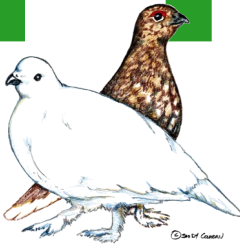


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FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY

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.

November 2021

Volume 53, Issue 8

FCAS Hosts

Reesa Conrey, Avian Researcher, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Presenting: "Bald Eagles in our Backyard:

Population Trends, Habitat Use, and Human Impacts on Colorado's Front Range Eagles"

Thursday, November 11

Announcements: 7 p.m.; Program 7:20 p.m.

Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Dr.**

Masks Requested

*****This program will also be accessible online using Zoom*****

Enter the following link on your web browser at or before 7 p.m. and follow the instructions to join the meeting virtually: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89661688877>

Reesa Conrey is an avian researcher with Colorado Parks and Wildlife who focuses on grassland birds and raptors statewide. She will present information about how CPW and many partners, including Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, began a four-year study monitoring population trends, habitat use, and human impacts on Bald Eagles along Colorado's Front Range. The Front Range is experiencing rapid human population growth, accompanied by more housing and commercial development, energy infrastructure, and recreational use. The Front Range contains a high concentration of Bald Ea-



Reesa Conrey releases a newly tagged Bald Eagle along the St. Vrain River, July 2021. Photo by Mike Lockhart.

gles, growing from zero nesting pairs in the 1970s to more than 90 pairs today.

NOTE: Due to the unpredictable nature of the pandemic, it may become necessary to cancel the in-person portion of our meeting and conduct the meeting entirely via Zoom. If you plan to attend the meeting in person, please check our website, Instagram, or Facebook page the day of the meeting to see if the in-person gathering has been

canceled. We hope that won't be necessary. Join us on Nov. 11. The public is welcomed.

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

October was probably the most fun and gratifying month I've had in seven years of serving as President of FCAS. First, I'll explain the fun, and then why it was so gratifying.

We started with a bang on Saturday, October 2, with a Wings and Wheels event celebrating birds and bicycles on the Poudre River Trail in Fort Collins. It was fun, and a great way to raise awareness about the official designation of the Cache la Poudre Urban River Corridor as an Important Bird Area. We were lucky to have Bird Conservancy of the Rockies as a partner and we're already talking about making it an annual event. Next, on Tuesday, October 12, we had our big annual fundraiser at the Lyric Cinema. There was live music, bird trivia, and the world premiere of "birdcall karaoke." It was a blast! We had a great turnout, and thanks to the generosity of attendees we've now exceeded our fundraising goals for the year. Just two days later, on October 14, our monthly meeting featured a really entertaining presentation on beavers. We also had two great birding field trips in October. All these events were offered to the public, not just FCAS members, for free.

Volunteers, including many of the people serving on our Board of Directors, made all this happen. I just showed up to enjoy the fruits of their hard work! In all my years with FCAS, I've never served with a more committed,



Information displays at the Wings and Wheels event.
Photo by John Shenot.

energetic, and creative Board of Directors. This organization is really hitting its stride: our membership is growing, our finances are strong, we're providing valuable and enjoyable programs and services to our members, and we're having a positive impact on our community and the wildlife we all love. I'm so pleased and feel so lucky to work with such a fantastic collection of volunteers on the FCAS Board of Directors.

Note: Visit our YouTube channel (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9fOjQbWvTJfXRQ2bYH_Hmw) to see birdcall karaoke highlights and the beaver presentation.

Happy

Thanksgiving!



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Visit us on Facebook:

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

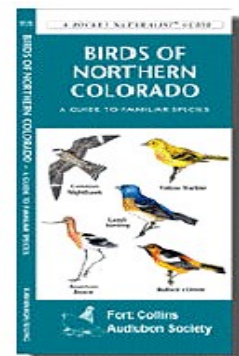
FCAS Pocket Guide to Local Birds

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 Loveland West
Outdoor Gear
2665W. Eisenhower
(970) 667-7375

Jax Outdoor Gear
1200 N. College
(970) 221-0544



Drumming Up Hope

On September 29, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) released a statement officially delisting 23 species from the Endangered Species Act (ESA) due to their extinction. Included in this list was the legendary Ivory-billed Woodpecker. Although the last confirmed sighting of the species occurred over three-quarters of a century ago, this news still dealt a devastating blow to many bird-lovers and conservationists.

