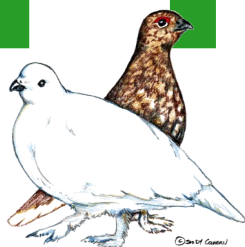


# PTARMIGAN



## 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.

January 2018

Volume 49, Issue 1

### FCAS Hosts Dave Leatherman

Birder, Entomologist, Writer

“Yikes..Shrikes!”

Thursday, Jan, 11

Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Dr.

Social Time: 7 p.m.; Program 7:20 p.m.

Dave Leatherman has warned this presentation is “not for the faint of heart,” as it will focus on the “meat and gore” of the life history of both Loggerhead and Northern Shrikes on the eastern plains of Colorado. Loggerheads will be emphasized and most of the talk will deal with their unique habit of impaling prey on sharp objects, what we can learn from this, and best ways to observe it.

Dave served as the forest



Northern Shrike with prey by David Leatherman.

entomologist for the Colorado State Forest Service from 1974 to 2005 where his major responsibilities included all aspects of Mountain Pine Beetle, teaching, and surveys. He is an avid birder, active in the Colorado Field Ornithologists, has seen 449 species in the state, and has been part of finding four first state records, including a Couch's Kingbird seen in Lamar last spring.

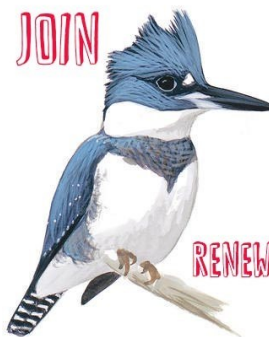
Join us on January 11 at the Fort Collins Senior Center for this free program.

### FCAS Annual Membership Renewal

It is January and that means it is time to renew your annual membership! FCAS chapter memberships run for the calendar year from January to December. Dues are \$20 to receive the *Ptarmigan* electronically or \$30 for a printed copy through the mail. Please use the form on the back page of the *Ptarmigan* to renew by mail or renew at a program meeting. You also can renew online at: [www.fortcollinsaudubon.org](http://www.fortcollinsaudubon.org). Your membership and contributions are tax deductible.

Your local chapter dues strengthen our efforts and make possible our programs, meetings, education, and advocacy for birds and wildlife habitat. Keep the *Ptarmigan* coming by renewing today!

If you renewed September–December 2017, your membership is good through January 2019. Thank you to all who have already renewed. We appreciate your support!



## President's Corner

by John Shenot

Happy New Year! As I start my fourth year as FCAS president, I'm grateful that volunteering in this capacity has given me the opportunity to meet so many of our members. I'm still meeting people on a regular basis. If we haven't spoken before, come to a meeting and introduce yourself!

Over the past few months, my colleagues on the Board of Directors and I have been searching for people willing to serve on the Board in 2018. The election for new officers and directors-at-large will be at our regularly-scheduled membership meeting on January 11, and every member in attendance gets to vote. I'm expecting we will elect some fresh faces to the Board, and I look forward to that.

After electing a new Board in January, I will appoint (with the Board's approval) a 2018 chairperson for each of the standing committees named in our bylaws: Conservation, Membership, Education, Finance, Programs, Field Trips, Publications, Public Relations, and Hospitality. This is a good time to let us know if you would like to serve on any of those committees. We especially are eager to add people to our Conservation, Membership, and Field Trips committees, but we have room for new people on every committee. The time commitment can be as big or as small as you like, and the timing of any meetings or activities is flexible. You can contact me or the current (2017) committee chairperson listed on our website if interested in serving.

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Visit us on Facebook:

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

## The Great Backyard Bird Count



From <http://springcreekprairie.audubon.org>

The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is a free, fun, and easy event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of bird populations. Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days between Feb. 16–19 and report their sightings online at [birdcount.org](http://birdcount.org). Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from beginning bird watchers to experts, and you can participate from your backyard, or anywhere in the world.



### FCAS Pocket Guide to Local Birds

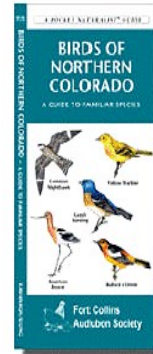
Is available at the following retailers who support our organization with the sales:

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



“I wanted to leave a message here, for humanity and all of planet, that the peoples need to join to defend Mother Nature, the soil, water, and air because they are being threatened. And humanity needs Nature to survive. So I want to say that Nature and the air are not a means of commerce for anyone and it’s every human’s right to live in peace. We need to respect the rights of Nature and humans beings that need her to survive.” -- *Ninawa Nuneshuni Kui, President of the Huni Kui People of Acre, Brazil, at the UN Climate Conference in Bonn, Germany, Nov. 6–17, 2017.*

## The Rights of Nature (<https://therightsofnature.org/>)

How does one begin to wrap their minds around a subject such as “The Rights of Nature?” I do a Google search on numerous topics and this is one such topic. The more I read on this topic, the more concerned I become for the future of mankind and our natural world.

