

# RIO BOSQUE NEWS

A newsletter reporting on events at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park

Center for Environmental Resource Management  
University of Texas at El Paso



No. 24

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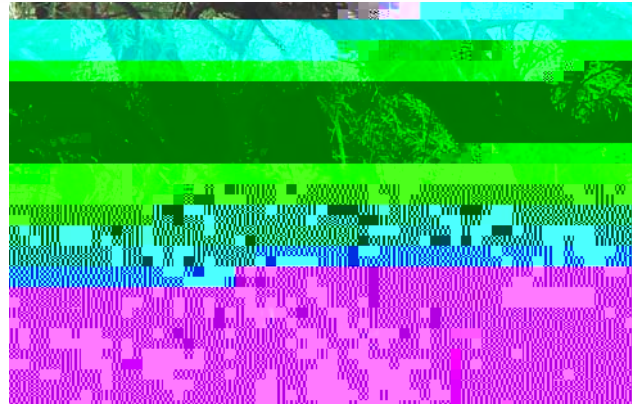
## VISITOR CENTER NEWS

Ever since its construction in 2004, we've been working to make the Park's visitor center fully operational. After a flurry of activity in recent months, we're almost there. Thanks to the City of El Paso's Parks and Recreation Department, the building now has electricity. Thanks to the El Paso/Trans-Pecos Audubon Society, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, we now have a water system in place. It both contributes to ecosystem maintenance and provides water to the visitor center's restrooms. And thanks to hard-working members of the Friends of the Rio Bosque, we have two new picnic tables under the ramada. There are still a few bugs to work out before the restrooms are operating. We hope to have good news soon regarding that crowning achievement. ✕

## A LONG-EARED SURPRISE

When we spotted a **Long-eared Owl** during bird surveys at the Park on April 29, it was a nice surprise but not totally shocking. Though it was late in the season, this species had overwintered in good numbers in the El Paso area this year.

The shock came several weeks later when we discovered a fledgling owl! It was the first nesting



Long-eared Owl along Bosque Trail, May 21, 2007  
(Bob Johnson).

record for the El Paso area in a long time. In June 1918, an immature bird was collected near Tornillo, Texas. Also, field notes from local birders indicate this species nested in 1934 and 1936 in a cottonwood bosque along the Rio Grande upriver from El Paso. The bosque was cleared when the river was channelized, and there are no more recent nesting records.

So, it was quite a surprise, but maybe we should have anticipated the possibility. Long-eared Owls tend to nest in dense tree stands next to open grasslands or shrublands, a habitat mix the Park certainly provides. ✕

## Friends of the Rio Bosque Membership Application

Name: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Bosque Buddy (12 and under)	\$4
Address: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$8
	<input type="checkbox"/> Senior (62+)	\$8
	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$10
	<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$15 Please

Friends of the Rio Bosque and mail to: Maria Trunk,  
Treasurer, Friends of the Rio Bosque, 1100 Kelly Way, El Paso, TX 79902.



### Next Meetings

Thurs., July 26  
Thurs., Aug 23  
Thurs., Sep 27  
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.  
411 Burges Hall  
UTEP  
Info: 915-545-5214

## GOOD WORK

As students of Rio Bosque history know, staggering quantities of broken glass and other debris accumulated at the Park in the past. Many volunteers helped remove this debris over the last decade. In April, Cub Scouts in **Pack 209** and students from **Henderson Middle School** joined the fray. Together, they gathered 2 pallet loads of broken glass and made an impressive difference along the Park's Bosque Trail.

Ecological restoration at the Park also got a shot in the arm recently from our dedicated volunteers. On April 24, a contingent of **UTEP Teacher Education** students, armed with saws and loppers, took dead aim at a stand of saltcedar in the Park's interior and reduced it to stumps and kindling. Then