

Disclaimer: This file has been scanned with an optical character recognition program, often an erroneous process. Every effort has been made to correct any material errors due to the scanning process. Some portions of the publication have been reformatted for better web presentation. Announcements and add copy have usually been omitted in the web presentation. We would appreciate that any errors other than formatting be reported to the NMOS at this web site. Any critical use of dates or numbers from individual records should be checked against the original publication before use as these are very difficult to catch in editing.



THE 1981 ANNUAL MEETING

By John P. Hubbard

The meeting will be held in Albuquerque on 11-12 April 1981. The business and paper sessions will be at the University of New Mexico, Department of Biology, room number 139. The identification workshop will be in the bird range portion of the Museum of Southwest Biology, in the basement of the biology building.

The schedule of events for 11 April is as follows:

8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.	Registration
8:30 a.m.-9:00 a.m.	Slide show
9:00 a.m.-9:30 a.m.	Business meeting, including election of officers
9:30 a.m.-9:45 a.m.	Break
9:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	Paper Session
12:00 p.m.-1:30 p.m.	*Lunch
1:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Identification Workshop
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.	Dinner
7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	Evening Program

* Bring your own or eat nearby.

On 19 April 1981 there will be a bird-banding demonstration at Candelaria Farms in Albuquerque. Details will be announced at the meeting.

The nominating committee of Bill Baltosser, Greg Schmitt, and Rex Wahl proposes the following candidates for offices:

President: Charles A. Hundertmark
Vice President: James R. Travis
Secretary: Sue Huntington
Treasurer: Ross L. Teuber
Director-at-large: Kevin J. Zimmer

Dustin Huntington and Bill Stone are also directors-at-large, and their terms continue for another year.

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Although I have not used this space otherwise during my tenure, I will avail myself of this final opportunity as my term of office enters its last days. Although this is a "swan's song" of sorts, I will assure you that it does not represent the demise of anything other than a stint in an office of the Society. My interests in birdlife of New Mexico are as abiding and deep as ever, and this should extend well into the future. Moreover, I am still prepared to serve the New Mexico Ornithological Society in whatever capacity I can, although I still have questions about the organization's will to live—at least in terms of it being in a form that embodies my interests.

As you know, the Society was founded in 1962, and thus in another year it will be twenty years old. The basic tenets of the Society were established in the beginning, and they emphasized the documentation and publication of New Mexico ornithology in the most scientific manner possible. In this endeavor, I think that the Society has succeeded admirably, including in the issuance of its Field Notes, Bulletins, and other publications, and in the establishment of valuable archives, including bird reports, photographs, tapes, and breeding records.

The accumulation of these data has been the product of hundreds of cooperators, aided by a small group of dedicated officers, editors, and associates. The quantity of the data is enormous for a state with so few people, and the quality has generally been high. The syntheses have also appeared in quantity and been of quality, although we constantly strive to improve in both areas. The New Mexico Ornithological Society has reason to be proud of all its accomplishments, for these compare favorably with those of any state ornithological society in the nation. The question is: can we keep up the accomplishments?

Competent synthesizers of any kind of data are marked by several characteristics, including patience, drive, and a burning curiosity about their subject. In time comes depth of understanding and knowledge, but these cannot be achieved without conscious and prolonged effort. Just as no person can expect to play an instrument or sport well without practice, one cannot become knowledgeable without study of the facts. This truth is self-evident, and I do not mean to insult you by pointing it out here. Nevertheless, it is basic to my concern about the future of the Society. In my opinion, we may no longer have the dedication to produce sufficient synthesizers to do what the Society has always been dedicated to doing. If this is the case, then the organization's reasons for being may cease to be met.

If the New Mexico Ornithological Society cannot do what it was established for, and do it well, in my view it should either change or dissolve itself. To change is perhaps a more attractive alternative than dissolution. However, what could the Society become that would be unique and worthwhile? With the proliferation of Audubon Society chapters, which did not exist in New Mexico in 1962, any change in that direction by the New Mexico Ornithological

Society would seem ill-conceived. It is also clear that, if it cannot carry out present goals, the Society is unlikely to succeed by becoming more scientific. In my view, there are few plausible alternatives to staying what we now are as a society. If that is the case, and if we cannot more optimistically view the future, I would recommend dissolution--preferably in one thrust rather than gradually. If we are going to do it, let's get it over with.

