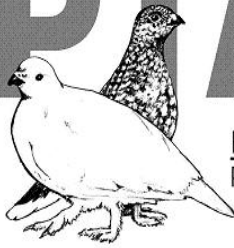


PTARMIGAN



FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY
P.O. Box 271968 • Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968 • www.fortnet.org/Audubon

Promoting the appreciation, conservation, and restoration of ecosystems,
focusing on birds and other wildlife, through education, participation, stewardship, and advocacy.

December 2009

Volume 40, Issue 14

Good Times at the Christmas Potluck and Slide Show

FCAS cordially invites all members to the annual Christmas potluck dinner on Thursday, Dec. 10. In lieu of a December program with a speaker, FCAS holds a potluck dinner and slide show. The "slide" show features some of our members who also are photographers. Like last year, the potluck dinner will be held in the large conference room of the Fort Collins Streets Department's historic sugar beet mill (directions follow).

Members are invited to bring a dish that would feed at least four people, any necessary serving utensils, and your own table service (plates, cups, silverware). Be prepared to take them home for cleaning. Members are asked to arrive shortly before 6:30 p.m. so your potluck dish can be set out in the serving line. We will start serving at 6:30 p.m. FCAS will provide beverages and napkins.

There is a PowerPoint projector in the facility. Please load your images on a flash drive (memory or jump stick). If anyone wants to show 35mm slides, let Bill Miller (5mcorp@comcast.net or 970-493-7693) know in advance and he will make a slide projector available.



Enjoying the 2007 potluck.

Directions:

The old sugar beet mill (Streets Department) at the SW corner of N. Lemay and E. Vine is accessed off of Lemay Ave. From the intersection of Lemay and E. Lincoln continue 0.4 miles north of that traffic light, to the second left (road opposite San Cristo Street).

From the intersection of Lemay and E. Vine, go south on Lemay, cross the railroad tracks, and take your first right.

From the parking lot at the Streets Department, proceed down the sidewalk on the left side of the building and enter the doorway on your right.

Officers and Committee Members Nominated

At its October 1, 2009 meeting, the FCAS Board formed a nominating committee consisting of Joel Hurmence, Bill Miller, and Ashley Waddell. Throughout October and November, the committee put together the following slate of people to fill the Board's list of elected and appointed positions:

Elected Positions:

Officers

Pres.	Karl Krahnke
Vice-Pres.	Bill Miller
President-elect	Bill Miller
Secretary	Scott Cobble
Treasurer	John Waddell

Directors

Heman Adams
Eric DeFonso
Ruth Grant
Ron Harden
Louise Parker
Liz Pruessner



Appointed Positions:

Conservation	Bill Miller
Education	Joann Thomas
Field Trips	Eric DeFonso
PR	Pat Hayward
Finance	Heman Adams
Membership	Liz Pruessner
Programs	Jessie Meschievitz

Publications	Carol Jones
Hospitality	Pat Adams
Birdathon	
AC Delegate	Bill Miller
Scholarship	Lisa Evans
Web Site	Joel Hurmence
Vol. Coordinator	Ashley Waddell
Email List Serv	Kaye Holman

Elections will take place at our annual meeting, on January 14, 2010. We are still looking for someone to be the Birdathon Coordinator, as well as for people to serve on various committees. We will accept nominations from the floor at the annual meeting for the elected positions.

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Field Trip Coordinator

Eric DeFonso
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Newsletter Editor

Carol Jones
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For other FCAS contacts visit www.fortnet.org/audubon/leadership.htm



Conservation Corner _____ by Bill Miller

"Tis not the shooting of the birds that will kill them off; it will be the loss of habitat."

-- John James Audubon

"Today more than ever before, life must be characterised by a sense of Universal responsibility."

-- Dalai Lama, supreme head of Tibetan Buddhism, 1987

Conservation Stamp Update by Gary Miller

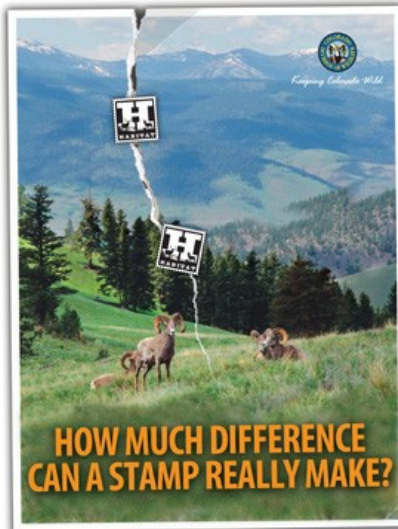
(Note: Gary Miller, retired Colorado Division of Wildlife (DOW) biologist, and Bill Miller represent FCAS at CDOW Conservation Forum meetings. In addition, Gary is a member of the governor's Habitat Advisory Committee, which provides recommendations on acquisitions and the use of habitat stamp funds).

