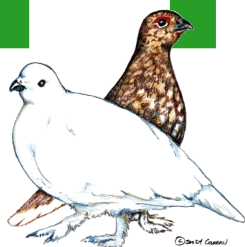


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FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY

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.

December 2017

Volume 48, Issue 9

FCAS December Potluck and Member Slideshow

Thursday, December 14

Potluck Buffet begins at 6:30 p.m.; Slides follow at approximately 7:15

Fort Collins Senior Center; 1200 Raintree Drive, Fort Collins

Presented by: YOU, the Members (Guests Invited too)

This is your evening to receive the appreciation and applause! Our December program will be presented by those of you, members and guests, who wish to share wildlife photos from your own photography collections (please limit your presentation to 10 minutes). Laptop, digital projector, screen, and sound sys-



Williamson's Sapsucker
By Ron Harden.



American Bittern
By Helmut Retzer.

tem will be provided.

For the potluck, FCAS provides coffee, tea, and water. Those attending, please bring a dish to pass (that will serve 6–8), your own place setting, and serving and eating utensils. Join us for this very special program meeting on Thursday, Dec. 14, at the Fort Collins Senior Center. Potluck buffet begins at 6:30. Guests are welcome!

FCAS welcomes new National Audubon Society members by sending one complimentary copy of our newsletter. 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 to keep receiving it, please support your local chapter and subscribe. See details on the last page or on our website at www.fortcollinsaudubon.org.

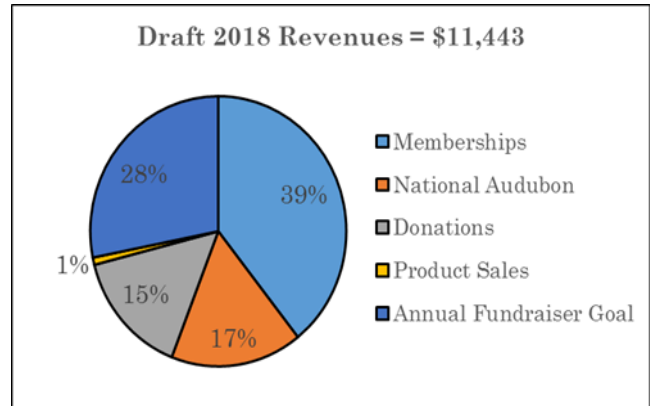
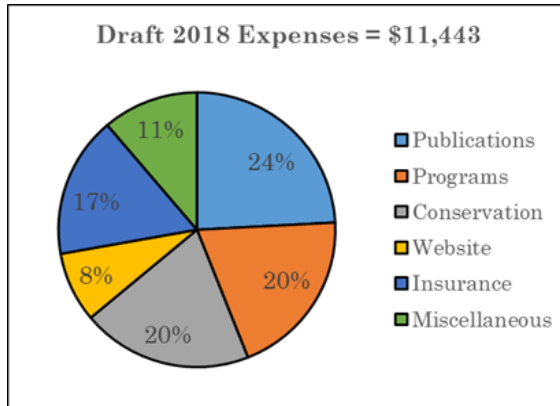


According to our current bylaws, the Board is supposed to agree on a proposed annual budget at our December meeting each year, and announce the proposed budget to the membership in our December newsletter. The tricky part is that the deadline for getting articles in our December newsletter is in mid-November.

We might need to amend our bylaws someday, but for this December, I'm just going to provide an overview of

the budget as it was presented to the Board in November by our Treasurer, and assure everyone that the complete budget will be available to any member upon request after the December Board meeting.

FCAS is a very small nonprofit organization run by volunteers. Our annual expenditures in recent years have been less than \$12,000. Our annual revenues have roughly equaled expenses, allowing us to maintain a steady level of reserves without raising membership dues. The charts with this article show the anticipated expenses and revenues presented in the Treasurer's draft budget.



