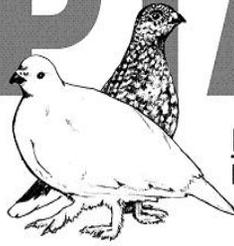


PTARMIGAN



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.

November 2014

Volume 45, Issue 8

Dr. Amy Gilbert, Disease Ecologist, USDA-APHIS

Presents:

“Rabies in Northern Colorado”

Thursday, Nov. 13

Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Dr.

Social Time: 7 p.m.; Program 7:30 p.m.

Skunk rabies has expanded in Colorado in recent years. Dr. Amy Gilbert will review the pattern of skunk rabies cases in Colorado and describe the genetic relationships among cases in Northern Colorado. Rabies prevention efforts led by the USDA Wildlife Services using vaccine baiting began in 1995 and primarily targeted raccoons and canids. Dr. Gilbert also will discuss future research to study the epidemiology of and to evaluate intervention strategies for controlling skunk rabies.

Dr. Gilbert is a disease ecologist with the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service interested in the maintenance and spillover of wildlife diseases, with a focus on rabies. She was a guest researcher and postdoctoral fellow with



Striped Skunk

the Rabies Program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for seven years, where

she conducted studies on rabies in bats, and both led and participated in international field projects focused on enhanced rabies surveillance and pathogen discovery in bats, as well as human-animal interface studies to model rabies risk. Her current research focuses on ecology and spillover of rabies infections in wildlife, and experimental studies regarding the

application of novel rabies biologics and technologies to improve vaccination of carnivore wildlife.

Join us on Nov. 13 at the Fort Collins Senior Center for this informative evening. This program is free and open to the public.

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 receive the *Ptarmigan*, please 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 October 2, the FCAS Board sat down for two hours and planned the future for the organization. In the December newsletter, we will publish a proposed slate of officers to be elected at the January meeting. We again invite anyone of the membership to join us on the board.

We also are looking forward to our annual December meeting dinner. A entrée will be provided while you are invited to bring a side dish, salad, or dessert to share. While enjoying dinner we will enjoy viewing everyone's photos. I finally got together photos I took from the birding trip to Ecuador with my son last year. He took 2,500 photos, so it's been challenging. How many photos can I flash through in 10 minutes?



So many challenges we face in 2015 as we look back on the many accomplishments we've had. Again as always, we invite you to join us in keeping the birds flying!

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NoCo Nature Festival

On the last Saturday in September, we join other exhibitors in what was the Northern Colorado Birding Fair. This year the name and location were changed. Officially now named the NoCo Nature Festival, the venue was changed from Fossil Creek Regional Open Space to Nix Farm, home of the city's natural areas program. Exhibitors were tightly linked as opposed to being far flung at Fossil Creek. Our FCAS canopy adjoined the Zoological Discovery Center's canopy, giving us entertainment all day long as we watched visitors touch the salamanders and snakes, eking and jumping as they did. The day began at 7 a.m. with bird walks. When the day ended around 3 p.m., we had educated and entertained about 800 people.



FCAS both at NoCo Nature Festival.



Scott Cobble and Joann Thomas manned the FCAS booth at the NoCo Nature Festival.

Two years ago every child left the FCAS booth with a wooden bird house that they had painted, but this year every child left our booth with a brightly colored orange and yellow milk

carton with directions and supplies for turning it into a bird feeder. Ideas and companionable help would be appreciated next year. Mark your calendars for the last weekend in September. Join Scott Cobble and Joann Thomas in meeting and greeting visitors at the nature fair.

Vote continued from Page 4

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) and other entities. Currently, for every \$1 the county spends on conservation, it receives \$1.73 from sources such as GOCO. Continue protecting our natural areas, open space, rivers, and wildlife habitat. Turn in your ballot by 7 p.m., Tuesday Nov. 4.



