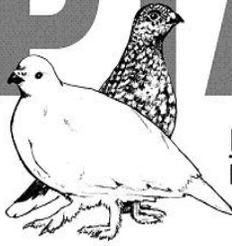


PTARMIGAN



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.

February 2011

Volume 42, Issue 2

Bear Management Challenges in the New West

Presented by

Mark Leslie, Colorado Division of Wildlife

Thursday Evening Program – February 10, 2011

Fort Collins Senior Center-Multi-Use Room

1200 Raintree Drive

Social Gathering: 7:00 p.m.; Program: 7:30 p.m.

Mark Leslie, Area Wildlife Manager for the Colorado Division of Wildlife (DOW), will present a program on management issues with bears and people in the “new” West. Mark has worked for the Colorado DOW for 24 years, first as a District Wildlife Manager in La Junta and Fort Collins, then as the Division Coordinator for



Photo provided by Mark Leslie, Colorado Division of Wildlife

game damage and captive wildlife issues.

Discussion and questions are encouraged and welcomed at this program. We hope you will join us for this informative evening at the Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Drive at 7 p.m., Feb. 10.

Changes in Chapter Membership Policy

Because of our limited resources and to simplify things, FCAS is switching to an annual basis for our membership. This means that renewals will now be due at the beginning of the year. This change will reduce the time and expense of mailing out renewal notifications on a monthly basis. If you took out a chapter membership or renewed in the months of September through December of 2010, your renewal date will be January 2012. All other chapter memberships are due for renewal in January 2011. If you have any questions about your status please send an email to fortcollinsaudubonmembership@gmail.com or phone 484-4371.

President's Corner

by Bill Miller

I find myself with the dubious pleasure of writing from two perspectives this month (and for the next 23 months, for that matter). For those who so noticed, we had an election of officers and directors on Jan. 13, 2011, at which I was elected to serve as President of FCAS for 2011-2012. I am no stranger to the position, having served twice before in that capacity.

What does concern me about serving for a third term is that volunteer organizations can become "ingrown," so to speak. The vitality of such organizations can be boosted considerably by the addition of new volunteers to the governing board, as they often provide ideas that can become the basis for an organization to "rethink" itself. As of the recent elections, we are pleased to have four new Directors-at-Large: Rich Fisher, Hildy Morgan, Rich Roberts, and Paul Opler. Paul is not exactly new; he served on the FCAS Board in the 1980s and early 1990s. However, the organization has changed considerably during his absence so it might seem to him that he is "new."

While the addition of four new directors is welcomed as good news, we still have two critical

vacancies that need filling: Field Trip Coordinator and Public Relations Coordinator. The Field Trip Coordinator's position is described in more detail under "Upcoming Field Trips."

The Public Relations Coordinator is responsible for sending out publicity about our programs and field trips to media in northern Colorado. This requires about four to six hours per month. This individual would forward our program and field trip announcements primarily to daily and weekly newspapers. An energetic person also could provide this information to local radio stations.

Our bylaws allow up to six Directors-at-Large, so we can still accept one more person. Directors' positions are generally considered to be learning positions that allow a person to become familiar with the organization. Directors are welcome to become involved in the business of FCAS at whatever level they wish.

If you think you might be able to help FCAS with one of these positions, contact me at: Bill Miller, 5mcorp@comcast.net, 970-493-7693.

FCAS Board Strategic Planning Retreat:

At the January 6 FCAS Board meeting, it was announced that the FCAS Board will schedule a strategic planning retreat. The specifics of the time and date still need to be finalized, pending board members' availability, but it may occur as early as the last weekend in January. Some of the topics to be visited include: Board vacancies, Junior Audubon Club, and chapter finances.

The planning retreat will be held at the Avery Carriage House, located north of the Avery House. The retreat is open to any interested members.



Program Meeting Location

At the January 6 FCAS Board meeting, the Board decided to continue to hold our program meetings at the Senior Center. There were two underlying motivators: room rental rates are less than what the Lincoln Center has announced, and the parking situation is much easier at the Senior Center than at the Lincoln Center.

