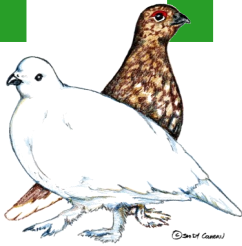


# PTARMIGAN



FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. Box 271968·Fort Collins,CO·80527-1968·[www.fortcollinsaudubon.org](http://www.fortcollinsaudubon.org)

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

November 2016

Volume 47, Issue 8

FCAS Presents

Lauren DeRosa, Birdfeeding Hobbyist

"Backyard Birdfeeding: Can 50 Million People Be Wrong?"

Thursday, November 10

Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Dr.

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

Lauren DeRosa, owner of Wild Birds Unlimited in Fort Collins, will be speaking about some of the myths regarding feeding wild birds, as well as tips and advice on what to offer wild birds to get the most joy possible from the hobby.

Lauren grew up in Steamboat Springs and moved to Fort Collins in 1981. She has fed wild birds for the past 15 years and was actually a customer at the local Wild Birds Unlimited store before purchasing it in 2006. Her favorite bird to attract to her own backyard is the American Goldfinch. The coolest bird that she has ever seen on the Front Range was the Prothonotary Warbler that was spotted at Lee



American Goldfinch from Wild Birds Unlimited.

Martinez Park this past spring. She considers herself a birdfeeding hobbyist more than a birder, and she loves sharing her joy of the hobby every day with friends, family and customers at the store. Her wish is that in her lifetime, there will be a wonderful pathway of deciduous trees and water that will attract the Northern Cardinal to the Front Range.

Join us at the Fort Collins Senior Center on November 10 for this evening of myths and tips on the hobby of bird feeding. This program is free and the public is welcomed.

## Welcome New National Members

FCAS welcomes new National Audubon Society members by sending complimentary copies of our newsletter for one month. 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 complimentary issue, please support your local chapter and subscribe to the newsletter. See the details on the last page of the newsletter or on our website at [www.fortcollinsaudubon.org](http://www.fortcollinsaudubon.org)



The big election is almost here! In less than three months we will be choosing new leadership. Yes, I said three months because, of course, I'm referring to the election of new officers and board members for FCAS.

At our annual meeting in January (which is part of our regularly-scheduled membership meeting and program), the members in attendance will vote for officers and board members to

# BECOME A BOARD MEMBER

lead FCAS in 2017. The president is elected to a two-year term. All other positions are elected to a one-year term.

The current board of directors has approved a nominating committee that will seek to identify a slate of candidates to fill all of the positions on the 2017 Board. This committee consists of current FCAS Vice-President Liz Pruessner, Jessie Meschievitz, and Lynne Hull. They will announce the proposed slate of candidates in our December newsletter, but nominations also can be made from the floor by any member at our annual meeting. There are no pre-requisites for officers or

board members, nor is there an expectation that all nominees will have conservation experience or birding expertise. If you would like to serve this organization as an officer or an at-large board member in 2017, or would like to suggest someone else you think would be good in such a role, please contact any of the nominating committee members. Contact information for Liz and Jessie can be found in the FCAS contacts on this page.

### FCAS CONTACTS

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For other FCAS contacts visit

[www.fortcollinsaudubon.org](http://www.fortcollinsaudubon.org)

Visit us on Facebook:

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

### FCAS Welcomes New and Renewing Members

Clifford Hendrick  
Diane Kristoff  
Michelle McKim  
Rich Roberts

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.



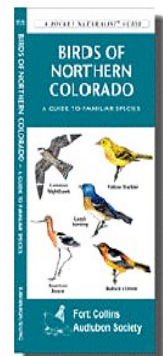
### Save the Dates!

The CBC is just around the corner. The Fort Collins CBC will be Dec. 17. Contact Tom Hall, [redbear@msn.com](mailto:redbear@msn.com) for more information. The Loveland CBC will be Jan. 1, 2017. Contact Nick Komar, [quetzal65@comcast.net](mailto:quetzal65@comcast.net), for details.