Report of the Nominating Committee on 2018 FCAS Board Candidates

In October, the FCAS Board of Directors appointed a Nominating Committee to identify candidates to serve as officers and directors for the 2018 Board. The Committee members were Jessie Meschievitz, Harry Rose, and John Shenot. In keeping with our bylaws, the Nominating Committee hereby announces a slate of candidates to be officially nominated at our January membership meeting: (1) President-Elect: none (still seeking a volunteer); (2) Vice President: Liz Pruessner; (3) Treasurer: none (still seeking a volunteer); (4) Recording Secretary: none (still seeking a volunteer); (5) Directors at Large (six positions to fill): Scott Cobble, Alan Godwin, Ron Harden, Bill Miller, Helmut Retzer, and Harry Rose.

Additional nominations will be accepted prior to and from the floor at the January meeting. Members present will vote, and those elected will be immediately installed. The position of President is not up for election this year, as John Shenot will be serving the second year of a two-year term.

FCAS CONTACTS

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For other FCAS contacts visit

www.fortcollinsaudubon.org

Visit us on Facebook:

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

FCAS Pocket Guide to Local Birds

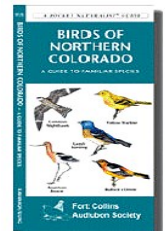
Is available at the following retailers who support our organization with the sales:

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



“You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.”—*R. Buckminster Fuller*

The Rights of Nature

The Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature (<https://therightsofnature.org>) is an organization that promotes the recognition of nature’s rights. “It is the recognition that our ecosystems—including trees, oceans, animals, mountains—have rights just as human beings have rights. Rights of Nature is about balancing what is good for human beings against what is good for other species, what is good for the planet as a world. It is the holistic recognition that all life, all ecosystems on our planet are deeply intertwined.”

In 2008, Ecuadorians adopted their new constitution by an overwhelming majority, making Ecuador the first country in the world to recognize the Rights of Nature in its constitution. In 2011, Bolivia followed suit, followed by Peru. Closer to home, Boulder Rights of Nature (BRON) began organizing in late 2012. Their goal is to convince both Boulder and Boulder County to recognize the rights of nature within their jurisdictions. In addition, more than 100 municipalities in the United States, mostly in Pennsylvania, also have passed rights of nature ordinances.

Just in case you haven’t already noticed, our environment is struggling, primarily because large corporations strongly influence the legal and legislative system, and they consider communities and the environment as their “property,” according to Kai Huschke, Northwest community organizer for the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF; <https://celdf.org/>). As an example, consider the sway that oil companies have over our political system in gaining federal permission to drill for oil and gas in risky places, such as in deep oceans and the arctic. We’ve already experienced numerous environmental calamities, such as the Deepwater Horizon blowout in mile-deep waters in the Gulf of Mexico in April of 2010.

The CELDF has done incredible work to demonstrate how the American legal system is stacked in favor of both government and corporations. Over time, they have developed a structure of law that favors themselves, is focused on endless growth, extraction, and development instead of protecting people, workers, communities and the environment. This structure is

“inherently unsustainable, and has, in fact, made *sustainability illegal*” (<https://sandiegofreepress.org/2017/10/the-rights-of-nature-and-the-power-of-law/>).

Recently I came across an article by Will Falk for the San Diego Free Press that related how he, a former public defender in Wisconsin, and four others from the international environmental organization Deep Green Resistance (DGR), are listed as “next friends” to the Colorado



Colorado River from Wikimedia Commons.

River, which is a legal concept that means they have signed on to a lawsuit as fiduciaries or guardians of the river. They brought the suit on behalf of the Colorado River against the State of Colorado in a first-in-the-nation lawsuit—*Colorado River v. Colorado*—requesting that the U.S. District Court in Denver recognize the river’s rights of nature. These rights include the rights to exist, flourish, regenerate, and naturally evolve. To enforce these rights, the Colorado River also requests that the court grant the river “personhood” and standing to sue in American courts.

When asked if he thinks their case is going to win, Mr. Falk indicated that they have provided the arguments the judge needs to do the right thing and rule in their favor. If they do win, the highly endangered Colorado River will gain better protections, while the environmental movement will gain a strong new legal weapon to use in defense of the natural world.