Generations of birders have eagerly sought out Ivory-billed Woodpeckers in their historic range in the southeastern United States. Where populations once flourished, the loss of mature forest habitat and frequent collection decimated their numbers. The last time an Ivory-billed Woodpecker sighting was confirmed was in 1944, and the species was listed as endangered in 1967. Even so, for many years, some people believed they could still find a rare remaining individual. In 2004, two bird experts were convinced they saw one from their kayaks in Arkansas. However, subsequent extensive searches in the same area and others have had no such luck.

Due to the lack of evidence of their survival, the USFWS officially declared the extinction of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker in September. To those who have long been skeptics of their continued existence, this declaration confirms their strong suspicions. To others who have always believed, this declaration seems like a rash decision. Both reactions to this news are understandable. In a world with so many problems, it may be wasteful to focus considerable resources on one species

that could be long gone. At the same time, the enduring search for the Ivory-billed Woodpecker symbolizes the most essential tool to any conservation effort: hope.

Of all imperiled species that have been listed under the ESA, 99 percent have evaded extinction to this point. The protections provided by this policy combined with other efforts have effectively prevented the loss of the vast majority of these species. Although listing a species as endangered signals a serious problem, it is also a source of motivation to find a solution. It is an impetus for hope.

If we hold onto this hope that something can be done for these species in the face of overwhelming odds, we can bring many of them back from the brink. Hope leads us to use every resource at our disposal to protect declining species, even with continuous habitat loss and climate change. Hope leads us to believe that people can change habits of destruction to save what we have left. Hope leads us to list a species on the ESA after two decades since its last confirmed sighting. And hope leads us to keep searching for the slightest glimpse of that species, even after all evidence points to its extinction.

As a conservationist, I am focused on working toward a better future for the countless species that still need a healthy planet to live on, including our own. But if I am ever paddling through the bayous of Arkansas, my eyes will be scanning the trees for flashes of ivory. I hope you will do the same.



Ivory-Billed Woodpecker plate
from John J. Audubon's *Birds of America*.



Male Ivory-billed Woodpecker.
Photo by Arthur A. Allen, 1935.



Mindful Birding

"In every walk in nature one receives far more than one seeks." —John Muir

The UCHealth Cancer Center at Harmony Campus has started a "Mindful Birding" program to help connect their patients to birds, and teach them the healing powers of nature. Receiving a cancer diagnosis can create considerable emotional and physical distress. Research shows that the practice of mindfulness and nature-based interventions provide an increase in feelings of empowerment, competence and personal strength, a sense of calm, serenity and balance, and normalizing of hormonal and immune function. It also can decrease stress and physical pain, sleep disturbance, and fear of recurrence.

Mindfulness is one of many forms of meditation. It is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive to what is going on around us. Jon Kabat-Zinn, a microbiologist working at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, started



**Red-winged Blackbird by
Rebecca Riedner.
From UCHealth.**

a program called Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) in 1979, inviting patients to take time for self-care in the hospital. The MBSR program is now taught around the world as a practice to improve mental and physical health. The Fort Collins UCHealth Cancer Center offers this workshop for patients and has added birding as an option to take the healing process an important step further.

When patients come in for a transfusion, they have access to binoculars and a field guide while they are receiving their treatment. They are given a mindful birding toolkit to take home to start birding in their backyard. The folder includes discount coupons and free backyard birding supplies, identification tips, local birding destinations, gardening tips to attract birds, and environmental impact information.

For an extended experience, Laurie Fonken, a health and well-being counselor, and Paul Dougherty, a wildlife biologist, with NaturerxCO, have teamed up to offer workshops in mindful birding and forest therapy. Forest

therapy, or forest bathing, is also known as Shinrin-Yoku. This practice originated in Japan in the 1980s as an effective tool to enhance one's health through connection to the natural world.

