

RIO BOSQUE NEWS

A newsletter reporting on events at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park

Center for Environmental Resource Management
University of Texas at El Paso



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DAY AT THE BOSQUE 2003

Join us **Saturday, February 8, 2003** for a special community event -- **Day at the Bosque 2003!** The flyer enclosed with this newsletter has all the details. Everyone interested in wildlife, native plants and the history of our river valley is invited to come to the Park from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. to learn about the Rio Bosque project and enjoy the Park's beauty.

Many educational displays will be set up to introduce the flora and fauna of the 372-acre park. Visitors can explore Rio Bosque at their own pace by walking an easy 1.5-mile nature trail. Knowledgeable guides will be stationed along the trail to point out details and answer questions. Longer (2.4-mile) guided tours are planned to begin at 10 a.m. and 12 Noon. Tents with tables and chairs will be available for picnicking, and restroom facilities will be provided. There will be a number of activities especially for kids, so bring the whole family!



Ducks on Wetland Cell 1; January 2, 2003

ON THE WILD SIDE

We are moving into the prime time for wintering waterbirds at the Park. Although numbers are down from last year, over 2000 ducks are now present.

Among the factors contributing to lower numbers this year: drought conditions in 2002 on Northern Prairie breeding grounds and relatively mild weather that has allowed birds to winter north of us.

Along with waterfowl, birds of prey are abundant now, especially Red-tailed Hawks and Northern Harriers. A number of birds that typically winter south of El Paso are also lingering at the Park. We are still seeing White-faced Ibis, Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet and Cave Swallow. The occasional active bullfrog, lizard, dragonfly and butterfly also testify to our mild winter weather.

The Park's vertebrate list keeps growing. New this past fall: yellow mud turtle and Steller's Jay. The turtle was expected. Normally, the jay would be a surprise, but not this year. Steller's Jays have been present throughout El Paso in unprecedented numbers this fall and winter.

FACILITIES UPDATE

We now have a self-guided tour along the Park's Wetland Trail. Be sure to pick up one of the tour brochures during the Day at the Bosque on

TOURS

Twice each month, UTEP offers free walking tours at the Park. Coming up:

9-11 a.m.	Sat., Jan. 11	Introductory Tour
3-5:30 p.m.	Sun., Jan. 19	Birds
3-5 p.m.	Sun., Feb. 2	Introductory
9 a.m.-noon	Sat., Feb. 22	Birds
3-5:30 p.m.	Sun., Mar. 2	Birds
9-11 a.m.	Sat., Mar. 8	Introductory

The meeting place is a bridge crossing Riverside Canal. To get there 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.

February 8. Numbered posts along the trail are keyed to information in the brochure. Thanks go to students at the David L. Carrasco Job Corps Center for their excellent work on these posts.

GRACIAS

Our community workday at the Park on January 18 (see below) will involve transplanting young cottonwoods from ponding areas on El Paso International Airport lands to the Park. Thanks go to the City of El Paso Parks and Recreation Department and to the Airport for making this project possible and to Cesars Pallets for providing the sawdust in which we'll bed the trees during transport to the Park.

GET INVOLVED!

You now have more ways to get directly involved in shaping the future of Rio Bosque! **Thursdays** are now volunteer days at the Park. Each Thursday, we work on projects needing volunteer help. Come any time; work as little or as long as you want. Call John Sproul (747-8663) for details.

Of course, we continue to have a community workday at the Park on the 3rd Saturday each month. Upcoming workdays:

- 9 a.m.-noon, Sat., Jan. 18
- 9 a.m.-noon, Sat., Feb. 15
- 9 a.m.-noon, Sat., Mar. 15

The meeting location is the same as for the tours: the bridge crossing Riverside Canal.

Thanks also go to Cesars Pallets, Epsom El Paso and the Woman's Department of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce for their recent generous donations in support of the Park.

FRIENDS OF THE RIO BOSQUE

Friends of the Rio Bosque is the volunteer support group for Rio Bosque Wetlands Park. It meets the 4th Thursday of every month from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in Room 411, Burges Hall, on the UTEP campus. Join us for the next meeting on **January 23**. The group will be preparing for the Day at the Bosque. We need volunteers in a number of areas to help make this event a success. To learn more: Mike Gaglio (490-8601) or John Sproul (747-8663).

Want to enhance your skills as a volunteer at Rio Bosque? On Saturday, **January 25**, the Friends will be hosting a training session on how to interact effectively with Park visitors. It takes place at the Chamizal National Memorial, 800 South San Marcial in El Paso, from 8 a.m. to Noon.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit us on the Web at:

<http://www.cerm.utep.edu/riobosque>

Want to be added to the mailing list for this newsletter or ask a question about Rio Bosque? Contact:

John Sproul
915-747-8663

jsroul@utep.edu

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