The Conservation Forum, an informal group of conservation organizations providing advice and information exchange with the DOW, met in late October primarily to discuss wildlife habitat funding. In addition to their licenses, Colorado hunters and anglers are required to purchase a habitat stamp (revenue projections are for about \$8 million/year), with the funds directed toward habitat acquisition/protection (e.g., conservation easements, outright purchase, etc.). Over the past three years these monies (leveraged with GOCO and some other monies) have funded protection of about 120 square miles of some of the most important habitats in Colorado—not necessarily for hunting and fishing, but areas important to many species-at-risk. So far, non-license buyers have contributed only a

couple percent of the habitat revenues (it is no longer necessary to obtain a stamp before entering a state wildlife area). Conservation Forum members are exploring ways to financially engage the non-hunting/fishing community in these efforts.

Funding for wildlife has typically been derived from the consumptive users of wildlife—hunters and fishers. The non-consumptive users of wildlife (photographers, bird watchers, hikers, and campers) have contributed very little to the funding of the management of both game and non-game species of wildlife. In addition to license fees, consumptive users often pay user fees on hunting and fishing equipment that is collected at the federal level and distributed to state programs. One such program is the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act, popularly known as the Pittman-Robertson Act, which was approved by Congress and became law on July 1, 1938. The purpose of the act was to provide funding for the selection, restoration, rehabilitation, and improvement of wildlife habitat, wildlife management research, and the distribution of information produced by the projects.

Continued on Page 5



What Does the Education Chair Do?

I had to ask myself, “Just what does the education chair do?” at FCAS’s recent all day retreat. On a cold, snowy Saturday, 12 members of the board created a plan for moving forward. Under the guidance of Art Bavoso, a United Way consultant, we were asked to explain what we were all about. Surprisingly, we were tightly focused.



Harmony Voorhies (foreground) and family enjoy a “Second Saturday” nature walk at Reservoir Ridge.

The exercises gave me the opportunity to look critically at the education function in our chapter. After pondering, I realized that my activities in education are divided into four categories.

First, there is the education function for which I design hands-on educational exhibits for our three major education events. The exhibits target families and children, and include: Putnam Science Fair (March 6, 2010), Discovery Center’s Family Day (usually summer), and Northern Colorado Birding Fair (fourth Saturday in September).

Second, there are the “backyard birds” slide shows that are indoor events done by

request. We have done these shows for church groups, Lions Clubs, Rotary Clubs, Gardens at Spring Creek, Newcomers’ Garden Clubs, and the Aspen Club in both Loveland and Berthoud. Three board members give these programs: Bill Miller, Lynne Hull, and myself.

Third, we set up Audubon promotion exhibits by request at different events. This year we exhibited at Bath Nursery Bird Days, JAX Film Festival in Fort Collins and Loveland, and a Gardens at Spring Creek event.

Fourth, over the past two years, I’ve done the second Saturday and Thursday morning nature walks at the High Plains Environmental Center. These events are family friendly and designed to include anyone with disabilities; however, these two events have ended. Eric Defonso, our field trip coordinator, and I are working together to create a complete slate of field trips that will involve all categories of birders, and even some classes like “birding by sound” or a trip to Crow Valley to hear the morning chorus.

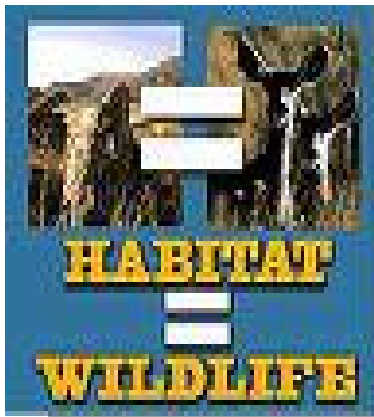
This dissection of my function allows me to ask for volunteers on specific levels. If you want to work with children and/or adults, you can volunteer to be an education host; to give slide shows and answer questions about birds, you can volunteer as a program host; and to manage an FCAS exhibit for a function, you can volunteer to be an exhibit host. To make it easy for you to decide, I’m writing job descriptions that will be posted on our Web site.

