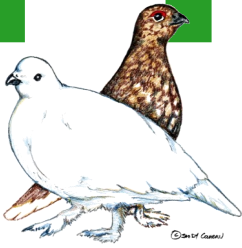


PTARMIGAN



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.

November 2019

Volume 50, Issue 8

FCAS Presents

Dr. Susan Bonfield, Executive Director, Environment of the Americas

"What's the Solution to Plastic Pollution?"

Thursday, November 14

Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Dr.

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



Canada Goose caught in plastic
From lovecanadageese.com.

Plastics have become an integral part of our lives. Our children's toys, food storage, and the medical industry depend on it. Though plastics offer many benefits, they also have an increasing number of impacts. Birds are just one of the groups of animals that are affected by our growing dependency on plastics. Dr. Bonfield will explore the topic of plastics and how we can work together to reduce our plastic use and protect birds, our environment, and ultimately ourselves.



Dr. Susan Bonfield is the director of Environment for the Americas, a non-profit organization that works across the globe to connect people to bird conservation.

Join us on November 14 for this program that is free and open to the public

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 if you'd like to keep receiving it, please support your local chapter and subscribe. See details on the last page of the newsletter or on our website at www.fortcollinsaudubon.org.



President's Corner

by John Shenot

In my role as president, one of the things that worries me most is that FCAS will cease to be relevant to new generations of birders and conservationists who communicate and socialize in new ways.

As much as I admire and appreciate our members of all ages, it concerns me that the vast majority of us are over 40. I see plenty of birders out in the field who are younger than 40, but I don't see too many of them on the FCAS membership list.

Please don't misunderstand me: older members who have knowledge and experience, who have settled down in Northern Colorado, and who in many cases have time for volunteer activities are an organizational strength. But every organization needs fresh blood and new ideas. The times they are a changin'—and we need to keep up.

So, one of my goals for 2020 is to see if we can't modernize FCAS, attract more young members, and expand the impact we have with people of all ages in our community. I'd like help. I'm thinking about creating an ad hoc committee that will focus on these challenges, and I'm looking for volunteers. I especially want and need young volunteers and volunteers of any age who are savvy about social media and networking in the modern era. Perhaps this could be a school project or community service activity for a couple of students? Please spread the word and have interested parties contact me at johnshenot@gmail.com.



First graders learning birding techniques with
Lori Pivonka and Alan Godwin.

FCAS Welcomes New and Renewing Members

Jeane Darst
Robert Blinderman
Christine Sparks
Glenn Elmore
Ronald Bright
Barbara Case
Rich Roberts
Lawrence Sherman

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
802-595-1669

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

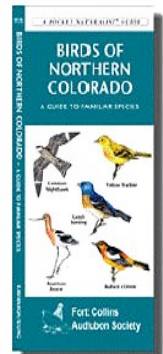
Is available at the following retailers who support our organization with the sales:

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

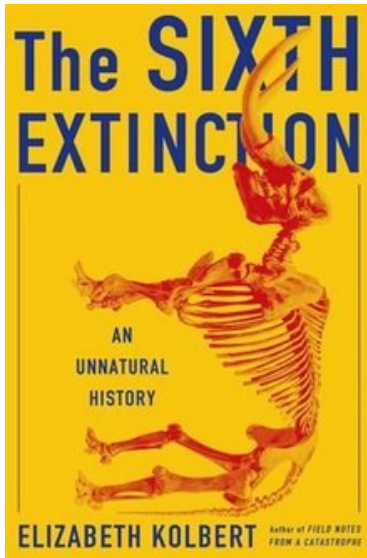
Jax Farm & Ranch
1000 N. Hwy. 287
(970) 481-2221



The Sixth Extinction: Two Versions

If the title of this *Ptarmigan* article sounds familiar it is because it is similar to the 2015 book, *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*, by Pulitzer Prize recipient Elizabeth Kolbert. In her book Kolbert, a science writer for *The New Yorker*, argues that Earth is in the midst of a modern, man-made, sixth mass extinction. She compares the five previous mass extinctions in earth's geological history to today's, planet-wide, accelerated extinctions. She estimated that between 20 and 50 percent of all living species on earth will disappear by the year 2100.

