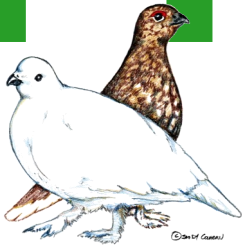


PTARMIGAN



FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. Box 271968·Fort Collins, CO·80527-1968·www.fortcollinsaudubon.org

Promoting the appreciation, conservation, and restoration of ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife through education, participation, stewardship, and advocacy.

October 2016

Volume 47, Issue 7

FCAS Presents: Scott Rashid

Director, Colorado Avian Research and Rehabilitation Institute

“The Northern Goshawk: the Gray Ghost”

Thursday, Oct. 13

Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Dr.

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

Scott Rashid, founder and director of Colorado Avian Research and Rehabilitation Institute, has been monitoring Northern Goshawks since finding his first nest in 1998. Since that time he has located numerous goshawk nests both in and around Rocky Mountain National Park.

Like other Northern Goshawk researchers, Scott has found that studying the species can be a bit interesting, as they often attack anyone or anything that comes near their nests and young. Northern Goshawks are often relentless when attacking prey and often won't give up the chase until whatever they are



Scott Rashid with Northern Goshawk.

attacking is either captured or escapes due to the situation.

Scott will talk about his years monitoring the species and his rehabilitation of injured Northern Goshawks. Scott's presentation will outline his third book, “The Northern Goshawk: the Gray Ghost,” published by Schiffer Publishing of Pennsylvania in 2016. Copies of his book will be available for purchase.

Join us on Oct. 13 at the Fort Collins Senior Center to learn more about goshawks, the “gray ghosts.” This program is free and the public is welcomed.

Dr. Ronald Ryder Memorial Scholarship

As we reported in the September *Ptarmigan*, Dr. Ronald A. Ryder, a retired CSU Professor of Wildlife Biology and the initiator of the Breeding Bird Survey in Colorado, passed away on August 2, 2016. One of his former graduate students and a friend of Dr. Ryder's for over 50 years, Dr. Clait E. Braun has established an endowed memorial scholarship in Dr. Ryder's name at CSU. The scholarship fund will be realized once it has received \$25,000 or more in donations. This amount will provide a \$1,000 annual scholarship to a student en-

rolled in the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology, and who also is studying birds.

Dr. Braun's graduate research was on White-tailed Ptarmigan, with Dr. Ryder as his major advisor. Dr. Braun initially was involved with the Fort Collins Bird Club, which later became FCAS.

Dr. Ryder continued on Page 3.



President's Corner

by John Shenot

On October 6, the FCAS Board will hold its annual strategic planning session. This is the time when we review the status of our organization, check whether we are meeting our goals, and identify priorities for the coming year. I wanted to take this opportunity to report to you, the membership, on some of the issues the Board will be discussing. I also invite your feedback—the sooner the better—on any topic or issue that you think should be a high priority for FCAS in 2017.

Last year the Board identified six strategic priorities for FCAS in 2016. I'm pleased to be able to report some success on most of those priorities. To begin with, we placed our highest priority in 2016 on fundraising, with the hope that we could avoid raising membership dues. And thanks to our hugely successful Birdathon in May, we exceeded my expectations. We are now in very solid shape financially and I expect (though the Board has yet to decide) that we won't need to raise our dues for at least another year.

The results are a little mixed on other priority items. We have been able to sustain our membership levels and recruit a few new leaders to the FCAS Board, committees, and volunteer positions. However, we are still eager to boost membership and still looking for new Board and committee members going into 2017. (Let me know if you are interested!) We've also made significant improvements to the FCAS website, but haven't yet completed the top-to-bottom review the Board had envisioned.

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www.fortcollinsaudubon.org

Visit us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/FortCollinsAudubonSociety>



Image from www.lawsocietywa.asn.au

That's still a work in progress. We've made progress in our quest to earn an "important bird area" designation for the Cache la Poudre Urban River Corridor, but we haven't quite finished the job. I'm hopeful that we will cross the finish line before the end of 2016, but this priority might carry over into 2017. And finally, we've only just begun to discuss "legacy projects" that will benefit the public at large, while at the same time raising awareness and appreciation of FCAS.

