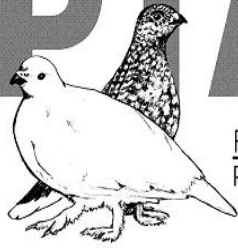


PTARMIGAN



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.

October 2014

Volume 45, Issue 7

"Northern Harrier: Living On The Wing"

Thursday, Oct. 9

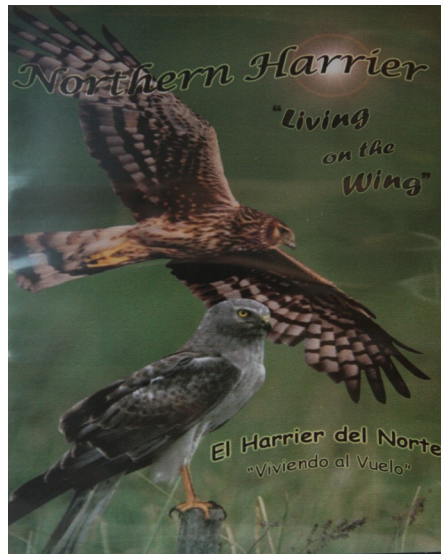
Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Drive

Social gathering: 7 p.m. - Program: 7:30 p.m.

Northern Harriers are part of the open landscape, just as are the plants that grow there.

The male's striking grey blue plumage may contrast with the female's more practical brown coloring, but there is no denying the elegance of these sleek hawks as they gracefully float a few feet over the ground or over cattails, watching and listening for any movement by prey below.

The beautiful film, "Northern Harrier: Living on the Wing," brings us the true-life look at a pair of these awe-inspiring hawks. Watch a Northern Harrier's sweeping courtship performance "sky dance," and ponder their curious relationship around the nest site.



View the astonishing aerial acrobatics displayed in their simple everyday activities, such as a food

transfer between male and female. All this behavior is related to successfully raising their fuzzy chicks, hidden in the vegetation. There is much to enjoy before the harriers and their young move southward for the winter.

Join us on Oct. 9 at the Fort Collins Senior Center to view this film. This program is free and open to the public. The visit by Audubon Colorado Council president and chair of its Water Task Force Committee, Jo Evans, has been postponed due to a family health complication. Her program will be rescheduled.

Special Program

On October 23, FCAS is hosting a special program, "Birding Colorado State Parks," by Steven Jones of Boulder County Audubon at the Loveland Museum. See Page 2 for details.

Welcome New National Members!

FCAS welcomes new National Audubon Society members by sending a complimentary issue of our newsletter. Join us at our monthly programs at the Fort Collins Senior Center on the second Thursday of the month to learn more about FCAS. To keep receiving the *Ptarmigan*, please support your local chapter and subscribe to the newsletter. See the details on the last page of this newsletter or on our website at www.fortnet.org/Audubon.

President's Corner

by Joann Thomas

On Oct. 2, the FCAS Board will sit down for two hours and plan the future for the organization. We are challenged with fewer leadership people than ever before. At the September program meeting, I invited all members to join us in creating FCAS's future. Our program meet-



ings are one of our strengths. Judging by the number of people who stayed to view our program, I know that you think so also. I ask that you consider the work that goes into creating an interesting slate of programs, obtaining the room, maintaining the funds to support the program, dining with our guest speaker before the meeting, having a computer and projector for use if needed for each program, setting up the coffee and tea, setting up the membership table and supplies, and probably more that I've forgotten. We the board create all of this for you. Please

join us—we would love to have you working with us to create new ideas for programs and maybe places to have them. At the end of October, we will be sponsoring a program at the Loveland Museum—maybe you can think of other programs we should have or events we should participate in. Come share your ideas and join us!

Special Program, Thursday, Oct. 23 "Birding Colorado State Parks"

Join us on Thursday, Oct. 23 at the Loveland Museum, 503 N. Lincoln at 6:45 p.m. for a presentation by Steven Jones of Boulder County Audubon.

Colorado's 42 state parks and more than 300 state wildlife areas offer the opportunity to see virtually every breeding bird found in the state,



Piping Plover by Steven Jones.

from Interior Least Terns and Piping Plovers at John Martin Reservoir State Park to Peregrine Falcons and Ovenbirds at Roxborough State Park. For the past eight years, Steve Jones has been working with Colorado State Parks and Wildlife Environmental Stewardship Coordinator Jeff Thompson and other naturalists to complete comprehensive breeding bird surveys in most of our state parks, and he's found birds of unique interest in each one he's visited. At this special program on Oct. 23 in Loveland, he'll show images of his favorite birding areas in some of his favorite parks.