I first became aware of the movement, Rights of Nature (RoN), in late 2012 when Boulder Audubon started organizing their Boulder Rights of Nature (BRON) effort. Since then I have become more informed on the efforts of scientists, indigenous people around the world, the governments of island nations, and many other entities, to stem humanity’s assault on the planet that we call home. The current picture isn’t pretty, nor is the forecast of what is to come if we don’t drastically change the way people treat our natural world.

The principal driver of the RoN movement is the world’s increasing human population and its excessive consumption of natural resources—minerals, water, air, forests, oceanic fisheries, and so forth. Some estimates are that the human population is consuming natural resources, such as forest products, at 1.4 to 1.6 times faster than nature can replenish them. Some natural resources, such as most mineral resources, are irreplaceable. In my youth I was told that the world’s oceans were an inexhaustible food supply. That obviously is not true today as most fisheries are depleted faster than they can replenish themselves. Our alarming rate of consumption of natural resources also is severely impacting human health and people’s quality of life.

An increasing population drives increased demands for consumer products which, in turn, drives an in-

crease in the need for more energy, derived primarily from the burning of fossil fuels. As substantiated by a majority of climate scientists, this drives the increases we see in global climate disruption.

What are the solutions to our dilemma that is worsening as I type? Many of us are concerned about problems

like climate disruption, biodiversity loss, toxins in our foods, income inequality, and so forth. One writer (<https://www.commondreams.org/views/2017/11/18/design-flaw-core-humanitys-malaise>) suggests that we need to rethink our “operating system,” namely our economy. The way that we produce, trade, value, and distribute goods and wealth negates our ability to deal

with the major issues of the times. One might wonder when the stock market has reached astonishing new highs at the same time that the nation has suffered severe economic blows from multiple natural disasters. This suggests a broad disconnect between finance and reality. Our economy doesn’t play by any natural laws, such as gravity. Instead, it is driven by the insatiable desire for continuous growth and expansion which, by all common sense, is unsustainable.

The world’s governments and businesses must accept the concept that we can’t continue consuming the earth’s resources at ever increasing rates. We all need to recognize that humans are a part of nature and that we must change our operating system to allow renewable resources to regenerate. Doctors are held to a high standard that dictates that they shall not cause harm. That same principle needs to be adhered to by humans, corporations, and governments in how we deal with and treat the natural world.



Earth by Kevin Gill. (Photo: Flickr/Creative Commons)

## Remember to Renew Your Membership!





## Now...For the Rest of the Story

## (Part 2 of Our Look at the Newly Updated 2017 Larimer County Bird List)

Who hasn't looked at a bird on the wing and yearned for its freedom? We daydream of flying where we want, when we want—to be free as a bird. We can only wonder if that bird we see is in pursuit of food and shelter, or adventure. What we do know is that the variety and abundance of birds seen in Larimer County changes constantly. The Larimer County bird list is updated every several years to reflect those changes. In last month's newsletter, we looked at the process of updating the previous 2010 list, now we'll take a closer look at some of the new additions.

Surprisingly, a few of the new species were confirmed in Larimer County years ago, but never were recorded. Andy Bankert believed Harlequin Ducks had once been found in the swift streams around Rocky

Mountain National Park, and began an online search of specimen databases for proof. Sure enough, he found a 1901 specimen collected near Estes Park. These beautiful birds are now primarily found much farther north. The Yellow Rail, new to the county and only the second record for the state, was documented in 2000 when a sharp-eyed Loveland property owner found a single dead bird in his yard and turned it directly over to the State Division of Wildlife, bypassing the county list.

Not surprisingly, some of the newly listed birds are easily overlooked species, difficult to identify, and resemble other more common birds. These include Smith's Longspur, Chihuahuan Raven, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, and the Eastern Wood-Pewee. The Eastern Wood-Pewee is very similar to the locally common Western Wood-Pewee. Their songs, however, are different and David Leatherman knows the difference. He identified the county's first documented Eastern Wood-Pewee "desperately" and fruitlessly singing in Grandview Cemetery from May 22 to June 27, 2010. While Dave is

an expert, it's often the novice and visiting birder who discover a rarity. The Smith's Longspur was identified and photographed by a birder vacationing from Massachusetts; the Chihuahuan Raven, by a birder from France. It would seem logical to assume these birders were familiar with these species uncommon to local birders, but they were not. It appears they simply had little preconception as to what should be found. The take away: when birding, keep an open mind.