### 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



### Get Water Wise with WaterSense



Recent surveys suggest that about 90% of Americans recognize the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Energy Star label as an indicator that a labeled appliance meets high standards for energy efficiency. Chances are good that you are in that 90% and have an Energy Star-labeled appliance in your home. But have you heard of EPA’s WaterSense program?

The WaterSense program (<https://www3.epa.gov/watersense/index.html>) was modeled after Energy Star and launched in 2006. The goal of the WaterSense program is “to protect the future of our nation’s water supply by offering people a simple way to use less water with water-efficient products, new homes, and services.” And here in Northern Colorado’s dry climate, we know just how important water conservation is. But although the WaterSense program has achieved great success in its first decade, public awareness has not yet reached Energy Star levels.

showerheads and toilets use 20% less water than typical showerheads and toilets, while also meeting high quality standards. (Yes, you will get a satisfying shower and a satisfying flush!) According to EPA, the average family could save 2,900 gallons of water per year—not to mention saving on the electricity or natural gas they use to heat water—by installing WaterSense labeled showerheads. And replacing an old toilet with a WaterSense model could save your family as much as 13,000 gallons of water per year!

Look for the WaterSense label if you are in the market for any of the products listed above. Even if your toilet and shower are working just fine, you might be able to save money over the long term by replacing them now with WaterSense products. The labeled products sometimes cost more at the time of purchase, but you’ll save money on your water and energy bills for years. And if you get your water service from Fort Collins Utilities, go to the utility’s website (<http://www.fcgov.com/utilities/residential/conserves/rebate-programs/>) to learn about rebates that make WaterSense toilets and showerheads an even better deal. The utility is offering double rebates on WaterSense toilets until the end of 2016!

WaterSense labels can be found on a variety of consumer products that you might purchase for your home, including showerheads, toilets, faucets, and irrigation controllers. WaterSense labeled

**Shorten your shower**  

**1 minute**  
 ...save **550**  
 gallons per year

**Switch your showerhead**  

 ...save **2,900**  
 gallons per year.

**ShowerBetter** 



A large group of Franklin’s Gulls by Nick Komar.



Some Observations on Regional Migratory Trends in Franklin’s Gulls

The arrival of flocks of lovely Franklin’s Gulls tells us of summer’s end and fall’s imminent arrival. Once called Prairie Doves for their buoyant flight and habit of following the farmer’s plow to eat grasshoppers and other invertebrates, there is growing opinion that the regional migratory patterns of these birds are significantly changing. Let’s investigate.

Franklin’s Gulls spend winter in coastal Chile and Peru. In summer, they nest on the northern Great Plains and central Canada where they build floating nests on prairie wetlands and lakes. Flying north, small numbers briefly stop over in Larimer County. After nesting, larger numbers return to our area in late summer and early fall for the apparent purpose of feeding, gaining weight, and molting in preparation for their whopping 5,000-mile return flight to South America.

Cornell’s mammoth <http://ebird.org> database provides a wealth of information for our review, and the data appears to support popular observations of changing migratory patterns. In light of the extremely limited scope of this article, the data indicate the following: numbers of spring arrivals in Larimer County have significantly increased since the 1960s, and dramatically so since 2011. Spring birds in Colorado peak mid-April. Numbers of late summer/ fall birds have dramatically increased in Colorado since 2009, and Larimer County since 2013; arriving earlier and staying longer than even 15 years ago. All records show the number of pre-nesting spring birds to be significantly smaller than post-nesting sum-

mer/fall birds. Digging into the literature, prior to 1900, Franklin’s Gulls were completely unknown in Colorado. They were first seen in the 1920s and by 1939 were labeled a “common late summer and fall migrant.” In north central Colorado, there is now a small nesting colony, although 2016 produced no successful nests.

