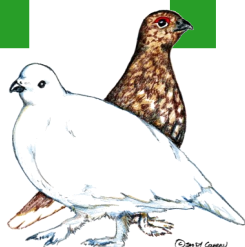


# PTARMIGAN



## 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.

October 2017

Volume 48, Issue 7

### FCAS Presents: Our 2017 Fundraiser

**A Silent Auction including original art, sculptures, classic out-of-print books, field guides, photographic equipment, matted photos, wildlife memorabilia, and many more items**

**Thursday, Oct. 12, beginning at 6:30 p.m.**

**Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Dr.**

**Special Guest Speaker: Kevin Cook**

**Author, Columnist, and Naturalist**

**"Life as a Naturalist"**

FCAS is looking forward to everyone coming early to join us for the silent auction on Oct. 12. Please know that we can accept only cash or checks for the auction.

Small bills are appreciated.



In addition to the auction, Kevin J. Cook will present, "Life as a Naturalist." He is the longest running columnist for the *Fort Collins Coloradoan* (since 1981), and has been doing monthly nature programs at the Fort Collins

library since 1991. He teaches natural history courses for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at CSU, and he teaches more than a dozen seminars for the Rocky Mountain Conservancy at Rocky Mountain National Park.

From his program, we will learn that to know what Horned Larks do on windy days, one must go afield on

windy days and look for Horned Larks. To know what Flammulated Owls do on rainy nights, one must go into the mountain forests on rainy nights. To know how much blizzard a White-tailed Ptarmigan will tolerate before it takes shelter, one must explore the high willow carrs in a blizzard or two. To know what pollinates a tiny twayblade flower, one must lie on wet ground where mosquitoes outnumber stars in the sky. Some details about life and living can be gleaned from books and journals and websites, but the life of a naturalist requires more than just reading a lot. Being a naturalist is about engaging life as richly and fully as possible, then sharing the experiences with others.



### 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).

First things first: At our September meeting, the FCAS Board of Directors voted to appoint Helmut Retzer to fill a vacant position on the Board through the end of 2017. Welcome, Helmut! I'm hopeful that he will continue to serve into 2018 if elected by the membership to do so. Which brings me to the topic of elections...

# CALL FOR BOARD MEMBERS

Every January, at our regularly-scheduled membership meeting, FCAS elects new officers and directors to our Board. (One exception: the president serves a two-year term, and thus is only elected every other January.) Consistent with our bylaws, the Board will name a nominating committee in time for our October membership meeting that will seek to identify candidates willing to serve as officers and directors in 2018. The nominating committee will announce a proposed slate of candidates in our December newsletter, but nominations also can be made from the floor by any member at our annual meeting in January.

Next year will bring a bigger than usual transition, as our long-serving treasurer (John Waddell) and sec-

retary (Scott Cobble) will not be seeking re-election to those roles. We also have a vacancy in the president-elect position (i.e., the person who will become FCAS president in January 2019). Because it is so important to find candidates for those roles, I'm using this month's column to get a head start on the nominating committee and urge potential volunteers to contact me as soon as possible. There are no prerequisites for officers or board members, nor is there an expectation that all nominees will have conservation experience or birding expertise. I don't expect anyone to make a firm commitment at this time, but if you are interested or even just curious please call or email me! Volunteers willing to serve on the nominating committee also should contact me as soon as possible.



Dark-eyed Junco by Alex Avery.

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

Visit us on Facebook:

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

### 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



"The newspaper headlines may shout about global warming, extinctions of living species, the devastation of rain forests, and other worldwide catastrophes, but Americans evince a striking complacency when it comes to their everyday environment and the growing calamity that it represents." —James Howard Kunstler

## And The List Keeps Getting Longer

Recently I came across another article describing the negative impacts of global climate disruption, often referred to as "global warming" or just "climate change." The article titled, "Right Under Your Feet: Soil Health and the Climate Crisis," added just one more topic under the negative column of the list of impacts from global climate disruption.

I have been extremely worried about the current and future impacts of climate change for at least a decade. Let's review several of the most devastating impacts of climate change.

