissel (Spiza americana) now seems to be a dependable breeder there. All of these species have been reported in other eastern New Mexico localities, but Fort Sumner seems to regularly host a number of each species within a concentrated area.

The best location for Blue Jays and Red-headed Woodpeckers is the cottonwood strip that borders the playing fields on the east side of Fort Sumner High School. Access to this grove of mature cottonwoods is best achieved by driving along the dirt road that parallels the irrigation channel behind the high school. This same irrigation channel and dirt road complex is also a good route to cruise for Northern Bobwhites.

Another fairly certain location for finding numbers of Northern Bobwhites is along the eastern side of the Pecos River. Park just before the bridge as you leave town on westbound US 60. Walk up-river, proceeding through a good stand of cottonwoods and heading toward a railway trestle that is about

1.5 miles away. If no bobwhites were encountered as you traversed this area, then check the row of tamarisks (salt cedars) just beyond the trestle. While at the trestle, check its underside for a possible Great Horned Owl (Bubo virginianus).

At least 2-3 Dickcissels have been recorded each year for the past three years (1987-89) on June Breeding Bird Surveys, and others have been heard while scouting the route (S.O. Williams III, pers. comm.). Among the more consistent areas for this species have been alfalfa fields south of Fort Sumner State Monument (=Billy the Kid Museum, etc.), where the males sing from shrubs bordering the fields.

While in the area, one must take note of the numerous Swainson 's Hawks (Buteo swainsoni) doing telephone pole duty on Fort Sumner's feeder highways. Also, a Barn Owl (Tyto alba) was seen on two successive evenings in July 1989 in the primitive camping area (eastern side) below the dam at Sumner Lake State Park.

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**MEMORIAL ESTABLISHED TO HONOR  
DR. HAROLD M. HEFLEY**

Dr. Harold M. Hefley, NMOS member and resident of Roswell since 1971, recently passed away at the age of 84.

Dr. Hefley became active in the NMOS through his deep interest in ecology. Ecology had been the subject of his doctoral dissertation at the University of Oklahoma in 1935; he was one of the pioneers in establishing the term and its meaning. He taught at Texas Tech, Baylor, University of Arkansas, and Southern Mississippi prior to becoming Professor of Zoology at Panhandle State University in Goodwill, Oklahoma (where the science building is now named in his honor). Among his many honors, he was elected to fellowship in the National Association for the Advancement of Science in 1953, and to the Outstanding Educators of America in 1970.

Dr. Hefley's widow, Mrs. Vera Hefley, has established a memorial fund in memory of her late husband. Anyone who would like to make a gift to the Dr. Harold M. Hefley Memorial Fund may do so with a check payable to "NMOS" and sent to Ross Teuber, NMOS Treasurer, 1612 Kentucky NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Now that I'm retired, I wonder how I ever had the time to work! With my association at the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and now as President of NMOS, I'm wondering how I'm going to find the time to bird and write, plus do all the other things I'd hoped to do in retirement.

However, there are other people in NMOS more important to the well-being of the organization than is the President. For instance, without the dedication of Ross Teuber, the Treasurer and information guru who supplies the know-how glue that holds the organization together, we would have foundered long ago. Rollie Goodman's enduring devotion to editorial precision and perfection as Editor of the Field Notes deserves our support and appreciation. Paul Steel's readiness to take on any onerous chore cheerfully and promptly is amazing and deserves kudos. Paul's mailing list is kept up-to-date seemingly on a day-to-day basis, and his mailings go out in mere hours. Mention should also be made of his and Ross' attention to detail in preparing the new Field Check-list. Sandy Williams performs magic in getting the Bulletin ready whether we have given him anything to put in it or not, and it's always newsworthy and professional. Other loyal board members who contribute so much to the continuity and strength of our organization are Steve West, Pat Stein, Burt Lewis, and Jim Karo. Also, ex-presidents Steve West, Jim Travis, Chuck Hundertmark, and Dustin Huntington have lent me their encouragement and sympathy, and they have made me feel free to call on them for advice.

The continuing editorial committee for the Field Notes, Bill Howe (who now lives in Colorado and also serves on the CFO Official Records Committee), Burt Lewis, Paul Steel, Ross Teuber, and Steve West, continue to crank out information for our Field Notes - truly a labor of love that few of us can ever come close to understanding. And John Hubbard's knowledge and expertise keep the ball rolling; his contributions are important to the professional thrust of the organization. The additional support of other active NMOS members, such as Bo and Woody West, Dave Ligon, Arch McCallum, Bill Baltosser, Pat Snider, and Donna and Greg Schmitt, helped me decide to accept the presidency.