Birdathon Final Tally

by Bill Miller

It's Over! Finished! Completed! Yeah! The last pledge from the Birdathon was received and deposited, and species lists have been compared. Irene Fortune's team of four had the highest species count of 135 species; and Nick Komar's team of six had the highest number of unique species (species seen by just one team).



American Bittern by
Helmet Retzer.

Due to unfortunate circumstances, I was unable to meet with Lauren DeRosa, owner of the Wild Birds Unlimited store in Fort Collins until the afternoon of the September program meeting. At that time I indicated to her the FCAS was contributing \$200 toward the 10 prizes to be presented to the 10 members of the two teams that took first place in the two categories of competition. Without even blinking, Lauren uped the ante' by another \$200. That means that the 10 gift certificates to be issued by Wild Birds Unlimited will each be valued at \$40. The gift certificates are redeemable at any Wild Birds

Birdathon continued on Page 4.



Vote for Conservation This November

The November election is less than two months away, and while it's easy to get caught up in the politics and opinions surrounding the presidential candidates and key issues, as members of Audubon, there is one particular issue we should focus on: electing conservation-minded leaders.

As members of FCAS, we care a great deal about the environment and conservation. But what about our elected officials and leaders—where do they stand on environmental issues?



Photo from landupdate.com

According to Conservation Colorado, “When it comes to protecting our air, land, water, and wildlife, who we elect matters in our everyday lives. Whether it’s minimizing the impacts of oil and gas activity on our communities, protecting wild places across our state, or taking real steps to address climate change, elected officials are in a position to greatly help—or harm—everything we love about Colorado.” This sentiment also applies at the national level.

For the past several years, environmental measures have faced opposition from a strong anti-conservation majority in both Colorado’s Senate and in Congress. This coming November, the opportunity exists to change that situation by electing pro-conservation leaders who can help ensure that conservation values become a priority, and that environmental issues are addressed and are dealt with in a more timely and appropriate manner. The environment has the potential to become a key political issue in the November election as

it’s gone from being a nonpartisan issue to an intensely partisan ideological issue.

This election and your vote matter! Become an informed voter and check out the records of national, state, and local-level candidates, and see where they stand on environmental and conservation issues and how their views align with yours. Some of the key environmental issues to check include climate change (including the Paris Climate Agreement), investing in renewable energy, fighting for environmental justice, clear air and water initiatives, oil and gas development, support for small farms (including offering incentives for conservation of natural resources), protection of our natural resources, and helping to preserve our vast natural areas for generations to come.

You can check out the 2016 records of state officials at <http://scorecard.conservationco.org> and compare where the presidential candidates stand on energy and environmental policy at: http://ballotpedia.org/2016_presidential_candidates_on_energy_and_environmental_policy.



Image from conservationvoters.org

Get involved! Write or call your legislators and let them know where you stand on environmental issues and also let them know you’re keeping tabs on where they stand on key issues as well.

Our planet is facing major conservation and environmental challenges. It’s time to stand together to find lasting solutions to these challenges. This November, make your vote count for conservation because, together, we can make a lasting difference for this planet and all of life.

Dr. Ryder continued from Page 1

To contribute to the Dr. Ronald A. Ryder Endowed Memorial Scholarship, make checks payable to the CSU Foundation, and send to: CSU Foundation, P.O. Box 1870, Colorado State University Foundation, Fort Collins, CO, 80522. Be sure to specify the Dr. Ronald A. Ryder Memorial Scholarship Fund, and please mention that you are a member of the FCAS.

FCAS Welcome New National Members

FCAS welcomes new National Audubon Society members by one complimentary copy of our newsletter. Join us at our monthly programs on the second Thursday of the month. National dues do not cover the cost of the newsletter, so to continue receiving it, please subscribe. See the details on the last page of the newsletter or at www.fortcollinsaudubon.org.