1. Severe drought and increasingly severe storm events. World-wide climatic disruption is producing severe drought over larger areas than ever before in recent history. Warming oceans are intensifying the severity of hurricanes and cyclones. Witness hurricanes Katrina, Harvey, and most recently, Irma, the most intense ever Atlantic hurricane.

2. A rise in sea levels. Sea level rise, due to melting glaciers and polar ice caps, and compounded by the thermal expansion of oceanic waters, will require the relocation of a billion or more people, both from inundated island nations and from low-lying coastal areas. Expensive to build, sea walls may be constructed to protect large cities, with no guarantees of their effectiveness. Salt water will invade fresh water aquifers on which many cities depend.

3. Acidification of the world's oceans. The oceans have been absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere ever since the dawn of the Industrial Age, and now con-

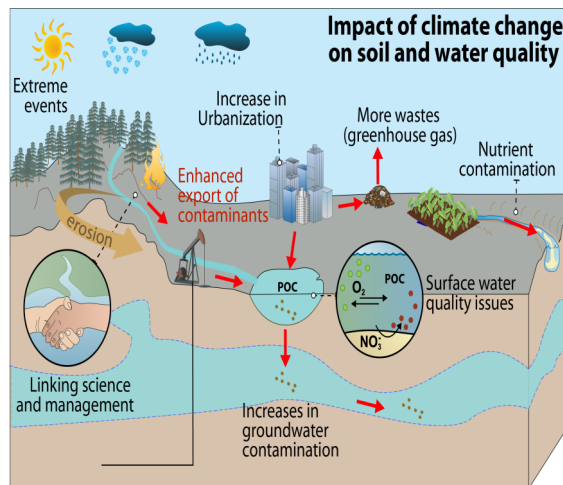
tain so much dissolved carbon dioxide that they are acidic. Shellfish are having a difficult time forming their shells that consist of calcium carbonate—the same material found in limestone. Ocean acidification could lead

to a total collapse of the oceans' fisheries and all marine life forms dependent upon them, including about one billion of the world's poorest people who depend on fisheries as a primary food source.

Now let's add to the list the impact of climate change on soil health. Humanity already has difficulty feeding its population. Currently we produce enough food to feed the world's ever-increasing population if we can distribute it more efficiently and reduce spoilage waste. We know that increased temperatures are leading to frequent droughts and

increased water evaporation that kill off the vital living soil ecosystems necessary to grow healthy crops. Furthermore, higher temperatures also leave less water to dilute even relatively common pollutants in reservoirs, streams and rivers, lakes, and wells.

I am angry with our politicians who, apparently, do not have sufficient background in the sciences to understand the significance of what scientists are warning. Equally disturbing is the silence of the majority of our citizens with respect to the inactivity on climate disruption. We should all be in the faces of our elected officials, pointing out to them that it will be less costly to change our current methods (burning fossil fuels) now instead of dealing with the future impacts of climate change when it will be more costly, if not impossible, to reduce those impacts.



From <https://waterclimate.wordpress.com>

## A Look Back in History

From: Vol. 2, No. 2, February 1971.

"The Fort Collins Bird Club annual banquet, heralding in the year's new slate of officers, was held January 19, 1971, at the Colonial Hickory House. While enjoying delights of either a ham or beef dinner, the group of approximately 30 members and guests were entertained by Dr. Alex Cringan's slide talk on birding in Canada. Dr. Cringan recently has arrived from Canada to become a professor of wildlife biology at CSU."



Snowy Owl from

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





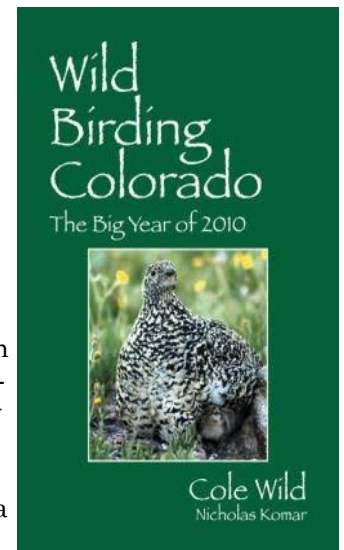
Shhh...quiet please! The FCAS "Silent Auction" is about to begin and you don't want to miss out. As you may know, this year the primary fund raiser for FCAS is a silent auction held during our October 12 meeting, starting at 6:30 p.m. Successful bidders will go home with some real treasures, including a camera and accessories, nature oriented artwork and books and, a real highlight, a day spent with one of Colorado's finest birders, Nick Komar.

