



F303

ENTERED

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, U. S. ARMY AIR DEFENSE ARTILLERY CENTER AND FORT BLISS
1733 PLEASANTON ROAD
FORT BLISS, TEXAS 79916-6816

ATZC-DOE (200)

13 May 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Observations at McGregor Range Camp Sewage Pond

1. The McGregor Range Camp Sewage Pond is a notable wetland habitat surrounded by Chihuahuan desert shrubland. The nine acre pond provides cattail and open water habitats for species uncommon in desert locations. This provides for greater diversity in the area. The pond does serve as a recreation area for dove hunters in the fall, and for bird watchers throughout the year.

2..The most obvious species are the migratory waterfowl that frequent the ponds. The numbers are greatest in the winter. The diving and ducks are the most numerous species. Some of these migratory birds will nest here (American coots and ruddy ducks, possibly an occasional mallard, particularly the Mexican subspecies). Other migratory water birds observed include shorebirds (American avocets, killdeer, and spotted sandpiper), the killdeer probably nest at or in the vicinity of the pond. Barn swallows were observed foraging on flying insects over the pond. There are almost certainly several species of bats that forage over the pond at night. Bats will move miles from roost caves to feeding locations such as small ponds or stock tanks.

3..I have not seen any of the dabbling duck species (mallard, pintail, American widgeon, gadwall, cinnamon teal, green-winged teal, blue-winged teal, northern shoveler) feeding by dabbling, or "tipping up". Apparently the vast majority of the pond is too deep for dabbling to work. I did see northern shovelers and ruddy ducks filtering water on the surface, apparently foraging on insect larvae attached to the surface film, or possibly algae? Invertebrates in the mud may only be available to dabbling ducks in the shallow areas around the edge, which also has a thick growth of cattails, limiting access to much of that portion of the shallow portion of the pond. I have also observed diving by ruddy ducks and American coots. I only saw them diving in the vicinity of the inlet pipe during the 2 hour visit I made in April of 2003.

4. I have only recorded notes on two different informal species, and that totals 23 different species. I made a quick list of species I'd expect to utilize the area, including migratory periods, and it is at least 83 species. With consistent effort, I'm sure the species list would be at least 150 animals.

Brian A. Locke, Ph.D.
Wildlife Biologist
Fort Bliss Directorate of Environment