Jones is author and co-author of several birding books. Join us for this interesting program that is free and open to the public.

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Energy Conservation and Halloween

Halloween’s creeping up on us again, but by practicing some energy-efficient tricks, your energy bill won’t end up haunting you.

Your home probably has many phantoms and vampires lurking about ready to drain its energy while sucking your wallet dry. Often referred to as “phantom loads” or “energy vampires,” many of today’s modern appliances and electronics continue to drain energy even when turned off or in stand-by mode. Scary!

So what can you do to rid yourself of these horrors? Unplug smaller appliances such as coffee makers, toasters, and cell phone chargers when not in use. When going away for an extended period, unplug televisions and other electronics. Use smart power strips designed to ward off unwanted energy vampires on appliances and electronics. Select energy-efficient

(ENERGY STAR) computers, office equipment, electronics and appliances, which use up to 65-75 percent less energy than non-labeled models, and remember to turn them off when not in use. Also, when buying a new computer, consider purchasing a laptop, which uses less energy than a desktop version.

Another energy-saving trick is to switch to energy-efficient light bulbs. LEDs are a great option as they can last more than 100 times longer than incandescent bulbs and cost 80-90 percent less to use. Outdoors, switch to solar lighting, which uses no electricity. By switching to energy-efficient lighting alternatives, you’ll save money and conserve energy while fending off scary energy suckers.

Install low-flow water features around your

home and conserve water by fixing leaks, insulating water pipes and water heaters, taking shorter showers, and only running clothes washers and dishwashers when fully loaded. According to the website <http://energy.gov>, you’ll save between 25-60 percent on your water bill by following these tips and you’ll have water to spare should you need to melt an unwelcome witch!

Air leaks around the house can waste a lot of energy and money as well, not to mention allow in unwanted ghostly spirits. One of the easiest

ways to take care of both problems is to seal (caulk, weather strip) all cracks and openings to the outside. Check doors and windows for air tightness, and replace old single-pane windows with energy-efficient double-pane versions. Add extra insulation in walls and the attic. Your home will stay warmer and money spent on

improvements will return in lower energy bills. If you have a wood-burning fireplace, keep the damper tightly closed when not in use. It will help prevent heat loss while deterring bats from entering your home.

Make sure heating equipment is in good-working order, and change air filters regularly. Turn down the thermostat and layer on clothes to help save energy and money. On sunny days, open up blinds and drapes to allow the sunshine in to help heat your home. Likewise, close window coverings at dark to conserve heat.

By practicing these energy-saving tricks, you’ll protect yourself from evil phantoms and vampires waiting to drain your home’s energy while also conjuring up a treat in lower energy bills you can enjoy year-round.



Birds, Birders, and Birding

Recently I received an email from an enthusiastic birder informing me that he'd had a Calliope Hummingbird at his feeder and he was curious about the bird. I congratulated him and explained that it was probably a late migrant from further north. Then I asked if it was male or female. Male, he assured me.

He then sent me a photo of the bird that I immediately recognized as either an immature male or female Rufous. My correspondent then said, "I guess I better keep my day job." To which I replied that as long as I have been birding, I had indeed kept my day job.

I tell this story first of all because I was so very excited to be knowledgeable on the subject of our hummers. I love them! And, because I wanted to reassure the writer that it is only one bird at a time by which we become accomplished birders. And how I love the "aha" moment when we know for certain of what species a bird is, and how well I know the agony of identifying a problem bird, and how you will probably never get it right all the time!

As a budding birder and new resident of Delaware, I accompanied the Delaware Ornithological Society on a trip to the seashore for gulls. At the time I did not realize how daunting gull identification was in winter. The more avid birders in

the group got their scope on a gull that defied positive identification. After everyone had a good look, they agreed to run and rouse it from its rest, so they could have a better chance of accurately identifying it. When we had all finished making our decisions after looking through the scope, the appointed chaser ran at the bird shouting and waving his hands. The bird flew.

The one-half who were positive that the bird was one species immediately changed their minds, while the other half also reversed their decision. In the end, the bird remained an enigma, even though each group had positively seen a marking that assured its identity!

So it goes. We are privileged to participate with the likes of Kevin Cook, Nick Komar, and David Leatherman on FCAS birding trips. But, for the rest of us—we'd better keep our day jobs!