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For other FCAS contacts visit www.fortnet.org/



Conservation Corner _____ by Bill Miller

“This is the first age that’s ever paid much attention to the future, which is a little ironic since we may not have one.”

-- Sir Arthur Charles Clarke (1917–2008) was a British author, inventor, and futurist.

“The road to the future leads us smack into the wall. We simply ricochet off the alternatives that destiny offers: a demographic explosion that triggers social chaos and spreads death, nuclear delirium and the quasi-annihilation of the species... Our survival is no more than a question of 25, 50, or perhaps 100 years.”

-- Jacques Cousteau in his autobiography, “Man, Octopus and Orchid,” published shortly after his death in 1997.

2011 Birdathon:

At its recent meeting, the FCAS Board set Saturday, May 14, as the date for its principal fund raising effort, the annual Birdathon. This annual event is a fun-filled day for participants, and is a good way for less skilled birders to go out with more experienced birders to enjoy a day in the field, good camaraderie, and also to benefit the chapter financially as a result of their efforts.

Prior to the actual event, team members solicit pledges from sponsors (friends, former friends, etc.) in the form of either a flat pledge amount or an amount per species. Then, following the day of the Birdathon, those same team members are responsible to collect the pledges from the donors.

Teams are formed ahead of time. Leaders select their team’s birding itinerary and then the team goes out to find and identify as many bird species as possible with a 24-hour period that may begin Friday night and end 24 hours after the team’s start time.

Please consider becoming a team member and/or a donor. More details to follow at subsequent program meetings.



Ptarmigan by Dave McKean.

Welcome

New National Members

FCAS welcomes new National Audubon Society members by sending complementary copies of our newsletter. We invite you to join us at our monthly programs on the second Thursday of the month to find out more about FCAS. National dues do not cover the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter, so if you’d like to keep receiving the *Ptarmigan* please consider joining the local chapter. See the details on the last page of the newsletter or on our Web site:

www.fortnet.org/Audubon.

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

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

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

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

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



Eagles and More Eagles

After studying the Bald Eagle, I became curious about the Golden Eagle. We are fortunate to have both here in Larimer County. Being large birds, I thought they should occupy different habitats and have different diets; and they do.

Research reveals that while the Bald Eagle prefers fish, the Golden Eagle dines mainly on rabbit. The Golden Eagle prefers aeries high on cliffs and can build as many as 14 nests while only using one. The Bald Eagle prefers tall trees near water and continually builds its nest to dimensions that can reach six-foot wide and 20-foot deep.

Here in Larimer County we are blessed with both habitats. Our Bald Eagles are spread across the Poudre River riparian corridor and at the reservoirs and lakes that are lined with cottonwoods. The Golden Eagles are focused up at Watson Lake.

On a recent cold, wintry visit, we spotted a lone sentinel high atop the cliffs overlooking Watson Lake from the east. Looking like a dead tree trunk, the Golden Eagle suddenly moved, flashing the rich rusty gold on his head. Golden, like Bald Eagles, stay in the nesting area year round as long as there is food.

While the mature birds are clearly identifiable,

the immature birds are challenging. The immature Golden Eagle with the white window panes on the underside of its wings and the white on its tail can be mistaken for the Bald Eagle; whereas, the immature Bald Eagle with its mottled brown and white chest can be confusingly identified as a hawk. The issue is the size. Even though the immature Bald Eagle is much larger than a hawk, it's easy to sit looking at one for quite a while trying to figure out what it is. I know; I've done it.

Both eagle species are immature for three to four years before they achieve full identifiable mature plumage. Last week at the Eagle Watch on Fossil Creek there were two immature eagles that observers kept trying to make into Ospreys until they

looked through the scope and identified them as eagles! About 50 people attended Saturday's Eagle Watch. In addition to two mature Bald Eagles and two immature, a coyote joined us, sitting on the ice, watching us chatter about eagles, while a rabbit ran back and forth across the trail leading to the platform. An immature Red-tailed Hawk stood sentinel at the entrance and a Northern Harrier swooped above the tall grasses. All in all, a stellar day in the field!



Golden Eagle.

© Jerry & Sherry Liguori

FCAS Welcomes New and Renewing Members

Bob and Dodi Adel
Robert Babbs
Scott Baily
Judith Ann Balice
Charles & Nancy Bell
Denise A. Bretting
Barbara Case
Linda Chalcraft
Christina Chapman
Scott Cobble
Curtis Cramer
Joan P. Dixon

Kate Dwire
Lisa Evans
Alan Godwin
Thomas C. Hall
Ron Harden
Nicole & Peter Hay
Pat & Joel Hayward
Kristin J. Joy
Frances Lipp
Carole Machala
Erica Majoram
Kerry Miller

William Miller
Hildegard Morgan
Larry Moskowitz
Brian & Marlene Myres
Louise Parker
Phil Phelan
Elizabeth Pruessner
Jodie Ranklin
Sandra Pitcaithley & Tom Lynch
James L. Shafer
Linda Stangel
Barbara Turnbull

Thank you for your membership!



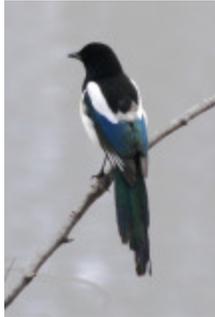
Upcoming Field Trips

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 tr

Feb. 13, Sunday, Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey.

Leader: Denise Bretting, dbretting@swloveland.com; work, 970-669-1185; home, 970-669-8095. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the city of Fort Collins. All levels welcomed.

Help Wanted: FCAS is in need of a Field Trip Coordinator. This person doesn't need to be an expert birder; in fact, he or she doesn't even need to be a birder at all. The Field Trip Coordinator will spend approximately four to six hours a month contacting field trip leaders from a list that already exists, and then submit brief descriptions of the field trips (dates, day, location, and the leader and their contact information and location) to the *Ptarmigan* editor. The deadline for all submissions for the upcoming month is the Sunday after the second Thursday of the month.



Black-billed Magpie by Nick Komar.

Legislative Workshop

The Audubon Society of Greater Denver (ASGD) and the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Sierra Club invite you to the 2011 Legislative Forum to learn about the hot environmental topics of the 2011 legislative session. After the continental breakfast at 8:30 a.m., Audubon Colorado Lobbyist Jen Boulton and the Sierra Club's legislative liaison will review the session's environmental bills and discuss several of the key issues with invited experts. Invited Colorado legislators will talk about the effort to balance the State budget, its impacts on our State's environmental programs, what's happening with State Parks, and possible threats to GOCO. A pot-luck lunch will be provided. A final agenda will be available in early February.

The cost of the Forum is \$12 if you register by Feb.10 and \$15 at the door. To register, call Rhonda in the ASGD office at 303-973-9530. If you are interested in volunteering at the forum, call that number or email: rshank@denveraudubon.org.

Please Join Us for the Audubon/Sierra Club 2011 Legislative Forum on Saturday, Feb.12, 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., at the First Plymouth Church, 3501 S. Colorado Boulevard, Denver (SW corner of Colorado and Hampden).

FCAS Volunteer Opportunities

February 12, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., ReSource Center on North College. Help children build bird houses from materials at the ReSource Center with the Nature and Children's Network.

February 26, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., High Plains Landscape Workshop. This very popular annual event provides FCAS with a great opportunity to promote membership and to sell our publications. Donate a couple of hours of your time.

Poudre Canyon Home For Sale: \$199,900. Birder's and gardener's paradise! One acre Poudre River front property with abundant birding and native plants. Lewis' woodpeckers nest every year; Carolina Wren one year. Lazuli Buntings, Black-headed Grosbeak, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Kingfishers, Golden Eagles, and three types of hummingbirds all frequent this property. House visited by Colorado and international bird club organizations, and is included as part of annual birdathon count.

The yard is planted with over 500 native rock garden plants and succulents to provide natural habitat and food source for birds. Simple home, wonderful setting 15 minutes up Poudre Canyon. Property backs to national forest. Call Patti Phillips, The Group Real Estate, 970-222-1928 for more information.





Fort Collins Audubon Society
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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) Name: _____

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

Additional Support for FCAS's Mission \$_____ City: _____ State: _____

New NAS Member \$20 (Receive *Audubon* magazine by postal mail) Zip: _____

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