I’m also working on the introduction of our newest education effort: River Watch. Look for information in the January newsletter! When a retreat is this productive, I do not begrudge my cold, snowy Saturday spent working.



Funds are derived from an 11 percent federal excise tax on sporting arms, ammunition, and archery equipment, and a 10 percent tax on handguns. The funds are collected directly from the manufacturers by the Department of the Treasury and are apportioned each year to the states and territorial areas by the Department of the Interior. Appropriate state agencies are the only entities eligible to receive grant funds and their shares are determined by a formula that considers the total area of the state and the number of licensed hunters in the state. (Ref: <http://permanent.access.gpo.gov/lps52835/federalaid.fws.gov/wr/fawr.html>)

At the other end of the spectrum, efforts to manage threatened or endangered wildlife are funded through federal and state dollars. Unfortunately there is a lack of secure, reliable, and adequate funding for the wildlife in the middle—the nearly 1800 species that are neither hunted or fished, nor threatened or endangered. These species, because they have no dedicated funding source, currently receive only five percent of the money allocated for wildlife.



In 1995, the Fish and Wildlife Diversity Funding Initiative, nicknamed “Teaming with Wildlife,” was proposed and would provide a national funding source for wildlife conserva-

tion, outdoor recreation, and environmental education that would be reliable and dedicated to these purposes. The program would add a modest surcharge, never to exceed five percent of the manufacturer's cost, to the wholesale prices of out-door recreation equipment such as tents, binoculars, and mountain

bikes, as well as wildlife-oriented merchandise like birdseed and field guides. Apparently the Teaming with Wildlife initiative never was acted upon.

The good news is that the Teaming with Wildlife initiative is still around and kicking. A bill was introduced in March 2009 to amend the Pittman-Robertson Act to en-



dure adequate funding for conservation and restoration of wildlife, as well as for other purposes. The bad news is that the bill, on March 3, 2009, was referred to Senate committee where it was read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works. My assumption is that, given our current national economic climate, health care, and two wars, this bill is going to be overlooked until it becomes necessary to re-introduce it at a later date.

The net effect is that non-game wildlife that does not fall into the threatened and/or endangered status is still woefully underfunded. That is where efforts such as the Colorado Habitat Stamp program can help. While it is no longer required for non-hunters or fishers to purchase a habitat stamp to legally enter DOW management areas, it still makes sense to purchase the stamp to do your part to support the wildlife we all enjoy, regardless of where it is found.

Currently, habitat stamps can be purchased wherever hunting and fishing license are sold, as well as at the DOW's central and regional offices, including the Fort Collins office on West Prospect. Please consider supporting wildlife in this small way. Purchase a wildlife habitat stamp!



Christmas Bird Count



The Fort Collins Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is one of the oldest in Colorado and has the distinction of being the longest consecutive CBC in the state. The first Fort Collins count was conducted in 1947 with just two counters. Today, dozens of participants take part in teams assigned to census all of the birds with specific area of the 177-square mile count circle during daylight hours on the count day. Less adventurous souls are encouraged to count the birds visiting the feeders in their neighborhoods, but must register in advance for special instructions. Consult the map on our Web site to determine if your bird feeder is located within the count area: (http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon/activities/christmas_bird_count/images/fc_cbc_map.htm).

We traditionally hold the count on the first Saturday of the CBC period, which this year is December 19. Sunny, mild, blizzard, or bone-chilling cold—the count goes on as planned. Owls are counted pre-dawn by a small group of dedicated "owlers" each year. FCAS sponsors the entire event, paying the \$5 dinner for the weary participants while the day's totals are compiled on a projected computer screen for all to appreciate the trends taking place in the local area.



Some recent winter bird population trends have been the recovery of the West Nile virus avian victims, including golden-crowned kinglets, crows, magpies, and chickadees, and the explosive growth of the Eurasian collared-dove. Declining species include ferruginous hawk, rough-legged hawk, and prairie falcon.

To sign up for the 2009 Fort Collins CBC, or to register as a feeder-watcher, contact our CBC compiler, Nick Komar at 970-449-3645 or quetzal65@comcast.net.

The Loveland CBC will be held Friday, January 1, 2010. Those not already assigned to an area (or who want to anyway) will meet at the Starbucks at 1317 Eagle Dr. just west of Taft and SW 14th at 7:30 a.m. At the end of the day, around 5 p.m., we will meet at the Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch for the compilation dinner. Contact Connie Kogler, zblueheron@gmail.com, to sign up.