Giving Thanks – A Conservation Success Story

As you gather with family and friends this Thanksgiving, give special thanks for the turkey, for it is a direct descendant of a true Native American, the Wild Turkey—a conservation success story.



Wild Turkey by <http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/>

According to the National Wildlife Refuge Association, “historical accounts from early European settlers suggest that Wild Turkeys existed in what would now be considered 39 continental states. Wild Turkeys thrived in forested habitat across the Eastern

United States and were closely tied to Native American culture as a game bird. During the 17th century, early American settlers took advantage of thriving Wild Turkey populations as a staple food source for those in the New World.”

Wild Turkeys remained a staple for the next 200 years, but as their habitat dwindled due to “...deforestation from intensive land-use practices” and their numbers declined due to “unsustainable hunting,” by the beginning of the 20th century, this once pervasive species was on the verge of eradication. A reference article about Wild Turkeys in Wikipedia states: “Game managers estimate that the entire population of Wild Turkeys in the United States was as low as 30,000 in the early 20th century. By the 1940s, it was almost totally extirpated from Canada and becoming localized in pockets in the United States.”

Fortunately for the Wild Turkey (and us), this story has a happy ending thanks to the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937, more commonly known as the Pittman-Robertson Act. The Pittman-Robertson Act created an excise tax

on sporting arms and ammunition which provides funds to each state for wildlife restoration projects. Many species have been saved thanks to the Pittman-Robertson Act, including Wild Turkey, White-tailed Deer, and Wood Duck.

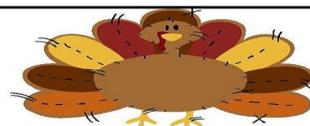
Funds from Pittman-Robertson coupled with state hunting license fees allowed wildlife researchers and game officials to protect and encourage the breeding of native Wild Turkey populations. In addition, turkeys were trapped and relocated, including into areas in western states where the species was not native.

Once Wild Turkey numbers began to bounce back and steadily increase, hunting was again “legalized in 49 U.S. states (excluding Alaska),” according to Wikipedia. “In 1973, the total U.S. population was estimated to be 1.3 million, and current estimates place the entire Wild Turkey population at seven million individuals.”



Wild Turkeys by stmresearchserve.blogspot.com

This year, as you’re giving thanks for family, friends, and the abundance of food you’re about to eat, including the turkey, remember to also give thanks to all those who helped make sure we still have Wild Turkeys roaming our country. The recovery of the Wild Turkey is truly a conservation success story!



Happy Thanksgiving



October Birding

Welcome to this glorious fall birding weather, although some have told me there are few birds. But on a recent outing, we saw the usual and some lesser than usual. A female harrier flew across our windshield and landed on a fence post nearby. Wow! We'd just learned about harriers in the movie shown at our program night, but did not realize the female was so big. She was beautiful and close enough to see her owl-like eyes. Nothing exciting happened except being able to view her for quite a while as she sat on one of the nearby fence posts.



Ferruginous Hawk

We continued drifting along in the car and spotted a mature Meadowlark accompanied by a youngster. It was great fun comparing them in the top of the tree. Actually I'd never seen meadowlarks in the top of a tree, but without leaves it was quite easy to see them clearly.

Suddenly, a large raptor flashed across the hood of our car. We jumped in and followed it. At first we thought it was the harrier, but it had no white tail band. After much consultation with several books, it was clear that it was a young Ferruginous Hawk. It landed on a nearby fence post and then flew to ground. We thought we were done, until it again appeared on the fence post with one of the many voles we'd seen running across the road. Our interest was picking

up as we watched it tear the vole apart. A piece of vole, slithery and shiny, slid down the side of the post. It was bloody gory, but also fascinating. Fur flew as it ripped the small mammal apart.

This hawk was enjoying his vole meal with gusto!