Without all of these people, a President could not tie it all together, and without them I would not have considered the job.

The brand new Field Check-list is available from Ross Teuber or Paul Steel. The Bird Finding Guide is being revised by Pat

Snider. If you have suggestions for the guide, please send them to Pat at 2435-C 45th Street, Los Alamos, NM 87544.

Our annual meeting will take place Saturday, 3 March 1990, at the New Mexico Museum of Natural History. Bill Baltosser has agreed to receive abstracts and schedule the papers sessions. Jim Findley, a charter member of NMOS, has agreed to give the invited talk on a subject of interest to all of us: "The Biodiversity of New Mexico." We'll need volunteers to help run the meeting, plan the banquet, and arrange for a field trip. Please call me (266-0561) or Pat Stein (672-3476) if you would like to help.

-Mary Alice Root

#### **MAY 1989 BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

The NMOS Executive Board met on the afternoon of 13 May 1989 at Black Mesa State Park, Oklahoma. Present were President Steve West, Secretary Pat Stein, Treasurer Ross Teuber, Directors Jim Karo, Burt Lewis, and Mary Alice Root, and Membership Chair Paul Steel. Secretary's, Treasurer's, and Membership Chair's reports were read and approved.

Supplies of the New Mexico Bird Finding Guide are running low; to meet the demand, an additional 2,000 copies will be printed in the near future. Pat Snider has offered to begin the coordination of a revision of the Guide.

Other items discussed included contacts with the New Mexico Museum of Natural History concerning its bird-related activities and the feasibility of the NMOS holding its next annual meeting there. Also discussed was the possibility of the NMOS becoming responsible for revising and reprinting the "Field Check-list" for New Mexico birds. Three more issues of the Field Notes are in the process of editorial review. A membership list will be printed in a forthcoming issue of the Bulletin.

#### **1989 ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

Fifteen members of the New Mexico Ornithological Society attended a joint meeting with the Oklahoma Ornithological Society (OOS) at Black Mesa State Park, Oklahoma, 12-14 May

1989. After a dinner on Friday the 12th, members of the OOS presented a slide show. On the evening of the 13th, Steve West presented a program on the Cave Swallows of Carlsbad Caverns. Field trips took place on Saturday the 13th and the morning of Sunday the 14th.

President Steve West called the annual meeting of the NMOS to order on the evening of 13 May 1989. Bo West, as Chair of the Nominating Committee, presented the following slate of officers: President - Mary Alice Root; Vice-President - Burt Lewis; Secretary - Paul Steel; Treasurer - Ross Teuber; Director for 1 year term (to complete Ms. Root's term) - Steve West; Director for 2 year term - Pat Stein. Jim Karo moved, and Pat Snider seconded, to accept the committee's recommendation. The motion passed.

New President Mary Alice Root set 9 September 1989 as the date for the next NMOS Board meeting.

#### **SEPTEMBER 1989 BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

The NMOS Executive Board met in Albuquerque on the afternoon of 9 September 1989 in the conference room of the Biology Department at UNM. Present were President Mary Alice Root, Vice-President Burt Lewis, Secretary Paul Steel, Treasurer Ross Teuber, Directors Jim Karo and Pat Stein, Field Notes Editor Rollie Goodman, Bulletin Editor Sandy Williams, and member Pat Snider. Minutes of the previous annual meeting and board meeting were read and approved, as was the Treasurer's report.

Ross Teuber reported that 1,000 copies of the New Mexico Bird Finding Guide were being printed for less cost than the previous edition. Thus, we will continue to sell the Guide for the same price (\$7.00 + \$2.00 postage).

Pat Snider will coordinate a revision of the Guide. Authors will be requested to update their sections. Enlarged copies will also be circulated to various members for suggested changes. There is a need to solicit authors for areas of the state not presently covered. The membership will be alerted about this project and the need for input by a note in the Bulletin.

Paul Steel reported that quotations for printing 10,000 copies of the revised Birds of New Mexico Field Check-list have been received. It is proposed that the Check-list will sell for \$.20 for 1 to 99 copies and \$.15 for 100 or more copies. It was

agreed with the New Mexico Audubon Council that local Audubon Chapters could purchase Check-lists for our cost.

Publication of the Bulletin is behind schedule, Sandy Williams reported, partly due to the near total lack of material. The possibility of assembling an editorial board of professionals, to assist with soliciting and editing manuscripts, was discussed.

Rollie Goodman stated that he had hoped, last spring, of finally being up-to-date with the Field Notes but input for three reporting periods still has not been received from some committee members.

The next annual meeting of the NMOS will be in Albuquerque at the New Mexico Museum of Natural History on or near 3-4 March 1990.

