

# El Llanero

Winter 2009

The Newsletter of  
the Sibley Nature  
Center

## Nature Trail Improvements Continue

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The Sibley Nature Center's Nature Trail improvements are continuing and could be complete as early as this coming spring! The one million dollar plus project broke ground this past summer/fall and it seems that new features crop up every week. Improvements include a new room attached to the existing Learning Center that will overlook a new Wildlife Viewing Area, almost 2,000 feet of new trails, an outdoor Teaching Pavilion complete with fire circle, new gardens, parking, a barn, windmill, water features, trail shelters and interpretive signage including a special feature at the Center's entry

named "Icons of the Llano Estacado." A lot of exciting new programs are being planned along with the new Nature Trail features and these will be announced in future *El Llaneros* and in the media. We as a staff and board of directors are very excited to finally see these improvements coming along and we suspect, as Sibley members and contributors to this project, that you share our enthusiasm!

If plans follow through as scheduled we will be having a dedication of the new Sibley Nature Center Trails Improvements on



Have an absolutely wonderful Holiday Season!

Saturday, May 22nd. Of course, we will keep the media informed of our plans but you can rest assured that all of our members and other supporters will get a personal invitation to the event. If you have a chance, come out and see the progress of the project. we'll be happy to have you!

### Special points of interest:

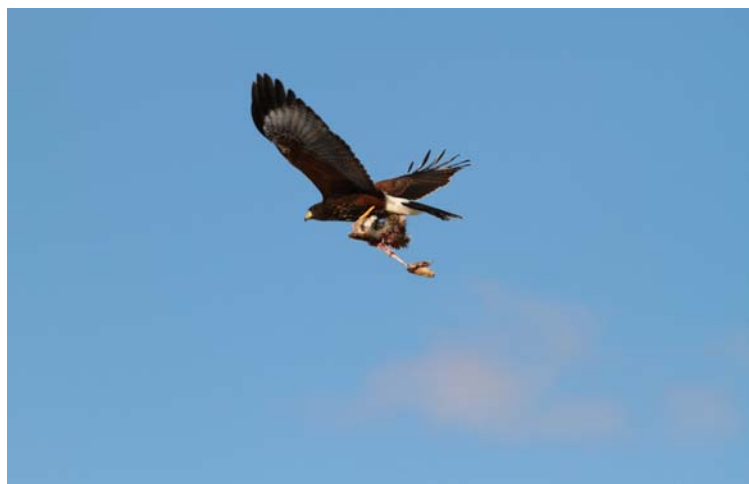
- \* Nature Trail Improvements Project on time and on budget!
- \* We have winter guests
- \* Join the new Sibley Photo Club!

## The "Hawk" Family requests the honor of your presence.....

Just a note to let you know that we apparently have a family of Harris's hawks spending the winter near our pond. We have seen as many as 4 to 7 that seem totally oblivious to our presence and allow us to get very near them for

photographs (see photograph on page 2)....so if you're looking for photographic opportunities or just want to visit the hawk family, this is a great opportunity and don't be surprised if you see a lot more on the trail. We hike

it on a regular basis and even at mid-day there is a lot of wildlife activity....you just have to keep your eyes open and your shutter release at the ready ... . H A P P Y SHOOTING!



One of our Harris's hawk family members bringing home supper! - photo by staff Richard Galle



Hanging out at the pond....

## Sibley Photo Club

Another great reason to have a Sibley Nature Center membership is the opportunity to be involved in the Sibley Photo Club. The club is a camera club wherein members share skills, knowledge, equipment, and the joy of photography. The club just recently started and membership is growing....the only requirement to be involved in the club is to be a Sibley member, or, in becoming a member of

the Club, you will automatically become a Sibley member! The club meets on Thursday nights once a month but many members also become involved with Sibley's Master

**"Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience."  
-Ralph Waldo Emerson**

Naturalists and the Permian Basin Outing Club on the weekends. Both venues are great vehicles to get out and progress your photographic skills and it all comes with your membership. We also have created a new wall to feature member photographs (if you will print them, we will display them). All photographs will be displayed for at least a month at Sibley so here's your chance to show off your skills.



Wildlife Viewing Room in Back of Learning Center



Outdoor Teaching Pavilion Northeast of Center

## 2010 Sibley Master Naturalist Program

The 2010 class of the Llano Estacado chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists will begin at 9 a.m. on January 9th at the Sibley Nature Center. Dr. Susan Tomlinson of Texas Tech University will present a workshop on Nature Journaling and sell her new book on the subject during a public presentation in the afternoon. Over a dozen folks have signed up for the year long and once a month class which features field trips to the eight major habitats of the Llano Estacado, plus other programs such as Dr. Tomlinson's. Students are

encouraged to participate in digital photography. This is a great way to learn about your home, so join us by sending an email to Burr Willisams at [bwilliams@sibleynaturecenter.org](mailto:bwilliams@sibleynaturecenter.org). The class costs \$75, but if you are already a member of the Sibley Nature Center the cost is only \$50! For this fee you will receive the state curriculum notebook. Master Naturalist members are required to do 40 hours of volunteer service (but the photography counts!).



## Membership Renewals

Most of you have recently received a membership renewal letter from Sibley re-announcing a new membership renewal method designed to minimize costs and staff time in notifying members of their renewal dates. The board of directors at Sibley made the decision to have all Sibley membership due dates occur at the same time of year, December 31st in this case, so that staff time and ef-

forts, i.e. funds, could be saved. Letters recently went out announcing the policy and due dates and renewals are coming in nicely. We want to remind you that memberships are very important to us...not only financially but in the overwhelming support that we always get from our membership. Not everything can be measured in dollars and cents and we enjoy a wonderful group of supporters

that continually amaze us in their willingness to support us in every way imaginable....(and don't forget the purchase discounts that you receive at businesses and here!

"Let us love winter, for it is the spring of genius."  
-Pietro Aretino

## Rambling items

- If you haven't already done so, please consider providing us your email so that we can deliver this newsletter and other notices if events, classes, etc. in a timely and cost efficient manner.
- Remember, as a Sibley member you can opt to be a member of the Permian Basin Outing Club, an outdoor adventure club at no additional cost....dual memberships. The club takes monthly trips to backpack, canoe, etc.

and is a service of the Sibley Nature Center.

- You will receive a 10% discount on any purchases, classes requiring a fee, or any other fee based program at the Sibley Nature Center when you show your Sibley membership card. This includes all non-sale items at Ski Skeller here in Midland!
- Consider joining Facebook and become a "friend" of Burr Williams. Over 450 people have

joined in the last 4 months. On it we post 2 photos a day of West Texas flora and fauna.

- Sibley sends a one-page newsletter, "This Week on the Llano Estacado," to 161 Midland ISD teachers and 20 out of town teachers. Each weekly issue features a photo or two and text about an organism that students are likely to see in the urban forest.

**The Newsletter of the  
Sibley Nature Center**

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We're on the web at:  
[www.sibleynaturecenter.org](http://www.sibleynaturecenter.org)

  
**The Sibley Nature Center**



**Widened, deepened, and newly lined Sibley Nature Trail Pond (still filling)**

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