



Friends of Candelaria Nature Preserve Winter 2025-26 Newsletter

WILDLIFE STORIES:

A breeding pair of Swainson's Hawks successfully fledged two at the Preserve in 2025. These young juveniles were observed flying and hunting at the Preserve before migrating south to winter habitat. Photo taken August 13, 2025 by Sara Griffith of adult and juvenile at the Preserve. (eBird, 2026)

Below, is a poem by New Mexico's second Poet Laureate, Lauren Camp (2023-25). She has upcoming events with several occurring in New Mexico [<https://laurencamp.com/events-with-lauren.html>]. Her new publication, *Is Is Enough* will be out in March, 2026.



Swainson's Hawk

by Lauren Camp

White throat and pointed wings, a perch
in Spanish bayonet, in shimmering oak, in pasture.

Small eyes tucking in to prey. I always forget
the haste of dismantling

the torn-off evidence:
leopard lizard, whiptail, kestrel, shrike.

While stars are raw, a raptor feathered to the toes
will eat grasped rats and voles,

collect the flapping bats. Another bone,
another funeral. The supply nearly endless.

I'm arriving on time to a table.
The mouth holds sorrows. Teeth cling to the soundless:

the leaves and route, the sunset rushes by.
Somewhere, a rabbit warm in the hawk's beak.

From *Took House* (Tupelo Press, 2020)

VOLUNTEER & RIO GRANDE RETURN STORIES:

The Bird House Event

The American Kestrel is 5.6x more frequent at the Preserve than the regional average. (eBird, February 2026).

So what do you do? You build bird houses! Over 20 Rio Grande Return employees and Friends volunteers built 10 bird houses, specifically designed for the American Kestrel.

The American Kestrel is a secondary cavity nester, meaning they do not create their own cavities in trees. A lack of suitable cavities in large trees can limit their breeding success.

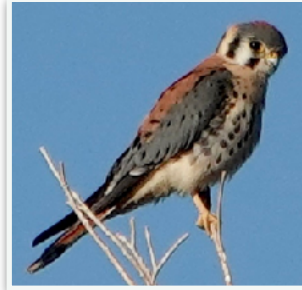


Photo by Sara Griffith, 17 Sept. 2025 @ the Preserve. Male. eBird



Photo by Merri R, 6 Aug. 2025 @ the Preserve. Fledgling. eBird

We put out a call to the Friends and were thrilled with the response. The wood had been cut prior to the volunteers arrival, so with much head scratching and figuring out the appropriate drill size, we worked in ad hoc groups and put together 10 beautiful homes for these worthy nesters.





While we do strive to remove kochia and tumbleweed from the Preserve prior to seed production, we 'catch up' during winter.

Local organizations like Anthropopulus Design + Planning pitched in for a morning helping us accomplish so many tasks. Who doesn't need to escape the computer on occasion and grab a sunny Albuquerque day?



FRIENDS OF CANDELARIA NATURE PRESERVE (FCNP) UPDATES:

Jeannie Allen is stepping down from her role as lead for the FCNP. We want to thank her for having the vision to create a Friends group and her successful efforts in creating a Board of individuals that have worked together with volunteers to accomplish tangible results for the benefit of migrating and resident animals. From organizing field volunteers to running community input forums, assisting the Open Space Division in sign development, fund raising for the Preserve, just to name a few. She has moved to Taos, but remains engaged with the Leadership Committee because the Preserve is a unique place for Burqueños to work together to help restore a functioning ecosystem in support of wildlife in the context of a changing climate.

We are restructuring the FCNP and continuing the work in support of this unique and special preserve. Most of the Leadership Committee is still committed, along with a few new folks. If you would like to be more involved, contact Ruth Salvaggio (salvaggi@email.unc.edu) or Augusta Farley (ducielrouge@gmail.com).

Monthly Walk & Volunteer Events

We continue to provide monthly walks on the last Friday of the month from 10am-noon. Opportunities to help out in the fields are on Mondays and Fridays from 9am-noon.

Donations

Steps to Donate

Go to: <https://openspacealliance.org/>

Click on "DONATE" at upper right. (This will take you to Member Planet.)

At right, in white letters on a blue background, click on "Donate Here".

Fill out the fields for Basic Information.

See also on that page, "Donation Designation". That is where you can select **Friends of Candelaria Nature Preserve** to receive your donation.

Fill out the fields for "Gift Information".

Click on "Pay Now", white text on a green background.

You will receive a confirmation by email.

AND THANK YOU!

Zoom Speaker Series

Our Zoom Speaker Series will continue quarterly. If you have ideas for content or specific people/organizations, please email us at:

friendsofcandelarianaturepres@gmail.com