Until, that is, a magpie landed on the adjacent post. The hawk stood still for a few seconds, then it continued to consume the vole while nervously looking over its shoulder to eye the scavenger. Then another magpie landed on the next post—then there were three magpies. The hawk became

very still, only slowing turning its head to watch the magpies in between bites of vole. A piece of meat slipped off the hawk's perch and one of the magpies flew down to retrieve it. This rattled the hawk that now was frantically looking from magpie to magpie while hovering over its meal. Interestingly, the magpies, while clearly a threat to the hawk, never moved closer than about three feet. The hawk gobbled down the rest of the vole and then looked around, but the magpies, realizing there would be no leavings, had flown away.

Great drama! We were surprised how three magpies could cause such uncertainty in a large raptor when all they did was stare at it. There certainly was strength in numbers. A great fall birding experience!

Support Open Space: Remember to Vote on Tuesday, Nov. 4

The FCAS Board supports Larimer County Issue 1A: Help Preserve Open Spaces one-quarter cent sales tax and we urge our members to support it as well. The sales tax would continue an existing one-quarter of one percent open space sales tax. It is not a tax increase. Groceries and prescription drugs are not taxed. The money is used to purchase and manage Open Space lands.

Funds are shared with the cities and towns of Larimer County: Fifty percent goes to Larimer County and 50 percent is split between the cities and towns according to their sales tax generation or population. Cities and town continue to have local control over where their funds are spent.

The funds may not be diverted to any other uses. A citizen's committee representing all parts of the county oversees use of the funds, and an annual report must be presented to the public.

Lands may be purchased from willing sellers only. Revenues will be used to match funds from

Vote continued on Page 2



Guatemala Cloud Forest Excursion: March 14-22, 2015

Join fellow Auduboners in experiencing the pristine cloud forest at Chelem-ha and Mayan ruins at



Resplendent Quetzal
by Knut Eisermann.

Quirigua in the Atlantic lowlands of Guatemala. Quetzal Tours is offering an eight-day, relaxed-pace birding and nature photography adventure, led by Guatemala's premier bilingual birding guide, Knut Eisermann, co-author 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. Expect to see Resplendent Quetzals, Toucans, Motmots, Trogons, Woodcreepers, Sabrewings, and hundreds of other species in the land of the Mayan indigenous peoples. The tour is limited to four people. For more information, contact Nick Komar at info@quetzal-tours.com, or 970-449-3645.

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 information and updates.

Nov. 9, 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. 15, Saturday, Loveland Lakes. Leader: Nick Komar, quetzal65@comcast.net, 970-449-3645. Reservation required; space is limited to 10 people. The lakes in and around Loveland are a magnet for migrating waterfowl and gulls. In recent Novembers, birders have found a number of local rarities in this area, such as Brant, Tundra Swan, Clark's Grebe, and Thayer's Gull. This trip will begin at 8 a.m. Additional details will be provided when you make your reservation with Nick.

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.

Did you know that FCAS has a Facebook page on which we post announcements of coming field trips, and highlights and photos of recent field trips. If you are a Facebook user, search for "Fort Collins Audubon Society" and join the growing number of people who "like" us!

Welcome New and Renewing Members



Susan Barbour
Raoul and Marjie Bates
Kenneth Dunnington
Julia R Jordan
Frances R Lipp
Leslye and Larry Sherman
Sheila Webber
Lori Zabel



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

FCAS Pocket Guide to Local Birds

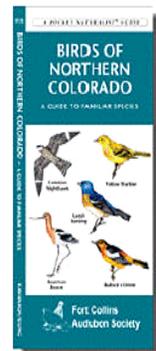
Is available at the following retailers who support our organization with the sales:

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

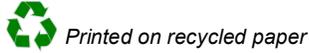
Jax Mercantile
950 E. Eisenhower
Loveland
(970) 776-4540

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

Jax Farm & Ranch
1000 N. Hwy. 287
(970) 481-2221



Fort Collins Audubon Society
 PO Box 271968
 Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968



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

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

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

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

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