Some new species, like the Canyon Towhee and Little

Gull (smallest gull in the world), which has been documented in Colorado in increasing number, were anticipated in the county. The Western Gull and White Ibis were surprises. The Western Gull seldom strays far



Eastern Wood-Pewee by David Letterman.

from the Pacific Coast, but one was confirmed at Timnath Reservoir in October 2013. The White Ibis, more at home in the Florida Everglades, was seen at Horseshoe Reservoir in September 2014.

Truly exciting is the addition of the Baird's Sparrow, and the possibility they are nesting here. Described by Cornell's website as, "rare and elusive, the Baird's Sparrow breeds in the vanishing prairie lands of the northern Great Plains. It habitually lies low in the tall grass, revealing its presence only with its distinctive tinkling song."

It is fun to contemplate what brought these birds to Larimer County. Is global warming having an effect? And, what will our next new bird be? You may want to familiarize yourself with the Greater Roadrunner, Tufted Duck, Crested Caracara, Nelson's Sparrow, King Rail, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Hermit Warbler, as Andy believes these all have potential.

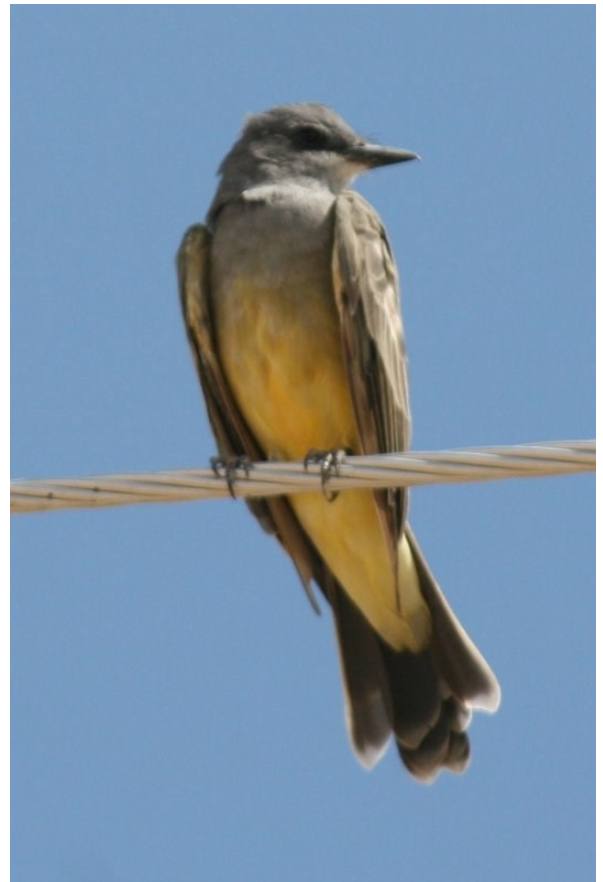


**Getting Green Laws:  
Environmental Topics for the Colorado Legislature  
Saturday, February 24**

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 or 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 is 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 who register get in free, otherwise the cost is \$12 in advance, \$15 at the door, and includes a breakfast snack and lunch. Register online at [www.denveraudubon.org](http://www.denveraudubon.org), or call the Audubon office, 303-973-9530, Monday–Thursday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., or send a check to: Audubon of Greater Denver, 9308 S. Wadsworth Blvd., Littleton, CO 80128.



Cassin's Kingbird by Nick Komar.

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

**FCAS Welcomes New and Renewing Members**

Jim & Darla Anderson  
Mary Beck & Gary Spivak  
Thomas J. Brewer  
Monica Brewer  
Meghan Bright  
Ann Donoghue  
Irene Fortune  
Mary Gish  
Ron Harden  
Jane Hawk  
Cliff Hendrick  
Joel Hurmence  
Laurie Kleespies

Tom Kleespies  
Michael Lacy  
Lark Latch  
Fred J. Lord  
Ron & Marcia Maeda  
Claire McCrea  
Laurie Miale  
Bill Miller  
Hildegard S. Morgan  
Jim Nachel  
John Oberle  
Cheryl Orwig  
Lynne Anne Pearson

Timothy Priehs  
Judith Putnam  
Patricia D. Quier  
Helmet Retzer  
Gary Robinson  
Carol Seemueller  
Craig & Lynette Seymour  
Lawrence Sherman  
Hank Thode  
Bobbie Tilmant  
Kay Ward  
Jim Welch  
Robin Welsh

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.



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).