Lest I be misunderstood, let me say that I am neither opposed to reasonable change nor that I am bent on dissolving the New Mexico Ornithological Society. I am sure that changes can be made for the better, but responsibility for change lies in the hands for those who would have us change. In other words, do not talk about change unless you are prepared to carry it out. And if change is so drastic that the Society ceases to be similar to what it is now, then expect some of us to go elsewhere with our interests in birds. If neither change nor a renewal of our dedication bring about a revitalization of the Society, then let us end things quickly and gracefully.

In my view, the Society's new administration will have as its major challenge the questions of the future of New Mexico Ornithological Society. If the Society is to be revitalized, then both change and rededication may be needed. More of you will have to become involved, especially if our founding concepts are to be carried forth into the future. Bird study, as the Society has embodied it, requires more than a recreational outlook on the subject. This outlook has served us well for almost twenty years, but whether it will go beyond is up to you.

John P. Hubbard

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mr. Hubbard:

You brought up two issues in the most recent NMOS bulletin: (1) Are members using the published information? Is the effort involved worth it? and (2) The possibility of a breeding atlas project for New Mexico. Regarding the former, I suspect that, just as one "doesn't miss the water until the well goes dry", the value of painstakingly-compiled records isn't always recognized until one needs the data and finds it isn't there. I often find my daily bird records tedious to keep, and an organization faces the same problem on a larger scale; but I am a firm believer in long-term research though the rewards are slow in coming, and the results not flashy (plus therefore not as attractive to granting agencies). Everyone now recognizes the importance of being able to mark individuals in a population in order to have as accurate a picture as possible of the biology of a species. The effort put into marking helps us overcome the limitations that we face when all of the animals "look alike". We're also limited (most of us) by relatively inefficient memory and by the inability to see into the future, but careful, consistent record-keeping can help overcome these limitations in an analogous way.

Of course, my own records are useless unless they're accessible to others, and that is where the importance of an organization like NMOS lies. The central and systematic organization of data is crucial to the data's being well-used. This may sound like a "librarian mentality", but that should be a positive image, since modern librarians are as much concerned with accessibility and retrievability of information as with making sure that the books are in order (or should be).

In the case of NMOS, I feel that the cost would have to be awfully high for me to say that the record-keeping and publishing isn't worth the time and effort. I like to know that my "isolated" observations can contribute to the larger picture, and I assume that other members receive the same pleasure from contributing, and I also like to know that fifteen years from now, when I want to look at the past distribution of a bird in New Mexico, the information may be there for the finding, thanks to the effort and organization of many individuals.

You can probably guess that I'm in favor of an atlas project. I participated in a similar endeavor in Massachusetts, sponsored by Massachusetts Audubon, and I'm also very impressed with the British Breeding Bird Atlas (which you may have seen)—it is an excellent model. One can put any number of overlays (displaying such variables as rainfall, temperature, plant distribution, human population, industry, et cetera) on top of the distribution for any species, and really have an amazing picture of ecological relationships. I can already envision many logistical problems for New Mexico: The combination of the large size of the state and the relatively few observers is the major one. Coverage will certainly be difficult. But because it's a fun project to be involved in--like a Christmas Count in slow motion--the same challenges to explore every inch of an area, to confirm a previously unconfirmed species, to add to the "list"*. It may take longer to complete in New Mexico than in the small eastern states, but I think it could be done.

Sincerely,
Miriam Axelrod

BANDING RESULTS AT CANDELARIA FARMS, 1979-1980

By C. A. Hundertmark

Candelaria Farms is an agricultural and woodland enclave in Albuquerque, New Mexico, which was recently purchased by the city for development as a nature center. Beginning in September 1979, with the assistance of 13 volunteers, I began banding operations at this site. Operations were conducted during fall, winter, and spring. We hope to continue banding through the nature center development period and into the years of initial operation of the center. During the first year, we banded 505 birds of 36 species (Table 1). While the majority of birds banded represented expected winter residents and migrants, a few unexpected encounters did arise. These included one almost-certainly winter-resident dark-lored White-crowned Sparrow (probably *Zonotrichia leucophrys oriantha*), a higher than expected proportion of Lincoln Sparrows, and both Savannah and Vesper sparrows, at or north of their expected winter range in the Rio Grande Valley (see Table 1 for other scientific names).