One UCHealth patient recovering from cancer participated in the MBSR program and became interested in birding. She was so inspired by the healing benefits that she turned her passion into a project to share with others. Thank you to Deanna

Krause for your vision and the volunteers on the Mindful Birding Committee for your time and expertise. And thank

you to the following companies and agencies for their generous donations: Vortex Binoculars, Wild Birds Unlimited, Poudre Pet and Feed Supply, Fort Collins Nursery, Photographer Ricardo Xavier, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, Audubon Rockies, Fort Collins Natural Areas, and FCAS.

If you are interested in more information, contact Oncology Counselor Ann-Marie Bowman at Ann-Marie.Bowman@UCHealth.org.

FCAS Welcomes New and Renewing Members

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.

Jeffrey Abrams
Nancy Boortz
Denise A. Bretting
James Bruening
James Crisp
Margaret Francia
Jeanine Smith & Robert G. Leisure
Elizabeth Perna
Vickie Traxler
Alice Wood



Field Trips

All field trips are free (unless otherwise noted) and are currently open to the public. All experience levels are welcome. Bring snacks or lunch, water, binoculars, and spotting scopes. Please understand that changes to dates, meeting times, locations, and trip leaders are occasionally unavoidable. To register for any trip, please visit the Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/123106328705>), Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/fcaudubon/>), or fortcollinsaudubon.org for a link to registration that will be posted one week before the scheduled trip. Due to Covid, attendance is limited to a maximum of 10 individuals. Waitlisted individuals for a trip will be sent a link for the next available trip before registration is open to the public.

Sunday, Nov. 7, Fossil Creek Reservoir. Leader: Sirena Brownlee, Sirena.Brownlee@hdrinc.com. Sign up link will be emailed to members before the trip, and posted on Facebook and Instagram. The field trip will be at Fossil Creek Reservoir at 10 a.m. It will be a short hike to the water looking for waterfowl and Bald Eagles. A scope will be provided.

Saturday, Nov. 13, Riverbend Ponds. Leader: Nolan Bunting, nbunting@rams.colostate.edu. Sign up link will be emailed to members before the trip and posted on Facebook and Instagram. The field trip will be at Riverbend Ponds at 10:30 a.m. Come and explore the waterways looking for waterfowl, wintering birds, and learn about cattails.

Field Trip Highlights

Saturday, Sept. 18, Dixon Reservoir/Pineridge



Red-naped Sapsucker
by Nancy Hitchens.

Natural Area. Leader: Sirena Brownlee. Saw 23 species; highlights included Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and three species of warblers.

Friday, Sept. 24, Pinewood Reservoir/Ramsay Shockey Open Space. Leader: Denise Bretting. Saw 24 species; highlights included a ton of migrating Townsend Solitaires, all three nuthatch species, and a Red-naped Sapsucker. Additionally, they believe they saw a Chihuahuan Raven, which would be the second in Larimer County history

according to eBird. It is still in the process of confirmation.

Saturday, Oct. 16, Well Gulch Trail, Lory State Park. Leader: Nolan Bunting. Saw 11 species; highlights included a Great Horned Owl being scolded by a Prairie Falcon, and flock of Black-billed Magpies. The trail was really quiet at the start of the hike, picking up as the sun rose into the gulch.

Plan Ahead to Share Your Photos at our December Meeting



Usually our December meetings consist of a potluck dinner and a narrated slideshow of photographs taken by members. This year because of COVID, we will not share food, but we are continuing the slideshow tradition when we meet on December 9. We also are considering some additional entertainment. You can join us in-person at the Senior Center or participate in the meeting remotely via Zoom.

Regardless of whether you are presenting photos or just a spectator, it's not too soon to look for your best bird and wildlife photos of 2021. This year we are suggesting your photos be related to one of these themes: 1) Wildlife and Birds in Action, 2) Critter Photo Capture, or 3) This Scenery is a WOW! This isn't a photography contest, but the name of anyone who contributes photos to the evening's entertainment will be entered into a drawing for a gift certificate to Wild Birds Unlimited. The drawing will be held that evening and you do not have to be present to win. We'll provide more de-

tails on how to participate in our December newsletter. In the meantime, it will help us plan the show if you tell us in advance that you want to present your photos. Send your name and preferred contact information to johnshenot@gmail.com. Depending on the number of people who want to participate, we'll decide the maximum number of photos each person can share.



One of last year's photo winners: White Ibis
by David Sitzman.



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.