Calliope Hummingbird



Female Rufous Hummingbird

Kick Up Your Heels for Conservation at the Third Annual Wing Ding



Have a Brew for the Birds Fundraiser for Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory Oct. 7, 7—9 p.m.

Odell's Brewery, 800 E. Lincoln, Fort Collins Tickets: \$10; Kids under 12 Free



Proceeds support RMBO's conservation and environmental programs in Northern Colorado

Purchase tickets at: www.RMBO.org or at the door

FCAS Welcomes New and Renewing Members

- Pat Hayward
Carol Kelly
Rich Roberts
Myron Smith

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.



Upcoming Field Trips

All field trips are free of charge (unless otherwise noted) and open to the public. All experience levels are welcome. Bring snacks or lunch, water, binoculars, and spotting scopes. Visit www.fortnet.org/Audubon for more

Oct. 11, Saturday, Soapstone Prairie Natural Area. Leader: Aran Meyer, City of Fort Collins Biologist. Reservation required. Space is limited to 12 people maximum. To reserve a space on this special trip, contact John Shenot, johnshenot@gmail.com, 970-682-2551. Soapstone Prairie is a local treasure encompassing 28 square-miles of remote country and uninterrupted scenery. These nearly pristine grasslands are home to many species of wildlife, such as pronghorn, elk, swift fox, burrowing owls, golden eagles, and rare and threatened plants. Note: Participants should be prepared for wilderness conditions (no services), lots of walking, and potentially harsh weather conditions. This trip will begin on-site at 9 a.m. and end at approximately 2 p.m. Additional details will be



Golden Eagle

provided to those who make a reservation.

Oct. 12, Sunday, Bobcat Ridge Natural

Area Bird Survey. Leader: Denise Bretting, dbretting@swloveland.com, work: 970-669-1185, home: 970-669-8095. Call for any change. Meet at 7 a.m. in the parking lot. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the City of Fort Collins. All levels are welcome.

Nov. 9, Sunday, Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey.

Meet at 7 a.m. See description and contact details above for this recurring, monthly survey.

Dec.14, Sunday, Bobcat Ridge

Natural Area Bird Survey. Meet at 7:30 a.m. See description and contact details above for this recurring, monthly survey.

Guatemala—Tikal Excursion, Nov. 22 - 30

This November, join fellow Auduboners in experiencing the mystique of Guatemala's highland volcanoes and rainforests at the breathtaking Mayan ruins of Tikal National Park. Quetzal Tours is offering an eight-day, relaxed-pace birding and nature photography adventure, led by Guatemala's premier bilingual birding guides, Knut Eisermann and Claudia Avendaño, authors of the *Aves de Guatemala*, an Annotated Checklist. Not only will

this be a unique experience at a low price (just \$2,100 per person), but the event also serves as a fundraiser for FCAS. Visit locations such as Los Tarrales Reserve and Antigua, as well as Tikal. Expect to see Toucans, Motmots, Trogons, Woodcreepers, Sabrewings, and hundreds of other species in the land of the Mayan indigenous peoples. The tour is limited to six people. For more information, contact Nick Komar at info@quetzal-tours.com, or 970-449-3645.




Keel-billed Toucan
by Claudia Avendano.

Wanted: Field Trip Ideas and Leaders

I'm always looking for new places and new ideas to spice up our chapter's field trips. Volunteers who wish to lead trips are also greatly appreciated. If you have a suggestion or want to lead a trip, just send me an email at johnshenot@gmail.com!



Fort Collins Audubon Society
PO Box 271968
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 the FCAS *Ptarmigan* by email

New or Renewing FCAS Chapter Member \$30
Receive the FCAS *Ptarmigan* by mail

Lifetime FCAS Chapter Member \$750
Receive the FCAS *Ptarmigan* by email
or receive the FCAS *Ptarmigan* by mail

**Additional Support for Alex Cringan
Fund natural history education grants** \$____

New NAS Member \$20
Receive the NAS *Audubon* by mail

Renewing NAS Member \$35
Receive the NAS *Audubon* by mail

Total Amount Enclosed: \$____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip: _____

Phone # _____

Email: _____

May we send you FCAS email alerts if updates occur for field trips, programs etc.?

Yes or **No**

May we contact you if volunteer opportunities occur from helping at events to contacting legislators on important environmental issues?

Yes or **No**

Please make your tax-exempt check payable to **FCAS** and mail with this form to **FCAS, P.O. Box 271968, Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968**. Your cancelled check is your receipt. All renewals are due in January. New memberships begun after August 31st extend through the following year. Applications can be completed at www.fortnet.org/Audubon