FCAS Pocket Guide to Local Birds

Is available at the following retailers who support our organization with the sales:

Wild Birds Unlimited
3636 S. College Ave
Ste. C
(970) 225-2557

Jax Outdoor Gear
1200 N. College
(970) 221-0544

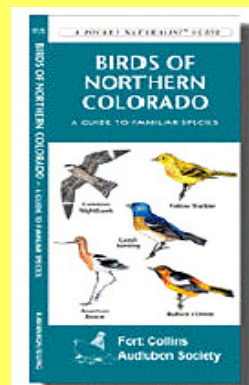
Bath Garden Center & Nursery
2000 E. Prospect
(970) 484-5022

Jax Farm & Ranch
1000 N. Hwy. 287
(970) 484-2221

Ranch-Way Feeds
546 Willow St.
(970) 482-1662

Matter Book Store/
Bean Cycle Coffee
144 N. College
(970) 472-4284

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Upcoming Field Trips



All field trips are free of charge (unless otherwise noted) and open to the public. All experience levels are welcome. Participants should dress appropriately for the weather. Bring snacks or lunch, water, binoculars, and spotting scopes. Carpooling is encouraged. A \$3.00 (unless otherwise specified) contribution per passenger to the driver is suggested. Visit www.fortnet.org/Audubon for more information. For all field trips and surveys, please contact the trip leader for sign up and for trip details.

Dec. 12 and 13, Sunday. Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Denise Bretting (dbretting@swloveland.com, work: 669-1185, home: 669-8095). Meet at 7:00 a.m. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the city of Fort Collins. All levels welcomed and encouraged!

Dec. 19, Saturday, Fort Collins Christmas Bird Count. Compiler: Nick Komar (quetzal65@comcast.net).

Read article on Page 6 or contact Nick Komar for more information on how to participate.

Dec. 19, Saturday, Rocky Mountain National Park Christmas Bird Count. Compiler: Scott Roederer. Participants meet at 8 a.m. at RMNP Headquarters. A compilation dinner follows the count.

Please email os-prey@estesvalley.net by Dec. 15 to assure a spot on a team.

Dec. 26, Saturday, Rawhide Energy Plant Christmas Bird Count. Compiler: Douglas Kibbe (303-551-2475, dpkibbe@msn.com).

Meet at visitors overlook at 8 a.m.

Jan. 1, 2010, Friday, Loveland Christmas Bird Count. Compiler: Connie Kogler (zblueheron@gmail.com). Please pre-register. All levels of birders are welcome to join this growing CBC. We have a variety of interesting habitats including plains agriculture, suburban ornamental landscape, reservoirs, and lower Rocky Mountain foothills. Highlight species include Trumpeter swan, gulls, waxwings, and sometimes a northern pygmy owl.

Jan. 9, 2010, Saturday, Winter Mountain Birds. Leader: Connie Kogler (zblueheron@gmail.com). Meet at the Starbucks on Eagle Drive in Loveland (SW corner of Taft and SW 14th) at 7:30 a.m. and car pool from there. Our first stop will be Ward, Colo., then Fawnbrook Inn, Allenspark, and finally to Estes Park. This will be an all day trip with

some walking involved. Please be prepared for the weather. I would like to arrange drivers in advance, so please contact me if you want to drive. Only blizzard conditions will postpone this trip. We will stop for a hot lunch at a restaurant in Estes Park. Expect to be back in Loveland late afternoon.

Jan. 10, 2010, Sunday, Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Denise Bretting

(dbretting@swloveland.com, work: 669-1185, home: 669-8095). Meet at 7 a.m. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the city of Fort Collins. All levels welcomed and encouraged.

Feb. 2, 2010, Saturday, Boulder Area Birding. Leader: Ted Floyd (tedfloyd57@hotmail.com). Join Ted Floyd, editor of *Birding* magazine, for a leisurely morning of birding around Boulder County. We'll go where the birds are! Meet at Walden Ponds. If there is open water on the reservoirs, we'll check it out; if not, we'll bird the foothills, feeders, and riparian strips. Dress for the weather, expect to do some carpooling, and get ready for lots of fun.





Fort Collins Audubon Society
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Ptarmigan Goes Paperless

Beginning January 2010, the Fort Collins Audubon Society will offer the Ptarmigan monthly newsletter primarily ONLINE.

A monthly e-mail announcement will be sent out when the newsletter is posted on the website.

Please let us know your preference by one of the following:

EMAIL: FortCollinsAudubonMembership@gmail.com

PHONE: 970-490-2473

MAIL: send this form to FCAS PO Box 271968, Ft.Collins, CO 80527-1968

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