TABLE 1 : Species Banded by Season, 1979-80

Species	Sep		Dec	Apr	Total
	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>May</u>	
Mourning Dove (<i>Zenaida macroura</i>)				5	5
Common (Red-shafted) Flicker (<i>Colaptes auratus</i>)	1		4	4	9
Ash-throated Flycatcher (<i>Myiarchus cinerascens</i>)				1	1
Dusky Flycatcher (<i>Empidonax oberholseri</i>)				22	22
<i>Empidonax</i> (spp.)				4	4
Western Wood Pewee (<i>Contopus sordidulus</i>)				2	2
House Wren (<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>)				4	4
Bewick Wren (<i>Thryomanes bewickii</i>)	1		1		2
American Robin (<i>Turdus migratorius</i>)	12		27	26	67
Hermit Thrush (<i>Catharus guttatus</i>)	2	6	2	4	14
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (<i>Polioptila caerulea</i>)				2	2
Ruby-crowned Kinglet (<i>Regulus calendula</i>)	2	3	1	1	7
Warbling Vireo (<i>Vireo gilvus</i>)				1	1
Orange-crowned Warbler (<i>Vermivora celata</i>)	1			1	2
Yellow Warbler (<i>Dendroica petechia</i>)				2	2
Yellow-rumped (Audubon) Warbler (<i>Dendroica coronata</i>)				3	3
MacGillivray Warbler (<i>Oporornis tolmiei</i>)				13	13
Wilson Warbler (<i>Wilsonia pusilla</i>)				3	3
Western Meadowlark (<i>Sturnella neglecta</i>)			9		9
Red-winged Blackbird (<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>)			1		1
Northern (Bullock) Oriole (<i>Icterus galbula bullockii</i>)				1	1
Western Tanager (<i>Piranga ludoviciana</i>)				2	2
Black-headed Grosbeak (<i>Pheucticus melanocephalus</i>)	1			9	10
Blue Grosbeak (<i>Guiraca caerulea</i>)				3	3
Lazuli Bunting (<i>Passerina amoena</i>)				3	3
House Finch (<i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i>)	3				3
Green-tailed Towhee (<i>Pipilo chlorurus</i>)	1			2	3
Rufous-sided Towhee (<i>Pipilo erythrophthalmus</i>)		1		1	2
Savannah Sparrow (<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>)			115		115
Vesper Sparrow (<i>Poocetes gramineus</i>)			2	1	3
Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco (<i>Junco hyemalis</i>)	15	36	23		74
Gray-headed Junco (<i>Junco caniceps</i>)	1	7	1	1	10
Chipping Sparrow (<i>Spizella passerina</i>)	5		5		10
Brewer Sparrow (<i>Spizella breweri</i>)	2				2
White-crowned Sparrow (<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>)	10	22	28	14	74
Lincoln Sparrow (<i>Melospiza lincolnii</i>)			7		7
Song Sparrow (<i>Melospiza melodia</i>)		4	6		10
Totals	57	79	232	137	505

Candelaria Farms is located at the western end of Candelaria Road and abuts the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District drainage ditch. We banded in two separate wooded tracts and in two fallow grain fields. The southernmost wooded tract is bounded on the south by Campbell Road, on the west by a bikeway and drainage ditch, on the north by a tract of land owned by the Albuquerque Fraternal Order of Police, and on the east by a residential area. This tract is characterized by areas of Russian olive (*Elaeagnus austifolia*) woodland with a herbaceous understory, some stretches of cottonwood (*Populus wislizenii*) woodland with Russian olive understory, and a meadow area. Banding on this site was limited largely to the wooded areas. We spent only two days on this site, while far more time was spent on the two northern sites adjacent to Candelaria Road. The northern woodland site was not homogenous. It consisted of open cottonwood woodland with some Russian olive understory, especially along edges, small stands or rows predominantly of Russian olive, and an area dominated by herbaceous growth.