For about 30 years, scientists have warned of the dangers of greenhouse gases produced by burning fossil fuels. Carbon dioxide is released into the earth's atmosphere where it acts like an insulating blanket that prevents the sun from radiating heat back into outer space, resulting in a gradual rise in the temperature of the earth's atmosphere, its land masses, and its oceans. Appearing simultaneously with the scientific warnings were "climate change deniers," many of whom were funded by the fossil fuel industry.



Hopes rose when various environmental organizations and world governments reacted to the warnings and eventually developed a plan known as the "Paris Agreement," by which countries agreed to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Formulated in 2015 and ratified in 2016, the agreement sought to limit the increase in global average temperature to below 2 degrees C (3.6 degrees F) above preindustrial levels. Unfortunately, the Paris Agreement had no binding stipulation or enforcement. The result, as of 2017, was that none of the major industrialized nations have implemented the policies that were envisioned.

Fast forward to 2019, when a new champion for combating "global climate disruption" arrived on the scene. Greta Thunberg is a sixteen-year-old schoolgirl from Sweden, and is an environmental activist on climate change whose campaigning has gained international recognition. Thunberg's activism began at age 15 in August 2018 when she began spending school days outside the Swedish parliament calling for stronger action



Greta Thunberg at the 2019 United Nations Climate Action Summit.

From <https://www.rediff.com>.

on global warming. Since then her actions have resulted in numerous school climate strikes around the world and appearances before numerous gatherings. But what I find most notable about her are the words she uses when confronting national leaders. For example: "We can't save the world by playing by the rules because the rules have to be changed. Everything needs to change, and it has to start today." TEDx Stockholm, December 2018.

"...Because if there are no positive things to tell, then what should we do? Should we spread false hope? We can't do that; we have to tell the truth." TEDx Stockholm, December 2018.

"You say you love your children above all else and yet you are stealing their future in front of their very eyes." COP24, Poland, December 2018.

"We deserve a safe future. And we demand a safe future. Is that really too much to ask?" Global Climate Strike, New York, September 20, 2019.

"My message is that we'll be watching you. This is all wrong. I shouldn't be up here. I should be back in school on the other side of the ocean. Yet you all come to us young people for hope. How dare you. You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words. Yet I am one the lucky ones. People are suffering." UN Climate Summit, New York, September 23, 2019.

If a sixteen year old can figure it out, why can't our elected and appointed leaders? Speak up!



Viewing Common Northern Colorado Birds

From my kitchen window under the deck I have a great view of my bird feeder, which is located on a pole strategically placed just beyond a squirrel's leaping ability from the deck railing. I also have a three-tiered bird bath in view. Thus I have had countless sightings of common Northern Colorado birds. Thanks to the massive old cottonwood trees lining my side of the street, I also have had occasional sightings and sounds of Barn Owls, Great Horned Owls, and Eastern Screech-Owls.

It is often the unusual that creates magical memories. A favorite and longest lasting viewing was that of



American Crow by Carole Hossan.

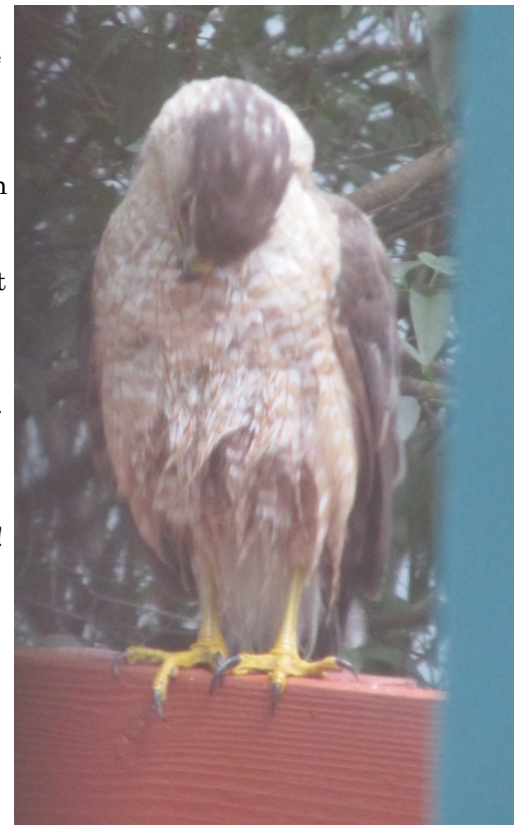
a Cooper's Hawk that had just finished bathing in the top-tier bird bath. An adolescent Fox Squirrel was acting like a kamikaze on the grass by the lowest bird bath: jumping up and down and practically doing handstands in the hawk's line of sight. After a while the hawk flew to the ground, raised and spread its wings, and successfully frightened the squirrel away. The hawk flew back to the top bird bath briefly, then flew and perched on the deck railing, where for over an hour it meticulously preened each of its wing and body feathers.

Additional special sightings include a February 2019 bottom-tier heated bird bath "hot tub" full of American Robins with a lone Cedar Waxwing among them (its mate was off to the side). I imagine the two had gotten swept up and carried along with the mass of robins that were attracted to the warm bird bath. The weather fallout in May of 2016 resulted in unusual species sightings in my backyard: there were male and female Black-headed Grosbeaks, a male and female Rose-breasted Grosbeak, male Lazuli Buntings, a male Indigo Bunting, as well as a male and female Western Tanager hanging out and eating at the feeder.

Some of the sightings were interesting due to bird behavior. It was amusing to observe adult American Crows and fledgling Blue Jays learning to successfully perch on the narrow bird feeder ledge. It was mystifying to discover a baby squirrel pelt on the lip of the tallest bird bath the day after I discovered the pelt in the same location and put it back on the ground. And a sad sighting occurred on the street near my home: I was walking to my house and heard a multitude of Blue Jays screaming at full volume from the tops of parkway trees on both sides of the street because a Cooper's Hawk was in the middle of the street with a dead Blue Jay beneath its claws. I felt like I was in a film sequence with the crowd screaming at the hawk, "Assassin! How dare you! Murderer!"



Male Western Tanager by Carole Hossan.



Cooper's Hawk preening by Carole Hossan.



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.

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



Wood Ducks by David Judd.

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.

Saturday, Nov. 9, Fossil Creek Reservoir Natural Area. Leader: Nolan Bunting, nolanbunting@hotmail.com. Join Nolan for a walk on the Cattail Flats trail to view late migrating and resident water-

fowl, and hopefully a few raptors. Plan for a 2-mile walk on the trails. All levels are welcome and a spotting scope will be available. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot.

Sunday, Nov. 10, 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.

Friday, Nov. 29, Fort Collins Black Friday Birding-Frölic-Arapahoe Bend Natural Area, Rigden Reservoir. Leader:

Robert Beauchamp, tyran-nusb@gmail.com, 970-232-9296. Let's walk off some Thanksgiving calories on this leisurely 1.5-2-mile walk where we will explore Rigden Reservoir and surrounding riparian and pond habitat for interesting fall birds. All levels are welcome. Meet at 8 a.m.



Green-winged Teal by Doug Kliever.

Nominating Committee Activities

A three-person Nominating Committee has been working to put together a slate of candidates for election to the FCAS Board of Directors at the January 2020 program meeting. Positions that still need candidates are: President-elect, Recording Secretary, one or more Directors-at-Large, and a Chapter Representative to the Audubon Colorado Council.

All of these positions are for a term of one year.

Collectively, the duties of these four positions are too voluminous to include here, but you may obtain detailed information from any Nominating Committee member: John Shenot, 802-595-1669; Barbara Patter-



son, 970-214-3888; or Bill Miller, 970-493-7693.

The strength of our chapter and the depths of its activities are directly dependent upon the strength and make-up of its Board of Directors. We always are looking out for new faces and personalities, and especially, fresh ideas. If the urge to contribute your time and effort strikes

you, please consider being a candidate for any of the board positions except President. It would be fantastic if we had more than one candidate for any of the positions.



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.