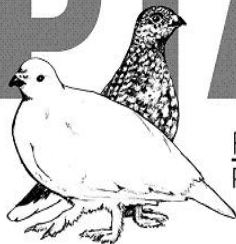


PTARMIGAN



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.

September 2010

Volume 41, Issue 6

Dragonflies and Damselflies of Colorado

Do you know a Red-tailed Hawk from a Meadowhawk? This presentation, by David Leatherman, will be about the wonderful dragonflies and damselflies of Colorado (aka the members of the Order Odonata, or “odes”). Our state, while not as diverse as other locales like the Southeast, has over 100 species of odes to see and study. The talk’s focus will be Larimer County species, but a few special gems from elsewhere will be included.

David Leatherman, long time birder and forest entomologist, became hooked on

odes about two years ago and is thoroughly addicted. Attendees are warned—this could happen to you!

Join us and come learn about the fascinating bluets, dancers, snaketails, skimmers, and more!

REMINDER: The Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Drive, is the new location for all upcoming Fort Collins Audubon Society Thursday evening programs in 2010. We will be located in Multi-Purpose Room 3 at the Center.



Paddle-tailed Darner by David Leatherman.

Looking ahead to upcoming FCAS programs:

October 14: Jon “Hawk” Stravers, Driftless Area Coordinator for Audubon’s Mississippi River Initiative. Jon will speak on monitoring projects involving Red-shouldered Hawks and other birds, and the migration of raptors along the Upper Mississippi River. He also will relate stories of doing this work by listening to and interpreting the language of the birds.

November 11: Nathan Pieplow, sound recordist and expert birder, will speak on bird sounds.

Thursday Evening Program September 9, 2010

◆ New Location ◆

**Fort Collins Senior Center
Room 3
1200 Raintree Drive
Social Gathering: 7:00 p.m.
Program: 7:30 p.m.**

6th Annual Northern Colorado Birding Fair

The Northern Colorado Birding Fair is a free day of fun and learning for the whole family held each year at Fossil Creek Regional Open Space where visitors can celebrate the sights and sounds of birding in the region. Bring the whole family and participate in hands-on birding activities, watch a presentation about birds, or build up your birding skills with an in-depth clinic. This year's fair will feature a mist netting demonstration and field trips to great birding areas—some of which aren't even open to the public yet! A full schedule can be found at http://www.co.larimer.co.us/parks/birding_fair.htm

FCAS is a partner in presenting the fair. Please direct any questions about the fair to Rob Novak at 970-679-4561 or rnovak@larimer.org.



Saturday, September 25
7 a.m. — 3 p.m.
Fossil Creek Regional
Open Space
On Carpenter Road
1 mile West of I-25 at
Windsor Exit

Upcoming Elections

Each year at this time FCAS establishes a nominating committee to identify candidates for the four elected positions of president, vice-president, secretary, and treasury; and for six directors at large. If you would be interested in serving on the nominating committee please call either Joann Thomas at 970-482-7125 or Bill Miller at 970-493-7693.

Your participation is appreciated!

Field Trips

All FCAS field trips are free of charge (unless otherwise noted) and open to the public. All experience levels are welcome. Visit www.fortnet.org/Audubon for a list of all upcoming field trips and details.

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



Whooh is the Flammulated Owl?

We sat quietly on wet logs, clad in fleece jackets --not nylon, which would swish-swish too loudly--sprayed with insect repellent, and listening carefully for any sound that indicates the owls are nearby. As the twilight lengthens and our eyes adjusted to the darkening sky, we heard feeding calls coming from a hole about 30 feet above the ground in the Aspen tree directly in front of us.

We had not found the nest by accident. Kevin Cook, leader of our week-long birding seminar, had carefully scoured the woods a week earlier to find it. We were there at 8:30 p.m. on a Monday night, the first of three excursions. By 8:50 p.m., the male made his appearance, bringing a large moth to feed his owlets.

The Flammulated Owl is a tiny owl, weighing only about two ounces. Six to seven inches tall, with a wing span of 16 inches, the insectivorous Flammulated Owl eats moths, beetles, and grasshoppers. Catching them in the air, on leaves, or on the ground, the male feeds the female as she incubates her eggs. The female then joins the male in feeding the nestlings through fledging.

As an insectivore, this owl must migrate as its food supply dwindles in the fall. It spends the winter in Mexico, returning to the western montane forest by late April to early May. The male finds a hole excavated by a woodpecker or sap-

sucker, claims it, and invites a female in to inspect it.

Pairs are monogamous and will re-mate if both male and female of a pair return to the previous nest. After mating, the female lays two to four eggs. Incubation is 21 to 24 days with nestlings fledging at about 25 days.

