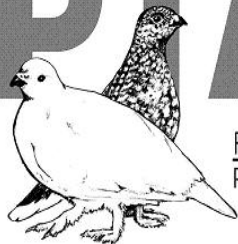


# PTARMIGAN



FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 271968 • Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968 • [www.fortnet.org/Audubon](http://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 2011**

**Volume 42, Issue 9**



## December Pot Luck and Member Slide Show

**Thursday Evening Program – December 8, 2011 — 6:30 p.m.**

**Fort Collins Senior Center-Multi-Use Room**

**1200 Raintree Drive, Fort Collins**

It is time again for the December Potluck and Member Slide Show. On Dec. 8, bring a dish with enough to share with six to eight people and any necessary serving utensils, to the Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Drive, by 6:30 p.m. Also, please bring your own plates, cups or glasses, and silverware. FCAS will provide a



**Black-capped Chickadee.**

choice of beverages and napkins. For those of you wishing to “strut your stuff” you may bring up to 15 digital images to show, preferably on a jump drive. Please limit your presentation to no more than 10 minutes to give those after you their fair share of time. We will finish by 9 p.m. Please join us for a great evening!



## Looking Ahead to 2012

Looking ahead to 2012, FCAS will offer the following programs:

**January 12:** Dr. Richard Reynolds, Wildlife Research Biologist for the U.S. Forest Service, will speak on the “Ecology of Goshawks.”

**February 9:** Dave Leatherman will present a program on “Life in the Cemetery,” an account of his two-years worth of observations of the numerous species of birds, wildlife, and trees living in Grandview Cemetery.

**March 8:** Eric DeFonso, FCAS’s former field trip coordinator, will have returned from a year in South America to share information and photos of the birds and habitats he experienced while there.



**Northern Goshawk.**

## President's Corner

by Bill Miller

"Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed."  
-- Mohandas K. Gandhi quoted in *EF Schumacher, "Small Is Beautiful"*

### Strategic Planning Session Wrap-Up

The FCAS Board of Directors held a Strategic Planning Session on October 22 to do some intermediate planning. Not only are planning sessions necessary to satisfy our obligations as an affiliate organization of the National Audubon Society, but planning sessions also are made necessary by the fact that our situation changes over time.

We addressed the following items:

- Hosting a presentation on Global Climate Change by the Climate Reality Project in April 2012.
- Submitting a letter supporting the proposed "Park on the Poudre" and the completion of the Poudre River trail across I-25 to the City



Poudre River.

of Fort Collins.

- Projecting a favorable impression of the chapter to the public.
- Recruiting younger members, possibly using Facebook and Twitter.
- Engaging our members.
- Expanding the Education Committee.
- Enhancing our field trip program with new and/or different ideas.
- Expanding the Membership Committee.
- Implementing major changes to the Web site, including new software.

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For other FCAS contacts visit [www.fortnet.org/audubon/leadership.htm](http://www.fortnet.org/audubon/leadership.htm)

#### 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

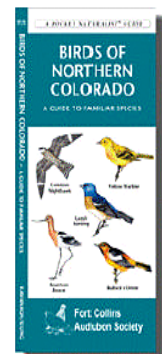
Jax Outdoor Gear  
1200 N. College  
(970) 221-0544

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

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

Jax Mercantile  
950 E. Eisenhower  
Loveland  
(970) 776-4540

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



## Conservation Corner \_\_\_\_\_ by Bill Miller

"I do not intend that our natural resources shall be exploited by the few against the interests of the many."  
-- President Theodore Roosevelt

"There can be no greater issue than that of conservation in this country."  
-- President Theodore Roosevelt, 1912.



### Rocky Mountain Raptor Program Open House

The Rocky Mountain Raptor Program will hold its Holiday Open House on Sunday, Dec. 11, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. This is your opportunity to get behind the scenes at the Raptor Center to see what is involved in caring for raptors during rehabilitation. It also is an opportunity to visit the Center's gift shop. Everyone is invited and all sales go directly to the care of the raptors. The Rocky Mountain Raptor Center is located at 720 B East Vine Dr., Fort Collins, (970) 484-7756.



Immature Red-tailed Hawk .

### IDEA WILD Fundraiser

Once again we are pleased to publicize an annual fundraising event sponsored by IDEA WILD. The mission of IDEA WILD is to conserve biodiversity by providing biologists and educators working in developing countries with equipment and supplies to aid in their conservation efforts.

This year's fundraising event, Nature Goes Wild, will be held on Thursday, Dec. 1, at Nature's Own, located at the intersection of Linden and Walnut Streets in Fort Collins. There will be music, free food, a fabulous selection of donated wines, and New Belgium beers. IDEA WILD will receive 100 percent of the evening's proceeds.

Since IDEA WILD'S beginning 14 years ago, they have aided over 2,500 projects in 82 developing countries. Recipients often share equipment with at least three other conservation projects. Consequently, the actual number of people using equipment and supplies provided by IDEA WILD is over 7,500. The average cost per project is around \$720. With IDEA WILD, a nominal conservation investment goes a very long way!

IDEA WILD is the brainchild of Wally Van Sickle. You can learn more about IDEA WILD at [www.ideawild.org](http://www.ideawild.org).





## Wintering Over

After the rush of the holidays, winter sits quietly on us. Challenging cold, blustery winds, all seem to converge to encourage us to stay snug and warm. Even car birding can become chilling and require stops for warm sustenance. I admit that even though I love the cold and snowy edge of winter, I love it most viewed from my window in front of the fire with a warm cup in my hand!