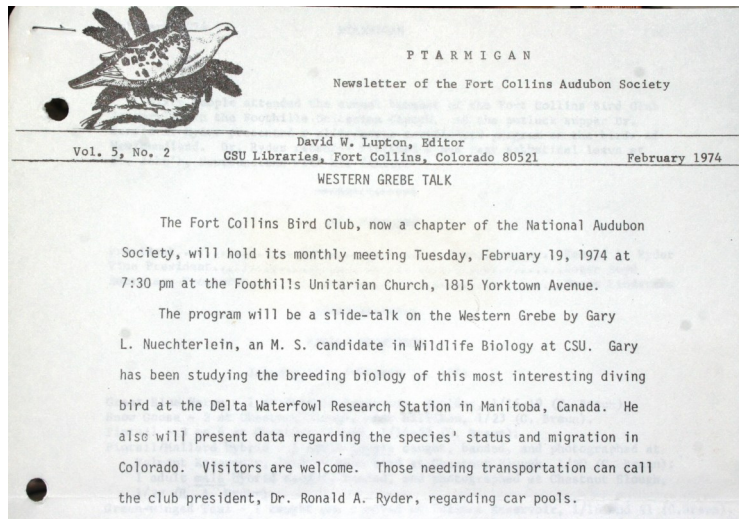


A Little History: The Origin of FCAS

The Fort Collins Audubon Society (FCAS) had its beginnings in 1962, with Dr. Ron Ryder as its first president. Initially it was known as the Fort Collins Bird Club; that name held through 1974. The first issue of the Bird Club's newsletter, the *Ptarmigan*, was published by David Lupton in January 1970, and Lupton remained the editor until November 1974.

During 1973, there was considerable discussion as to whether the organization should remain just

a bird club or become an affiliate of the National Audubon Society. Our current name is an indication of which viewpoint prevailed. The chapter became affiliated with the National Audubon Society in January 1974 and made the following announcement in Volume 5, Issue 2 (February 1974) of the *Ptarmigan*: "The Fort Collins Bird Club, now a chapter of the National Audubon Society, will hold its monthly meeting, Tuesday, February 19, 1974, at Foothills Unitarian Church." Dr. Ryder was the president of the chapter during its first year as a National Audubon affiliate. The next step was to gain tax exemption status, and FCAS received its 501(c)(3) exemption in August 1987.



An early issue of the *Ptarmigan*, Feb. 1974.

Over the years, FCAS has worked to fulfill its mission to promote "the appreciation, conservation, and restoration of ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife through education, participation, stewardship, and advocacy." The organization's local accomplishments include: nine monthly programs per year that are open to the public, frequent field trips that are open to the public, scholarships for educators, nomination of the Fossil Creek Reservoir and

surrounding area as a national important bird area, and support for multiple Great Outdoors Colorado grant applications. In addition, FCAS sponsors two Christmas Bird Counts (CBC), one in Fort Collins and one in Loveland. The Fort Collins CBC is the longest running continuous CBC in Colorado.

Thanks to Ann Molison and Bill Miller who traced this history of the origins of the FCAS by reviewing back issues of the *Ptarmigan* that have been archived at the library of the northeast regional office of the Colorado Parks and Wildlife (formerly the Colorado Division of Wildlife) and the Morgan Library at Colorado State University.

Birdathon continued from Page 2.

Unlimited store across the country. The gift certificates will be distributed to the 10 team members at the October program meeting or mailed to them if they do not reside in Fort Collins.

The Birdathon was an exciting event this year. We had seven teams, 82 donors, a total of 88 donations ranging from \$8.40 to \$500, and observed 222 separate species, 50 of which were unique. We got the Birdathon up on our website so teams could register and donations could be made through PayPal. But the greatest accomplishment is that FCAS grossed \$5,273.46, which will go a long way toward continuing our programs.

The FCAS Board wishes to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of the team members and donors who made the 2016 Birdathon a huge success.