Question: Should FCAS pursue the adoption of some form of rights of nature by Fort Collins and Larimer County? Might this be considered a “Legacy Project?”

Education Committee Announcement

We have formed a new education committee for FCAS. We are excited to organize some outreach opportunities, partner with students of all ages, and to inform and educate the public about the natural environment. Contact Barbara.Patterson@frontrange.edu for more information.



For The Love of the List

It's likely that at some point over the years you've walked into a park's visitor center, approached the front desk and asked for the "bird checklist." A bird list is like a wish list. It becomes checked, annotated, mangled and smudged, having accompanied its owner mile after mile, day after day in the field. Once home, it becomes a souvenir of yet another birding adventure. Today, of course, it is perhaps more likely the bird list was downloaded to your smart phone before leaving, and all of your observations were uploaded to eBird in the field. Paper or electronic, we birders love our lists; not only for the personal satisfaction they give, but in recognition of the critical data they provide researchers and resource managers.

Larimer County has an official bird list created more than a decade ago through the hard work of many FCAS members, including Joel Hurmence, Ron Harden, and Nick Komar. This year Andy Bankert updated the 2010 list with assistance from Sean Walters, Nick Komar, Ron Harden, Dave Leatherman, and John Shenot. Updates include a species order change due to American Ornithological Society (AOS) taxonomic changes. The Magnificent Hummingbird is now Rivoli's Hummingbird and the interior Western Scrub-Jay was renamed Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay. Two species were deleted: Thayer's Gull, now considered a variant of Iceland Gull, and Black Vulture, due to concern about the accuracy of the only record. Finally, the following species were added: Harlequin Duck, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Yellow Rail, Little Gull, Laughing Gull, Western Gull, Iceland Gull, White Ibis, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Chihuahuan Raven, Pacific Wren, Sprague's Pipit, Smith's Long-

spur, Eastern Towhee, Canyon Towhee, Baird's Sparrow, Connecticut Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, and Prairie Warbler. An electronic version of the new 2017 Larimer County Bird List can be viewed and downloaded at <http://www.fortcollinsaudubon.org/pdfs/FCASchecklist.pdf>.



Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay by Ron Harden.

Creating an accurate bird list takes detective work. Data sources include eBird, the Colorado Bird Records Committee, the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlases I and II, and historic records and skins at CSU, the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, and beyond. Andy Bankert (a true Sherlock Holmes among contributors) somehow discovered that The Royal Ontario Museum in Canada had skins of a Harlequin Duck collected near Estes Park in 1901, resulting in the listing of this species.

Instantaneous documentation and publicizing of rare bird sightings through portals such as the eBird and COBIRDS listserves is so commonplace that we must assume rare bird sightings are coming to light more quickly than ever.



White Ibis by Ron Harden.

Nick Komar's excitement is palpable in his real time July 25, 2017 COBIRDS post from the field: "Four of us are currently listening to a singing Baird's Sparrow on the west side of Larimer County Road 5 near Rawhide Energy Station. This may be Larimer County's first nesting Baird's Sparrow." It reads like the beginning of a mystery novel.

The ability of birds to travel wherever and whenever adds tremendously to the excitement of birding. In my next article, we'll take a more in-depth look at the stories behind the birds that were added to the 2017 Larimer County Bird List.

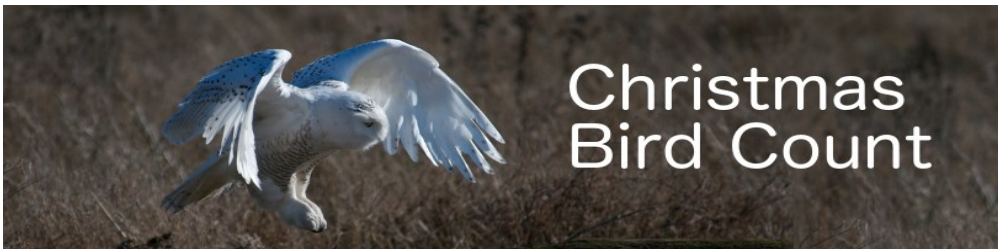


Sign Up for the Christmas Bird Counts!