So, why do I sign up each year to do the Bald Eagle watches at Fossil Creek? It's the thrill of discovery. How many eagles can we find today? Will there be a coyote on the far shore? Will there be drama on the ice?

Join me and the other naturalists who weather the cold and wind to watch our visiting eagles. Naturalists are available for interpretation and scopes available for viewing in December, January, February, and early March. I will be there on the second Saturdays of January and February and the first Saturday of March. Check [www.fcgov.com/naturalareas](http://www.fcgov.com/naturalareas) for a complete schedule of viewing availability.

The eagles, however, are not the only birds that might entice me afield. I have a personal challenge.

In 1975 I attended bird classes with John Tveten, a Texas photographer and licensed bird bander, who used a mist net to capture warblers in migration. He explained that he had to get the warblers out of the net quickly before the shrikes ate their hearts out. Now, I'd never seen a shrike, but I was sure this was a most ferocious and horrid bird. I've looked for one ever since!

I was continually challenged by my concept of its size. I thought surely a bird that killed rodents, reptiles, and other birds was raptor size. On moving to Fort Collins, I learned that the shrike was the same size as a robin and that two species of shrike occupied the Pawnee—the Loggerhead in summer and the Northern in winter. I found the Loggerhead during the FCAS Birdathon two years ago, but I've not identified the Northern yet. Clearly a reason to suffer the cold and wind of winter!



Northern Shrike.

While we do have resident Bald Eagles, the Fossil Creek eagles and the Northern Shrike are wintering-over birds. They are here for the food and protection that is more available than in their nesting grounds of the far north. If they think that northern Colorado is a cool place to visit in winter, then I too shall revel in the cool place in which we live, but where I can go indoors after!

### FCAS Welcomes New and Renewing Members

Margo & Anne Butner  
Barbara Case  
Melannie D. Hartman  
Jennifer Monath  
Margaret J. Page

Thank you for your membership!

Your support makes our programs and conservation efforts possible and helps us achieve our mission of connecting people to the natural world.

### Welcome New National Members

FCAS welcomes new National Audubon Society members by sending one complementary copy 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* after the complementary issue, please join FCAS. See the details on the last page of the newsletter or on our Web site at [www.fortnet.org/Audubon](http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon).





## Mark Your Calendar for the Upcoming Christmas Bird Counts

This year the 112<sup>th</sup> Christmas Bird Count (CBC) will be conducted from Tuesday, Dec. 14 to Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2012. Thousands of volunteers throughout the Americas take part in this adventure that finds families, students, birders, and scientists, armed with binoculars, bird guides, and checklists, roaming the fields and neighborhoods as defined by 15-mile diameter circles drawn on maps, called "count circles."

The Fort Collins CBC has the distinction of being the longest continuous CBC in Colorado. While other CBCs began earlier than the Fort Collins CBC they have had interruptions in history.

In addition to sponsoring the Fort Collins CBC, FCAS also is sponsoring the Loveland CBC. The Fort Collins CBC compiler is Tom Hall and will be conducted on Saturday, Dec. 17. The Loveland CBC compiler is Nick Komar and will be conducted on Sunday, Jan. 1, 2012. If you wish to participate in either (or both) CBCs contact Tom at [n2redbear@hotmail.com](mailto:n2redbear@hotmail.com) and/or Nick at [quetzal65@comcast.net](mailto:quetzal65@comcast.net).

An option to being a field observer is to be a

feeder watcher. Feeder watchers do not have to reside in the count circle. All data collected by feeder watchers and field observers alike is

turned in to the count compiler who, in turn, converts the data collected into an organized single set of data, which is turned in to National Audubon. Participants are requested to chip in \$5 that is sent to National Audubon to help defray the expenses of publishing the data. In recent years, the compilers have conducted "compiling parties" during which representatives of each team turn in their data for the day over dinner.

Audubon and other organizations use the data collected in this longest-running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations, which, in turn, guides conservation decisions. The citizen scientists

who brave winter weather conditions make an enormous contribution to conservation. Participants in CBCs do it for the love of birds and nature, the excitement of some friendly competition, and the knowledge that their efforts are making a difference for science and bird conservation.



Cedar Waxwing by Bill Miller.

### Send in Your Change of Address

Please remember to provide us with any new email addresses. Otherwise you may not receive your electronic version of the *Ptarmigan*. Send changes to: [fortcollinsaudubonmembership@gmail.com](mailto:fortcollinsaudubonmembership@gmail.com).



### Upcoming Field Trips

*All field trips are free of charge (unless otherwise noted) and open to the public. All experience levels are welcome. Visit [www.fortnet.org/Audubon](http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon) for more information.*


**Dec. 11, Sunday, Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey.** Leader: Denise Bretting, [dbretting@swloveland.com](mailto:dbretting@swloveland.com), work: 970-669-1185, home: 970-669-8095. Call for any change. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the city of Fort Collins. All levels welcome.





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Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968

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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 *Ptarmigan* by email)
- ☐ **New or renewing FCAS Chapter Member** \$30  
(Receive *Ptarmigan* by postal mail)
- ☐ **Lifetime Chapter Member** \$750  
Receive *Ptarmigan* by email \_\_\_\_\_  
Or receive *Ptarmigan* by post \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **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 your tax exempt 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](http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon)