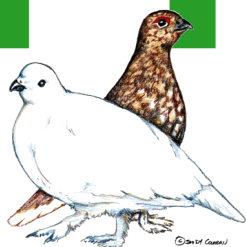


PTARMIGAN



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 2019

Volume 50, Issue 7

FCAS Hosts

Nathan Pieplow, Author of

“Peterson Field Guide to Bird Sounds of Western North America”

Presenting: “The Language of Birds”

Thursday, October 10

Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Dr.

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

All around us, all the time, birds are telling us who they are and what they are doing. Nathan Pieplow unlocks the secrets of their language. You'll listen in on the pillow talk of a pair of Red-winged Blackbirds and learn the secret signals that Cliff Swallows use when they have found food. You'll learn how one bird sound can have many meanings, and how one meaning can have many sounds—and how, sometimes, the meaning isn't in



Nathan Pieplow recording a Brown Creeper.

the sounds at all. This talk from Nathan Pieplow, author of “Peterson Field Guide to Bird Sounds of Western North America,” is an entertaining introduction to a fascinating topic.

Join us on October 10 at the Fort Collins Senior Center for this program that is free and open to the public.

Welcome New National Members

FCAS welcomes new National Audubon Society members by sending one complimentary copy of our newsletter. 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.



President's Corner

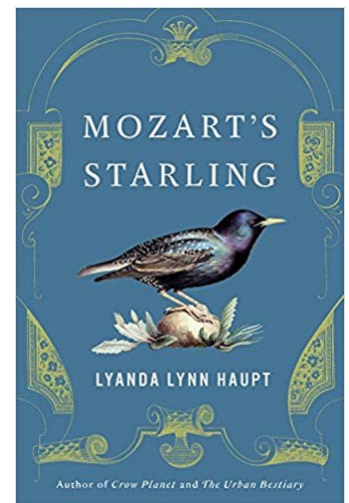
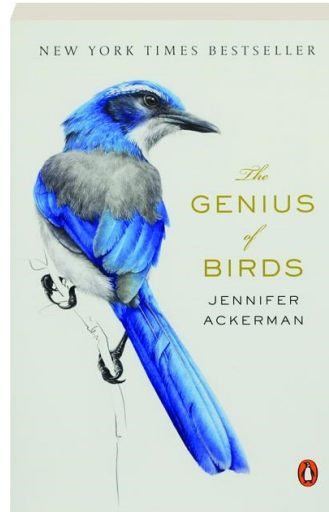
by John Shenot

I'm a reader. I read complicated reports just about all day long for work, so sometimes all I can handle in my free time is a pulp-fiction page turner. But I do try to sprinkle in works of great literature and fascinating non-fiction books—often about birds.

My most recent good read was *Mozart's Starling* by Lyanda Lynn Haupt. The author, a birder and musician, became obsessed with historical accounts suggesting the great composer Mozart adopted a European Starling after hearing it sing the theme to one of his concertos. Like most American birders, Haupt despised starlings, but decided that bringing one into her own home might provide inspiration for a book about Mozart. It did, but it also led to unexpected insights about birds and our interactions with them.

The Genius of Birds by Jennifer Ackerman is another recent favorite. Ackerman brings readers up to speed on some of the latest research on the intelligence of birds, offering examples of species (e.g., crows) that excel in different forms of intelligence.

What I like about both of these books is that they not only enrich my knowledge of birds, but also challenge my own attitudes and preconceptions about the web of life. I might never look at a starling or a crow the same way. And this is why I read. Drop me an email (johnshenot@gmail.com) any time if you want to recommend a good book!



FCAS Welcomes New and Renewing Members



Barb Adams
David Cantrell
Claire Sankey
Laurie J. Kleespies
Thomas J. Kleespies
Lisa Voelker
Florence Brady
Eileen Scholl
Patricia Cohn

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.

FCAS CONTACTS

Audubon@fortnet.org

President

John Shenot

970-682-2551

johnshenot@gmail.com

Vice President

Liz Pruessner

970-484-4371

fortcollinsaudubonmembership@gmail.com

Program Chair

Jessie Meschievitz

jmesch@slbbi.com

970-686-1424

Field Trip Coordinator

Sirena Brownlee

sirena.brownlee@hdrinc.com

970-669-8095

Newsletter Editor

Carol Jones

970-482-6295

cjones@cowisp.net

For other FCAS contacts visit

www.fortcollinsaudubon.org

Visit us on Facebook:

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

FCAS Pocket Guide to Local Birds

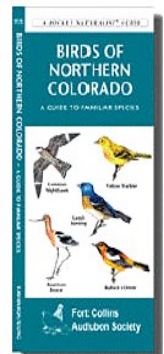
Is available at the following retailers who support our organization with the sales:

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



“But, you know, I’m sorry, I think democracy requires participation. I mean, I don’t want to proselytize, but I do feel some sort of duty to participate in the process in some way other than just blindly getting behind a political party.” —*John P. Cusack, American actor, producer, screenwriter*

A real Hornet’s Nest

For the past two-plus years, I have attempted to write this monthly Conservation Corner amidst the worst political and social turmoil that I believe our country has ever experienced. I am wondering what happened to the moral fiber of our elected representatives who, more than ever, seem more concerned about being re-elected than they are about doing what’s right for the American people. The current administration in Washington has stirred up so many issues that it is analogous to whacking a hornet’s nest with a stick.

Agencies that are in charge of administering and protecting our public lands now seem hell-bent

on reversing many of the positive gains of recent decades—enacted by presidents of both parties—that have benefited the American people. Already the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Air Act, and Clean Water Act have been tampered with. There have been efforts to relax, weaken, or eliminate regulations in many areas, such

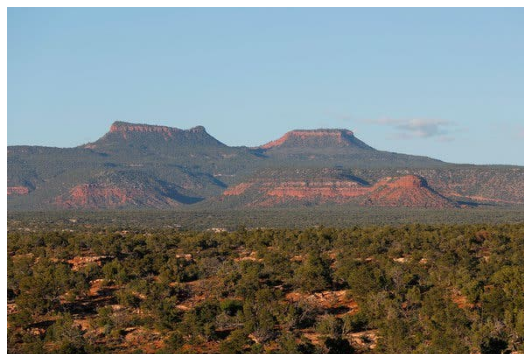
as requiring vehicles to become more fuel efficient and emphasizing more efficient light bulbs. And in the past three years we’ve seen the largest reduction of federally protected land in U.S. history, with national monuments in the Southwest shrinking by two million acres. Bears Ears National Monument was reduced by 85 percent.

Methane, often a byproduct of crude oil production, escapes readily from drilling operations and into the atmosphere. It is a worse greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide, yet regulations requiring oil companies to do a better job of capturing methane have been weakened.

This administration has sold off our public lands for dirt cheap prices to extractive industries, a continuation of bad practices that short-change taxpayers and ignore the wishes of a majority of Americans. Those extractive industries are greedily leasing public lands for future drilling activities despite there currently being a worldwide glut of cheap oil. Almost 25 percent of total American greenhouse gases originate from industrial activities on public lands or offshore leases. The United States is the biggest carbon polluter in history in that it is the world’s largest crude oil producer, as well as a leading exporter of that oil.

Numerous individuals have been placed in charge of agencies that they actively opposed in years prior to their appointments—talk about putting the fox in charge of the henhouse. This too has happened in prior administrations, but it needs to stop. The American people deserve to have agency heads who want their agencies to succeed, not to fail.

Big changes in the way Washington does business can’t come too soon for me.



Bear's Ear National Monument, Utah



Left:
Blue
Grosbeak
by Fi Rust.



Canada Geese by Ann Kramer.



Recycling is Broken

We have a mess on our hands. For 60 years we have been growing a “throw away” society and now it is out of control. We were told all of this waste was okay as long as we recycled it.

For years we have educated people, placed recycling bins next to trash cans, and created municipal recycling programs. While Front Range cities have some of the best recycling rates in the state, the overall Colorado rate is a dismal 12% compared to a mere 35% for the rest of the United States. We are fooling ourselves. Recycling isn’t

working, and it is going to get much worse.

We used to send thousands of tons of recyclables to China where it was sorted. Some was used in manufacturing; much went to landfills. China no longer accepts the stuff we throw into our bins. The market for recycled plastic bottles has dried up as declining oil and natural gas prices have made it cheaper to make new. There is a glut of aluminum; the price of cans fell 30%

in the last year. The cost of recycling is skyrocketing and recycling companies are closing. Some U.S. cities are now spending

more on recycling than trash disposal. Recyclables are going to landfills, being burned, and worse.

Only nine percent of the world’s plastic is recycled. Studies show that much of the world’s plastic that ends up in the ocean will increase a shocking tenfold in the next decade. In a single human lifetime, we have filled the ocean with it. Animals are eating it, becoming ensnared in it, and dying from it.

John Hite, of the New England based Conservation Law Foundation, recently addressed the need for producers of such waste to take responsibility. “Today’s

products and their packaging are often made from plastic and designed for disposal. The producers of those products have profited by making you and your envi-

ronment pay for their polluting products...You shouldn’t have to pay for the [recycling and disposal of] cheaply produced plastic flooding your community...the producers [must] cover the cost instead. Producer responsibility follows the principle of ‘the polluter pays’—if their product harms the environment, they must bear their share of the cost. Producer responsibility

requires the manufacturer, producer, importer, or online retailer to pay a fee per ton of packaging material they create. Those fees go to cities and towns to reimburse their recycling costs...In fact, companies like Coca-Cola, Proctor & Gamble, and Unilever are already funding similar programs in Canada, Europe and Israel.”

If producers share in the burden, less plastic waste will be made. Our conveniences have come at a hideous cost. At the very least, we must stop buying water in plastic bottles and decline plastic bags. Avoid single-use items such as coffee pods, wipes, and Styrofoam containers. Boycott companies creating environmentally damaging products (and packaging) and tell them so. Educate yourself to the issues, and kindly educate others. Now is the time for the adage “reduce, reuse, and recycle” to expand to “rethink, refuse, and revolt.”

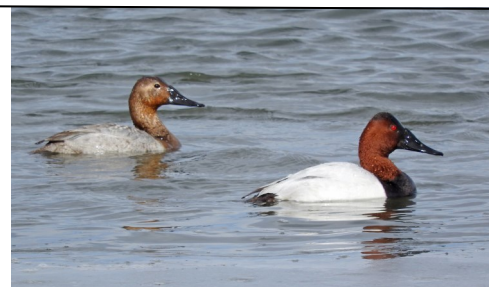


Plastic washed up on a beach from www.bbc.com.



Left:
Burrowing Owls
by Fi Rust.

Right:
Canvasbacks
by Tresa Moulton.



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 (Sirena Brownlee) or the trip leader named below to borrow binoculars. Changes to dates, meeting times or locations, and trip leaders are occasionally unavoidable (check the FCAS Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/FortCollinsAudubonSociety> for cancellations due to inclement weather). Contact the listed trip leader prior to the day of the trip or visit fortcollinsaudubon.org for more information and updates. RSVP strongly encouraged.

Sunday, Oct., 13, Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Denise Bretting, dbretting@swloveland.com, 970-669-1185 or 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.

Saturday, Oct., 19, Running Deer Natural Area.

Leader: Robert Beauchamp, tyranusbus@gmail.com, 970-232-9296. We will explore a few marshes and ponds during this 1.5–2-mile saunter through the natural area. All levels are welcome. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot.

Sunday, Oct., 27, Fort Collins raptor and owl hotspots tour.

Leader: Sirena



Red-tailed Hawk
by Brian Kushner.

Brownlee, sirena.brownlee@hdrinc.com, 970-980-6184. Trip limited to 10 people traveling in two or three cars to hit some local hotspots with a focus on owls and raptors. We will try for four or five spots located east of I-25 and a couple in Fort Collins. Please RSVP to Sirena by Oct. 23. Car pool location and specific details will be provided to participants via email.

Saturday, Nov., 2, Douglas Reservoir State Wildlife Area. Leader: John Shenot,

johnshenot@gmail.com, 802-595-1669. Dress warmly for an early start at one of the best spots in Larimer County for migrating waterfowl.

Douglas Reservoir is an excellent place to look for scoters and loons in November. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking area at the south end of the reservoir.



Common Scoter
from National Audubon.

Alex Cringan Memorial Fund is Now Accepting Applications

FCAS offers a scholarship for interested teachers and students to advance their knowledge of birds and conservation. The Alex Cringan Memorial Fund provides financial assistance to educators or students involved in a project teaching or researching natural resources to enhance their skills and share their knowledge with others.

Examples of projects include a training or workshop, a presentation or project at your school, or a research study that can be shared with others and provide a contribution to bird research. Scholarship projects should provide long-lasting benefit to birds, wildlife, the environment, and provide training to educators who will work to raise environmental awareness in the community. Priority is given to applicants that can provide depth and breadth through a project that will be shared with many.

Email Bpatters1957@gmail.com for an application. Please read the scholarship selection criteria carefully and send your completed application to: FCAS, Attn. Scholarship Committee, P.O. Box 271968, Fort Collins, 80527-1968. The application is due November 1.



Dr. Alex Cringan.



Fort Collins Audubon Society
PO Box 271968
Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968



Printed on recycled paper

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.