Mississippi Kite by Nick Komar.



Upcoming Field Trips

All field trips are free (unless otherwise noted) and open to the public. All experience levels are welcome. Bring snacks or lunch, water, binoculars, and spotting scopes. Inquire with the FCAS field trip coordinator (John Shenot) or the trip leader named below if you need to borrow binoculars. Please understand that changes to the dates, meeting times or locations, and trip leaders are occasionally unavoidable. Contact the listed trip leader prior to the day of the trip or visit fortcollinsaudubon.org for more information and updates. RSVP strongly encouraged.

Oct. 2, Sunday, Wyoming Hereford Ranch. Leader: Irene Fortune, irene_fortune@msn.com, 970-613-0966. This ranch, located on the outskirts of Cheyenne, is a favorite destination among Cheyenne-area birders and an Audubon-designated "important bird area." It offers a variety of habitats that can attract fall mi-



Birding at the Wyoming Hereford Ranch from cheyennebirdbanter.wordpress.com

grants, and the owners welcome birders. Meet at the north end of the Harmony Road park and ride at 6 a.m. to carpool to the ranch, or call Irene to make other ar-

rangements.

Oct. 8, Saturday, Pineridge Natural Area. Leader: Sirena Brownlee, warblerak@yahoo.com. Join us for a morning bird walk around one of Fort Collins best areas for fall songbird migration. Meet at 10 a.m. at the parking lot on the north side of 42C (for Maxwell Natural Area, not the Dixon Reservoir Parking lot).

Oct. 9, Sunday, Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Denise Bretting, dbretting@swloveland.com, work: 970-669-1185, home: 970-669-8095. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the City of Fort Collins. All levels are welcome. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot. Call for any change. Dates and times for future surveys are as follows: Nov. 13, Sunday, 7:30 a.m.; Dec. 11, Sunday, 8 a.m.

Oct. 15, Saturday, Arapaho Bend Natural Area. Leader: John Shenot, johnshenot@gmail.com or 802-595-1669. This City of Fort Collins natural area sits at the southeastern end of the proposed Cache a l Poudre Urban River Corridor Important Bird Area. Here and at the adjacent Rigden Reservoir one can find lovely mountain views and an interesting mix of waterfowl, shorebirds, and land birds. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot at the corner of E. Horsetooth Road and Strauss Cabin Road.

Guatemala—Tikal Excursion, Nov. 5–13

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 guide, Claudia Avendaño, co-author of the *Aves de Guatemala*, an Annotated Checklist.



© Claudia Avendaño
Pink-headed Warbler by
Claudia Avendaño.

Not only will this be a unique experience at a low price (just \$2,500 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

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.

Birding in Costa Rica in December

Quetzal Tours also is offering a unique birding opportunity in Costa Rica, Dec. 1–14, with experienced guide Noel Ureña. Cost is \$4,200. For more details, contact Nick Komar at info@quetzal-tours.com, or 970-449-3645.

Welcome New and Renewing Members

Thanks Tim Priehs 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.



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.

- New or renewing FCAS Chapter Member \$ 20 Name: _____
Receive the FCAS *Ptarmigan* by email
- New or renewing FCAS Chapter Member \$ 30 Address: _____
Receive the FCAS *Ptarmigan* by mail
- Lifetime FCAS Chapter Member \$750 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Receive FCAS *Ptarmigan* by mail or email
- Additional support for FCAS programs \$ _____ Phone: _____
- Additional support for Alex Cringan Fund \$ _____ Email: _____
(natural history education grants)
- New NAS member \$ 20 May we send you FCAS email alerts if updates occur for field
Receive the NAS *Audubon* by mail trips, programs, etc.? Yes or No
- Renewing NAS member \$ 35 May we contact you for volunteer activities such as helping at
Receive the NAS *Audubon* by mail events or contacting legislators on important issues? Yes or No

Total 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 31 extend throughout the following year. Applications can be completed at

www.fortcollinsaudubon.org.