The 118th annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) will take place from December 14 to January 5, 2018. The CBC is the longest running citizen science survey in the world, and it provides critical data on bird population trends. Tens of thousands of participants know that it is also a great way to make new friends and have fun! Volunteers are assigned in teams to cover designated areas within a 15-mile diameter circle, counting every bird they see or hear all day. This

year, the Fort Collins CBC is scheduled for Saturday, December 16 and will be coordinated by Tom Hall (redbear44@msn.com). The Rawhide Power Plant CBC, organized by Doug Kibbe (dpkibbe@msn.com), takes place on Sunday, December 31. And finally, the Loveland count will be on Monday, January 1 and coordinated by Nick Komar (quetzal65@comcast.net). Contact Tom, Doug, or Nick to participate in the CBC. Advanced birding skills are not required; beginners can be

paired with more experienced birders. Volunteers who live within a count circle that just wish to record what comes to their backyard feeders also are welcome to participate; they should contact the CBC coordinator for details.



Upcoming Field Trips

All field trips are free (unless otherwise noted) and open to the public. All experience levels are welcome. Contact the listed trip leader prior to the day of the trip or visit fortcollinsaudubon.org for more information and updates. RSVP strongly encouraged.

Dec. 10, 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 on the second Sunday of each month. All levels are welcome. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot. Call for any change.

Dec. 16, Saturday, Fort Collins Christmas Bird Count. Contact the coordinator if you wish to participate: Tom Hall, redbear44@msn.com, 970-980-1834.

Dec. 31, Sunday, Rawhide Power Plant Christmas Bird Count. Contact the coordinator if you wish to participate: Doug Kibbe, dpkibbe@msn.com, 303-910-9476.

Jan. 1, Monday, Loveland Christmas Bird Count. Contact the coordinator if you wish to participate: Nick Komar, quetzal65@comcast.net, 970-449-3645.

Getting Green Laws:

Environmental Topics for the Colorado Legislature Saturday, February 24, 2018

Audubon of Greater Denver and the Sierra Club Denver Metro Network are teaming up for another great session on "Getting Green Laws" (GGL) passed in our state legislature. Activists from both groups network on how to best contact legislators, decide which legislators are major players, discuss how to effectively communicate environmental concerns to them, and identify "hot" environmental topics for 2018. Armed with this information, and advised by our lobbyists, they can then help to protect our wildlife, water, and landscapes.

The GGL meeting is highlighted by Audubon lobbyist Jen Boulton's entertaining description of the bills, the process, and the personalities involved. A panel of experts on one of more of the hot topics follows her talk; then legislators talk about their interests and listen to ours, giving us an opportunity to meet and engage them on issues of concern to us as environmentalists.

The forum will be Saturday, Feb. 24, from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., at First Plymouth Church, 3501 S. Colorado Boulevard, Denver (SW corner of Colorado and Hampden). The first 20 people under 30 years old who register get in free, otherwise the cost is \$12 in advance, \$15 at the door, and includes a breakfast snack and lunch. Register and pay by credit card online at www.denveraudubon.org, or call the Audubon office, 303-973-9530, Monday–Thursday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., or a check to: Audubon of Greater Denver, 9308 S. Wadsworth Blvd., Littleton, CO 80128.

Welcome New and Renewing Members

Connie Marvel
Lori Nixon
David Otis
Thad Pawlikowski
Margaret Reek



Thank you for your membership!



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
Receive the FCAS <i>Ptarmigan</i> by email | \$ 20 | Name: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | New or renewing FCAS Chapter Member
Receive the FCAS <i>Ptarmigan</i> by mail | \$ 30 | Address: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Lifetime FCAS Chapter Member
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
(natural history education grants) | \$ ____ | Email: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | New NAS member
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
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.