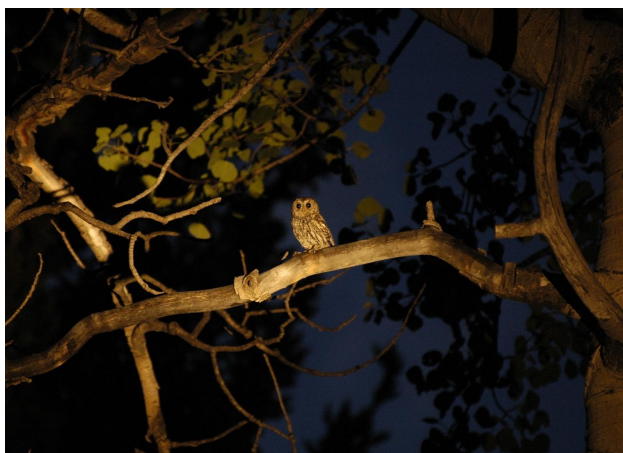
All of these facts do not begin to reflect the excitement of seeing a pair of owls feeding their young "fuzzballs" with dark marble eyes as they peer over the edge of the hole. Luckily we were

accompanied by Deborah Cowan, a photographer, who recorded both the male Flammulated Owl and the owlets.

The second night one of the owlets fledged, fluttering down in a soft float to the ground. The third night both owlets had fledged and the parents were busy keeping the demanding fledglings fed. That night we spotted both the female, who is larger than the

male, and the male in a tree right above us.

Walking back to the van through the damp forest, I wondered how many birders got to see what we'd witnessed. Not many, I bet. What a privilege! What a wonder! This bird is named Flammulated because its coloration mimics flames, but for me it's a Flammulated Owl because it lights the imagination and inspires the quest to find new birds in more obscure habitats. We only have to be willing to look and learn!



Flammulated Owl by Deborah Cowan.

Francesca Berger
Douglas & Virginia Doty
Vicki Ellis
Alan Godwin
Michelle Haefele
William J. Henderson
Sandra Hunter

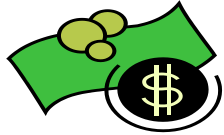
FCAS Welcomes New and Renewing Members

Barbara Hyink
Judy McKenna
Mike Knowles
Kenneth Kulas
Adele La Riviere
Paul T. Lathrop
France Lipp
Michele Mandeville
Cynthia L. McDonald
Irene & Fred Moose
Paul A. Opler
Elizabeth Pruessner
Randall K. Roberts
Carol Seemueller

Linda Smith
Rafael Tello
Henry P. Thode III
Deborah Valentine
George Van Arsdale
Ann Washnock

Thank you for your support and membership!





Financial Realities: How National and Local Chapters are Funded

By Bill Miller, Vice-President

Most likely, you are painfully aware of the role that money plays in our nation's political system. Money affects virtually everything, from the influence exerted on our elected officials by highly paid lobbyists to the obscene amounts of money that corporations will soon be spending to influence elections following the recent U.S. Supreme Court *Citizens United* decision.¹ Closer to home, money also plays a vital role in determining the vitality of non-profit organizations, including FCAS.

It has become obvious that there is a lack of understanding among most of our members pertaining to the relationship between the National Audubon Society (NAS) and local Audubon chapters and their respective membership dues. The following will identify the various Audubon organizations, clarify the intricacies of their relationships to each other, and explain the changes soon to be implemented by FCAS.

Audubon organizations:

Basically, there are four types of organizations within the Audubon movement, the collective name for the more than 500 Audubon clubs, societies, and organizations in North America. Plus there are some independent organizations that are not part of the movement, but which contain "Audubon" in their names. At the top is the NAS, followed by three tiers of organizations.

The second tier consists of the Audubon state offices. Located in about 24 states, they were established by NAS as extensions of the national organization and are staffed by individuals that have been hired by, and report directly to, NAS. State offices may, or may not, have their own membership programs. Some state offices may operate one or more nature centers and may provide limited support to local chapters. Colorado has a state office, Audubon Colorado (<http://co.audubon.org/>), located in Boulder. State of-

fices conduct their own fund-raising campaigns, independently of NAS, and also initiate and manage state or national conservation campaigns. For example, Audubon Colorado oversees the Audubon-led efforts to monitor and protect the Gunnison Grouse in western Colorado.

The third tier consists of the independent state Audubon societies. These were actually the first Audubon organizations to form.