Colorado is a state of tremendous birding opportunities. If you are new to Colorado, you may be surprised to learn that the official state list of the Colorado Birds Records Committee (a standing committee of the Colorado Field Ornithologists) is now at 502 species. Colorado is a land of contrasts, blessed with a variety of habitats each with its own set of birds. In one summer day we can drive through hot shortgrass prairie to the east, chill out with a picnic surrounded by tundra atop the Rocky Mountains, and then spend the night among the canyons and plateaus of our western red rock country. Our drive also takes us by countless rivers, lakes, and reservoirs home to dippers and waterfowl. Colorado's geographic location also makes it a fantastic spot for viewing an exciting array of spring and fall migrants. There are only a handful of states whose species lists exceed Colorado's.

What a great opportunity for the winner (or winners, as up to five people can bid together as one group): a field day with Nick Komar to get out for some excellent Colorado birding. In addition, the winner also receives a copy of the book, "Wild Birding Colorado: The Big Year of 2010," in which Cole Wild (co-authored by Nick) recorded his experiences observing over 400 species in

one year. Reading about Cole's Big Year yields excellent ideas as to how one might spend the day. The winner could actually do their own "Big Day" during the birdy month of May, seeing as many as 150 species or, instead, focus on a specific target bird or group of birds such as gulls, waterfowl, or shorebirds, and glean expert advice on field ID. Another option is to make a day trip to a specific hot spot, such as Pawnee Grasslands. Nick will give the winner(s) a custom birding adventure not to be forgotten.

Bid for Nick on your own or gather up to four friends and bid as a group. He is donating his expertise; winner(s) to provide transportation. Please bid generously on this, or any auction item. You'll be supporting FCAS and have a great time doing so. See you there and good luck!



Streak-backed Oriole by Nick Komar.



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

**Oct. 8, 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 on the second Sunday of each month. 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. 12 at 7:30 a.m., and



Dickcissel at Reservoir Ridge Natural Area by John Shenot.

Dec. 10 at 8 a.m.

**Oct. 14, Saturday, Fossil Creek Reservoir Natural Area.** Leader: Sirena Brownlee, [sirena.brownlee@hdrinc.com](mailto:sirena.brownlee@hdrinc.com), 970-980-6184. Fossil Creek Reservoir Natural Area is designated an "Important Bird Area" by the National Audubon Society. Join Sirena to look for migrating waterfowl and wading birds, gulls and terns, and more. Meet in the parking lot at 9:30 a.m.

### FCAS Welcomes New and Renewing Members

Holmes Rolston III  
Christine Sparks  
Darwin Spearing

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.



Above: White-breasted Nuthatch by Ron Harden.



Left: Song Sparrow By Ron Harden.



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.

- |  |          |  |
|--|----------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New or renewing FCAS Chapter Member<br>Receive the FCAS <i>Ptarmigan</i> by email | \$ 20    | Name: _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New or renewing FCAS Chapter Member<br>Receive the FCAS <i>Ptarmigan</i> by mail  | \$ 30    | Address: _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime FCAS Chapter Member<br>Receive FCAS <i>Ptarmigan</i> by mail or email    | \$750    | City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional support for FCAS programs  | \$ _____ | Phone: _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional support for Alex Cringan Fund<br>(natural history education grants)    | \$ _____ | Email: _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New NAS member<br>Receive the NAS <i>Audubon</i> by mail                          | \$ 20    | May we send you FCAS email alerts if updates occur for field trips, programs, etc.? Yes or No                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Renewing NAS member<br>Receive the NAS <i>Audubon</i> by mail                     | \$ 35    | May we contact you for volunteer activities such as helping at 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).