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**NMOS ANNUAL MEETING**

By John P. Hubbard

The NMOS Annual Meeting for 1980 will be at Farmington on 11-13 April, at the invitation of Alan Nelson and the Four Corners Bird Club. The following is the schedule of events:

11 April (Friday)

3:00 to 5:00 p.m.--Field trip to Kirtland Marsh or Morgan Lake  
Contact Alan Nelson--325-8619),  
5:00 to 7:30 p.m.--Supper (dutch treat, your choice).  
7:30 to 9:00p.m.--Slide show at Alan's home (106 W. 33rd St.,  
Farmington, N.M.)

12 April (Saturday)

7:30 to 11:30 a.m.--Meet at B-Square Ranch, 1 mile east of  
Farmington on US 64; bird walk, business meeting, viewing  
exhibits, and coffee break. Note that this is the residence of  
Mr. Tom Bolack, and it should be treated with care and respect.  
11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.--Lunch (dutch treat, your choice).  
1:00 to 4:00 p.m.--Workshop on bird identification and nest  
finding. Meet at San Juan College (4601 College Blvd.), Lecture  
Room; use south parking lot, enter at southeast entrance, turn  
left from foyer.  
4:00 to 6:30 p.m.--Supper (dutch treat, your choice).  
7:00 to 8:30 p.m.--Evening program at Civic Center (Allen and  
Arrington streets, one block north of Main), Rooms C and D. Park  
south or west of building, enter on the south side and go to

west part of Civic Center.

13 April (Sunday)

morning--Field trip in the Farmington area, details to be announced at the meeting on Saturday (12 April).

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Two members of the Board of the NMOS have terms expiring in 1980, and a committee was named to nominate replacements. The committee consisted of Charles Hundertmark, David Lange, and Mary Alice Root. The nominees for these two-year positions are:

William Stone -- Santa Fe, NM  
Dustin Huntington -- Albuquerque, N.M.

Other nominees may be suggested by writing to the committee, or to the Secretary of the NMOS.

#### TURKEY VULTURE ROOST COUNT

By James R. Travis

A prominent ornithological event at Bandelier National Monument is the evening arrival of the Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) flock coming in to roost. Starting shortly before sundown, the vultures sail in over the canyon rim, circle overhead for some minutes, and gradually settle into the trees for the night. The primary Bandelier roost is located in three mature cottonwoods (*Populus* sp.) about 150 meters southeast of the monument headquarters. A secondary roost, a large cottonwood tree, is located 300 meters east of the main roost. Usually a few vultures (10% of the population) roost there, occasionally more. Rarely one to three vultures roost in tall ponderosa pines (*Pinus ponderosa*) between the main and secondary roosts. This occurs only when peak populations are present. The Bandelier roosting area has been used annually for decades.

The roost is occupied from the time of first arrival in the spring to the final autumn departure. The median spring arrival date obtained from local observations in Los Alamos County over 16 years is 1 April. The earliest recorded arrival is 23 March 1964. The median fall departure date from 14 years of observation is 27 September; the latest recorded date being 15 October 1957.

Sporadically during the summer for six years I have counted the roosting vultures at dusk. The final count in a day was made shortly after sunset when the vultures had settled down for the night. Examination of the data shows that the population rises to a peak in about three weeks after the first arrival, that is, in late April or early May. It falls to a low in mid or late June, and increases again to almost the same peak number in early September, before the gradual departure on migration south. The seasonal pattern is the same from year to year, but it may shift in time. In 1977 most of the vultures had arrived by the second week in April; in 1975 the peak number was not reached until the first week in May.

The counts are subject to some uncertainty. A given count may be in error by birds which were hidden or unnoticed. A more serious problem is disturbance from the nearby parking lot. If disturbance occurred just at the final settling down time, some of the vultures retired to auxiliary roosting trees and might have been overlooked.

The range in peak population as observed was from 63 to 78, with a mean of 69 from 4 years of sampling near the peak date.

The large change in roosting population through the season is attributed to nesting activity. Under this hypothesis the changes in vulture numbers would be explained as follows. The vulture population roosts in Bandelier for a few weeks after arrival from the wintering areas. The adults gradually move out to nest and raise young, so that only the non-breeding birds continue to use the roost during summer. As young are fledged, the adults return to the roost, remain for a few weeks, then move south. If the young also use the roost, the fall population should be significantly greater than the spring one. This is not the case.

Although I have not made a determination of the proportion of young in the fall population, there appear to be few if any young in the roost. Possibly the young of the year do join the roost, and the fall migration may be quite extended—with some adults moving out before the young arrive. The question of where the young go remains to be answered. Another hypothesis for the large change in numbers is that in the spring a large proportion of the roosting vultures are migrants which continue farther north, after spending some time locally; in the fall the roost population is augmented by migrants returning south from the north.

#### NOTES AND NEWS

Bald Eagle sightings are needed as part of efforts to census the species throughout the U.S. by the National Wildlife Federation. Send your records to the Editor, complete with places, dates, numbers, and ages of all Bald Eagles seen in New Mexico in January 1980.

We have received about 300 breeding record cards for the 1979 season. If you still have cards to submit, please do so now. If you need blank cards, contact the NMOS Secretary.

The bobcat is now under jurisdiction of the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, thanks to the support of various conservationists in the state and elsewhere. This is a needed step toward expanding the Department's jurisdiction over non-game wildlife, and your continued support is needed in this endeavor.

The 1980 breeding bird routes need to be assigned as soon as possible, as several people have or may drop ones that they have run in the past. In order to "clear the decks," all routes will be considered available until written notification to the Editor is received that you are committed to one or more routes in 1980. Those running the route in 1979 will be given preference, but get your bids in now.

American Birds reports are to be sent to the Editor within 10 days after the close of a reporting period. These periods are:

winter: December - February  
spring: March - May  
summer: June - July  
fall: August - November

Please be prompt in sending in your records and be sure to give substantiating details for unusual records.

JOIN THE NMOS

Membership in the New Mexico Ornithological Society is open to everyone. Membership offers you two issues of the Field Notes and four of the Bulletin each year, plus an Annual Meeting each spring. It also provides an opportunity for you to publish your observations and articles. Membership costs are:

student: \$ 2.50  
family: \$ 7.50  
institutional: 2.50  
contributing: 25.00  
regular: 5.00  
patron: 100.00

Contact the Secretary or Editor for more information, or send your dues to the Secretary,