Examples are Massachusetts Audubon and Maine Audubon. In 1901, many of the state-based Audubon societies united to form a loose alliance called the "National Committee of the Audubon Societies of America" in order to have greater national political clout. In 1905, the National Committee incorporated as the "National Association of Audubon Societies for the Protection of Wild Birds and Animals." In 1940 the name of the organization was changed to National Audubon Society.²

The last tier consists of the local chapters. For the most part, these are independent, non-profit organizations affiliated with either NAS or the independent state Audubon societies. Independent chapters have the freedom to follow their own game plan as opposed to following the philosophy of the higher organization(s).

There are other organizations that use "Audubon" in their name, but are not affiliated in any sense with NAS, its state offices, or the independent state Audubon organizations. They include groups such as Audubon International, which concerns itself with golf courses (<http://hillcountrywater.org/AudubonInternational.htm>). Locally, there is the Foothills Audubon Club that meets in Berthoud, but has no affiliation with NAS or Audubon Colorado.



(Continued on Page 5)



(Continued from Page 4)

Memberships:

Membership in NAS is obtained in one of two ways: directly with NAS or through one of its affiliated organizations. It is important to note that in the beginning, state organizations brought members to the national organization after the "National Association of Audubon Societies" was established in 1905.

The establishment of the unified national Audubon group simplified membership services. NAS was able to maintain the membership records and handled the bulk of the recruiting, for itself and its affiliates. For years, membership in NAS was advertised to automatically include membership in the nearest local chapter. All dues were collected by NAS, but a portion was returned to the chapters to support their activities. In return for its share of the dues collected, NAS provided a high-quality magazine, advocacy staff in Washington to campaign for important conservation issues, recruitment and renewal mailings, and membership record keeping for chapters. Chapters, predominantly staffed and run by volunteers, provided a newsletter, local advocacy, and face-to-face contact with the public through programs and field trips.³

A major change that negatively affected chapters was NAS' unilateral decision to increase profits by reducing, and then eliminating, the system of dues-sharing. In 2000, chapters received \$5.50 per member; it was reduced to \$4.12 in 2001, \$2.75 in 2002, and would have been eliminated totally without vigorous protest from chapters. NAS leveled the dues at \$2.75 per member, but even the \$5.50 amount generally was not sufficient to cover the annual costs of a newsletter. The NAS delivered a final blow when it stopped advertising that NAS membership would include local chapter membership.

It is confusing for members to understand what they are entitled to as a NAS member. If a chapter recruits a member to NAS, the chapter is refunded the first year of dues. After that, other

than the baseline funding, the chapter gets no other portion of the member's NAS dues. Many chapters, including FCAS, continued to service members recruited by NAS with a chapter newsletter even though no longer required to do so. But this has become a financial drain on the chapters.

Changes to membership:

For several years, FCAS has offered a chapter membership for \$15. Chapter memberships will soon increase to \$20 if you receive the *Ptarmigan* newsletter electronically and to \$30 if you receive the *Ptarmigan* in hardcopy form. We will still subscribe people to NAS for their initial membership, but at the NAS rates. After that, NAS renewals will come directly from NAS. If

the data that we receive monthly from NAS indicates that a person is a member of NAS only, then we will send them an offer to become a chapter member. If they opt to become a chapter member, they will

receive the *Ptarmigan*; otherwise they will be dropped from the *Ptarmigan* mailing list after a reasonable period of trying to convince them to become a direct chapter supporter.

The reality is that chapters have to reduce their costs if they are going to remain financially afloat. With printing and postage rates continuing to escalate it is critical to control the chapter's expenses. The *Ptarmigan* makes up over half of the chapter's total annual expenses and we are looking for ways to reduce our expenses. We hope you enjoy the *Ptarmigan*, but let us know if you want to be removed from the mailing list.

References:

- 1)http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/22/us/politics/22scotus.html?_r=2
- 2)<http://www.answers.com/topic/national-audubon-society>
- 3)<http://www.washingtoncrossingaudubon.org/pages/chapter/news0324.htm>



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Fort Collins Audubon Society
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Fort Collins, CO
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Membership Application

Join Fort Collins Audubon Society (FCAS), National Audubon Society (NAS), or both. Check all applicable::

☐ **New or renewing FCAS Chapter Member** \$20
(Receive the *Ptarmigan* by email)

☐ **New or Renewing FCAS Chapter Member** \$30
(Receive the *Ptarmigan* by postal mail)

☐ **Additional Support for FCAS's Mission** \$_____

☐ **New NAS Member** \$20
(Receive *Audubon* magazine by postal mail)

☐ **Renewing NAS Member** \$35
(Receive *Audubon* magazine by postal mail)

Name:_____

Address:_____

City:_____ State:_____

Zip:_____

Phone #:_____

Email:_____

Total Enclosed \$_____

Please make checks payable to FCAS and mail with this form to:
Fort Collins Audubon Society, P.O. Box 271968, Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968
Membership applications may be completed online at: www.fortnet.org/Audubon