The next board meeting will be 13 January 1990 at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge.

> > > JOIN THE NMOS < < <

Membership in the New Mexico Ornithological Society is open to anyone with an interest in birds. Memberships are for a calendar year - 1990 will be due January 1. Please join or renew at one of the following membership rates: Regular \$7.50, Family \$10.00, Student \$3.50, Supporting \$30.00, Life \$300.00. Checks should be made payable to the NMOS and sent to the Treasurer, Ross L. Teuber, 1612 Kentucky NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110.

> > > JOIN THE NMOS < < <

#### **BIRD FINDING GUIDE TO BE REVISED**

The New Mexico Ornithological Society is in the process of revising and enlarging its New Mexico Bird Finding Guide, and we are inviting interested and knowledgeable persons to participate in this project. There are many areas that need to be included in the guide as well as corrections to be made on existing material.

Our success in distributing the guide, and the many positive responses to it, have helped us realize the need to make the

next edition even more exciting and as complete as possible. Surely, given the biodiversity of our state and the quality of New Mexico birders, we should be able to produce one of the best bird finding guides in the United States.

If you would be interested in sharing your expertise to help make the New Mexico Bird Finding Guide an outstanding and professional publication, we would very much like to meet with you or hear from you. We have scheduled a meeting to discuss the guide, in conjunction with our board meeting, on Saturday, 13 January 1990, at 1:00 PM at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge.

Pat Snider (2435-C 45th St. Los Alamos, NM 87544) and Burt Lewis (P. O. Box 665, Los Alamos, NM 87544) have undertaken the revision. Some progress has been made and some comments have been received from previous contributors, as well as new material received from interested persons. Our enthusiasm for this project is high and we're looking forward to a wonderfully cooperative effort by the birders of New Mexico.

#### **1990 ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULED**

The NMOS will hold its annual meeting for 1990 in Albuquerque at the New Mexico Museum of Natural History on Saturday 3 March 1990. There will be papers sessions in the morning and afternoon, and an invited speaker in the evening. Dr. William H. Baltosser will arrange the papers sessions. Dr. James S. Findley of UNM Department of Biology will speak in the evening on "The Biodiversity of New Mexico." Additional details regarding the meeting will appear in future Bulletins.

#### **SUBMISSION OF AMERICAN BIRDS/NMOS FIELD NOTES DATA:**

John Hubbard and Sandy Williams now serve jointly as New Mexico's regional editors for American Birds. Contributors should submit their records to John and Sandy by (AND PREFERABLY BEFORE) the established deadlines (listed below). After the information has been summarized for American Birds it is forwarded to Rollie Goodman and used to compile the more detailed NMOS Field Notes. After being used for these reports, all submissions become a part of the NMOS archives; even if all your submissions are not published, they will remain on file.

Season

American Birds and the NMOS have the year broken down into four reporting periods:

Season	Period	Reports Due
Autumn	Aug-30 Nov (4 months)	31 Dec
Winter	Dec-28/29 Feb (3 months)	31 March
Spring	March-31 May (3 months)	30 June
Summer	1 June-31 July (2 months)	31 Aug

Records should be submitted to John P. Hubbard and Sartor O. Williams III at either the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Villagra Building, Santa Fe, NM 87503 or (Hubbard) 2016 Valle Rio, Santa Fe, NM 87501 or (Williams) 65 Verano Loop, Santa Fe, NM 87505. Please submit your records in taxonomic order and make sure all records include date, exact location, numbers of birds, age/sex/color phase if applicable, and name(s) of observer(s). Provide details for unusual records.

#### **EDITOR'S NOTE**

The NMOS Bulletin is published four times a year; subscription is by membership in the NMOS. The Bulletin serves two primary purposes: 1) to publish articles of scientific merit concerning the distribution, abundance, status, behavior, and ecology of the avifauna of New Mexico and its contiguous regions; and 2) to publish news and announcements deemed of interest to the New Mexico ornithological community. The Bulletin invites contribution of articles and announcements. Submitted articles are subject to editing and will be refereed by the Editor and at least one other reviewer. Published articles are noted in major abstracting services (e.g., the AOU's "Recent Ornithological Literature" section of The Auk). Articles and announcements for the NMOS Bulletin should be submitted to the Editor, Dr. Sartor O. Williams III, 65 Verano Loop, Santa Fe, NM 87505.

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#### **NEW MEXICO ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.**

#### **OFFICERS FOR 1989**

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Director: Steve West, Box 2489, Carlsbad, NM 88220; 885-1153.

Director: Patricia Stein, 305 Potrillo Drive, Los Alamos, NM 87544; 672-3476.

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