

SPARROWS! SPARROWS! SPARROWS! SPARROWS!

This is your chance to see Baird's Sparrows and Grasshopper Sparrows up close and personal! Anyone who's interested in sparrows and can walk briskly across grasslands can help flush sparrows into mist nets. See secretive grassland birds in the hand.

WHAT? Study of the effects of the Ryan wild fire on wintering grassland birds (third year post fire). The 38,000-acre Ryan wild fire swept through the southern Sonoita Valley in April 2002, burning 90% of the Audubon Research Ranch, as well as much surrounding grassland and oak savannah foothills. This study is repeating previous protocols on the Research Ranch and an unburned BLM site to determine how this fire affects wintering grassland birds for several years after the fire. The study involves flushing and mist netting grassland birds, primarily sparrows, as well as other survey and vegetation measurement protocols. We need your help in flushing sparrows!

WHERE? Two sites in the Sonoita Valley – the Audubon Research Ranch and the Davis pasture on the BLM Las Cienegas RCA. Meeting places will be identified and directions provided.

WHEN? One Wednesday and Saturday in each of three months (January – March). See dates and locations below, and check your schedule.

CONTACT? Dr. Janet Ruth, U.S. Geological Survey, Research Ecologist; email: janet_ruth@usgs.gov; Note: email communication is preferable and will be accessible when I'm in Arizona as well. Phone: (w) 505-346-2870 Ext. 12 or (h) 505-890-4083; I will be reachable at these numbers through the end of December. After that, if you can't email me, you can reach me (during the field weeks) at the Audubon Research Ranch Bunk House at 520-455-4659, or leave a message at the headquarters office at 520-455-5522, but please don't inundate them with calls.

Please contact me if you are interested and let me know which dates you plan to attend. Provide an email address and home phone number if at all possible. This will help me determine whether I have sufficient bodies (or need to draft more volunteers). I will also know how to contact whom if some problem forces me to cancel a particular event at the last minute (some of you remember the rain and high winds of 2004). In other words, if you don't tell me you're coming or don't give me a phone number and I have to cancel, I won't be able to give you a call.

Winter 2005 Mist Netting Schedule

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|------------------------|------------------------|
| Wednesday, January 12 | Davis Pasture |
| Saturday, January 15 | Audubon Research Ranch |
| Saturday, February 12 | Davis Pasture |
| Wednesday, February 16 | Audubon Research Ranch |
| Wednesday, March 2 | Davis Pasture |
| Saturday, March 5 | Audubon Research Ranch |

Travel Directions to The Research Ranch

National Audubon Society Appleton-Whittell Research Ranch (TRR)
HC 1 Box 44, Elgin AZ 85611 520-455-5522 FAX: 520-455-9201

From Tucson: 80 minutes

0. If originating at Tucson International Airport: Drive north on Tucson Blvd for one mile; turn right at light onto Valencia (a Burger King is on the right corner); head east about five miles; and take I-10 heading east.
1. Travel east on I-10 for 20-plus miles to Exit 281 and turn right (south) onto Hwy 83 (toward Sonoita and Patagonia).
2. Travel south on Hwy 83 for 25 mountainous miles to Sonoita, cross Hwy 82 (an east-west hwy, which is 4-lane) and continue south.
3. Don't miss the next turn as Hwy 83 turns east just one block (1/3 mi) south of the Hwy 82-Hwy 83 intersection,
4. Stay on Hwy 83 (traveling east and then south) for another 3.7 miles.
5. Turn left (east) onto Elgin Road (within a quarter mile, you will pass a school on your right). Continue on Elgin Road, traveling east and occasionally south for 4.7 miles to reach Elgin, a small town of about 5 buildings.
6. Just 60 yards after passing the Winery (on your right) bear right (south) - the pavement turns into a dirt road. Do not bear left to cross the iron bridge.
7. After 0.7 of a mile, cross a cattle guard, then after 100 yds, take the left fork (a sign should point to the "Research Ranch").
8. After 2 miles, take the right fork toward the Research Ranch (the left fork would have taken you toward the Babocomari Ranch).
9. After 1.3 miles, enter the Research Ranch, proceed 0.4 of a mile, take the right fork and proceed 1.7 miles to the office. Do not take a right turn (after only 1.5 miles, leading to the Appleton house).
10. Dismount and water your horse.

From Sierra Vista: 45 minutes

1. Travel north on Hwy 90 for about 10 miles and turn left (west) onto Hwy 82.
2. If your weight is below 15 tons, proceed west for 10.7 miles, turn left (south) onto the Elgin road, and continue with instruction 3, in this section.
- 2b. If your weight is above 15 tons, proceed west for 19 miles to Sonoita, turn left (south) onto Hwy 83 and pick up at instruction 3 under "from Tucson."
3. Travel 4.6 miles (south and then west), cross the iron bridge into Elgin, turn left onto the dirt road, and pick up at instruction 7 under "from Tucson."

From New Mexico traveling west on I-10:

1. Turn south at Exit 302 onto Hwy 90 and travel south for 19 miles.
2. Turn right (west) onto Hwy 82 and pick up at instruction 2 or 2b under "from Sierra Vista."

From Nogales traveling north on Hwy 82: 60 minutes

1. At Sonoita, turn right (south) onto Hwy 83 and pick up at instruction 3 under "from Tucson."

Road Map to The Research Ranch

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