The second northern tract consisted of two fallow alfalfa fields separated by an irrigation ditch. The ditch banks supported a heavy growth of sunflowers (*Helianthus* sp.) and other herbaceous plants. The banks also support scattered elm (*Ulmus* sp.) saplings. A fuller description of habitat will be undertaken during the next year.

We banded on 33 days during a nine month period. Birds banded during September and October were presumed to be largely autumn migrants, although some (e.g. American Robin) may represent late summer birds and others (e.g. Dark-eyed Junco) are early winter arrivals. Birds banded during November represent late migrants (e.g. Hermit Thrush) or winter residents (Dark-eyed Junco, White-crowned Sparrow). Birds banded during December through March are presumed to be largely winter residents, while those banded during April and May are largely migrants (e.g. Dusky Flycatcher, House Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher) or summer residents (e.g. American Robin, Black-headed Grosbeak).

Our most interesting results appeared in the winter sparrow populations. Those results are summarized below.

Vesper Sparrow. We banded individuals on 26 January, 22 March, and 4 May. The first two were almost certainly wintering birds, and sight observations of this species during the winter period indicated their regular presence through the period. Hubbard (1970 *Revised check-list of birds of New Mexico*, N.M. Orn. Soc. Publ. No. 6) puts the known northern wintering limits for this species in the Rio Grande Valley in the vicinity of Socorro. The birds we banded were some 90 miles north of that limit. Photographs of all these birds were taken by various individuals.

White-crowned Sparrow. A total of 74 was banded over the nine month period. Most were of the Gambel race (*Z.i.gambelii*), which has light lores. However, four were dark-bred birds, presumably of the race breeding in the montane western United States. The latter were single birds banded as follows: 24 October (adult), 3 February (immature bird molting into adult plumage), 23 March (adult), and 4 May (adult plumage). The Gambel subspecies is the expected winter resident in northern and central New Mexico, while the other subspecies is known in the state at that season only north to the Bosque del Apache N.W.R. (Hubbard 1978, op. cit.). The 3 February bird was almost certainly wintering at Candelaria Farms. It might well have been lumped with our "subspecies unknown" birds, had it not been in molt--showing the bird's lores coming in black. All but the 23 March dark-lore birds were photographed.

One of our most astounding birds was the 4 May dark-bred White-crown. This bird had a missing right foot and left hind toe. Both injuries were healed. The proximal primaries and distal secondaries of both wings were severely worn into the form of an arch, suggesting that the bird was using its wings as crutches or for balance.

Lincoln Sparrow. We banded seven from early December through late March, i.e. on 2 December, 24 and 26 January, 23 February, and 15 (2) and 23 March. Hubbard (1978, op. cit.) calls this species casual in winter north of Socorro in the Rio Grande Valley. We saw this species in the area far less regularly than we saw Song Sparrows, yet we banded one more Lincoln than Song Sparrow during the winter period. The December and January occurrences of this species, together with recaptures of our 24 January bird on both 23 February and 4 April, suggest that these Birds were winter residents rather than early migrants. The species may be more regular and common in winter in the Valley than previously believed. Four of the seven individuals were photographed.

Conclusion

Our first nine months of banding at Candelaria Farms provides a baseline for future work. We hope to obtain additional data before the development of nature center facilities begins. It is likely that such development will alter winter and migrating populations to some degree. By the time those alterations occur, we should have a data base to make comparisons.

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to the Albuquerque Parks and Recreation Department and the New Mexico Parks Department for permission to band at the nature center site. Without the help of the following people in this field, this project would not have gotten off the ground: Toe Bidell, Carol Cochran, Dustin and Sue Huntington, Marjorie Jannotta, Jeremiah Johnson, James Karo, David Lange, Maurice Mackey, Elaine Sanchez, Ross Teuber, James Travis, and William Wallace, I am also indebted to John P. Hubbard of New Mexico Department of Game and Fish for continued guidance on procedures and identification.