We are seeing more pre- and post-nesting Franklin’s Gulls. Southbound birds are arriving earlier, in greater numbers, and staying longer. What are the potential causes? Are we seeing more birds because the global population has grown? Franklin’s Gulls do not lend themselves to standard census techniques, but general consensus is that the population is in overall decline. (A declining global population with increased numbers would support the changing migration theory). Are Franklin’s Gulls attracted to the increased numbers of landfills here? Franklin’s Gulls are

not considered common landfill feeders. What about their habit of feeding behind the plow? While agriculture increased after 1900, homes have replaced farmlands in the last 20 years. Are increased numbers of reservoirs and manmade lakes attracting and keeping Franklin’s Gulls in the area? Franklin’s Gulls are often seen resting and feeding in these habitats. A cursory look at eBird sightings of this bird in Colorado and Larimer County shows a very strong relationship between sightings and water. What are your thoughts?

For references, email [bobbietilmant@comcast.net](mailto:bobbietilmant@comcast.net)



Franklin’s Gull in non-breeding plumage by Nick Komar.



Juvenile Franklin’s Gull by Nick Komar.



FCAS's mission includes promoting the appreciation, conservation, and restoration of ecosystems. First and foremost in that mission is education. And although FCAS does not have a chairman for the education committee, we still provide education to our membership and the public through our monthly programs and field trips.

Another method to provide environmental education, especially to youth, is the scholarship fund created about four years ago following the passing of a long time chapter member and retired wildlife instructor, Dr. Alexander Cringan. In fact, the membership form on the last page of every issue of the *Ptarmigan* contains the option to provide additional support for Alex Cringan Fund (natural history education grants). The purpose of the Cringan Fund is to provide financial assistance to educators involved in teaching natural sciences and environmental education so they may upgrade their skills and become more effective teachers.

A second scholarship fund that we financially support and promote is the Dr. Ronald A. Ryder Memorial Scholarship Fund. Dr. Ryder passed away last August. One of his former graduate student established the memorial fund through the CSU Foundation, to which



Dr. Alex Cringan



Dr. Ronald Ryder

FCAS has contributed \$1,000. The purpose of this memorial fund is to provide a \$1,000 scholarship to a CSU student who is studying birds in the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology.

To contribute to the Alex Cringan Scholarship Fund, send a check to FCAS, P.O. Box 271968, Fort Collins, 80527-1968. To contribute to the Dr. Ryder Memorial Fund, send a check to the CSU Foundation, P.O. Box 1870, Colorado State University Foundation, Fort Collins, 80522. The check must specify the Dr. Ronald A. Ryder Memorial Scholarship Fund for it to be placed in the correct fund. Please mention that you are a member of the FCAS. Also, notify Scott Webb at the Colorado State University Foundation that you have made a contribution to the Dr. Ryder's fund: Scott Webb, Executive Director of Advancement, Warner College of Natural Resources, 1401 Campus Delivery, Fort Collins, 80523-1401; 970-491-3594.

Both scholarship funds should provide long-lasting benefits to birds, wildlife, and the environment because they will provide training to educators and biologists who will work to raise environmental awareness in younger generations who will eventually be taxpayers and voters.

## 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 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](http://fortcollinsaudubon.org) for more information and updates. RSVP strongly encouraged.*

**Nov. 13, 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. 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. The next survey is Dec. 11, Sunday, 8 a.m.

**Nov. 20, Sunday, Riverbend Ponds Natural Area.** Leader: John Shenot, [johnshenot@gmail.com](mailto:johnshenot@gmail.com) or 802-595-1669. This City of Fort Collins natural area offers a combination of ponds, wetlands, and riparian habitat. About 200 bird species have been seen here over the years, and more than 70 species in the month of November. Note: This natural area has more than one parking lot. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot on E. Prospect Road.



Field Trip participants at Arapaho Bend Natural Area in Fort Collins. Photo by John Shenot.



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](http://www.fortcollinsaudubon.org).