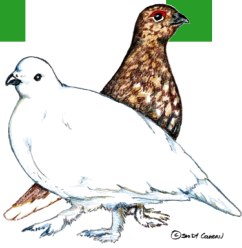


PTARMIGAN



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.

April 2022

Volume 54, Issue 4

FCAS Hosts Mat Alldredge, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Presenting: "Mountain Lions in Colorado"

Thursday, April 14

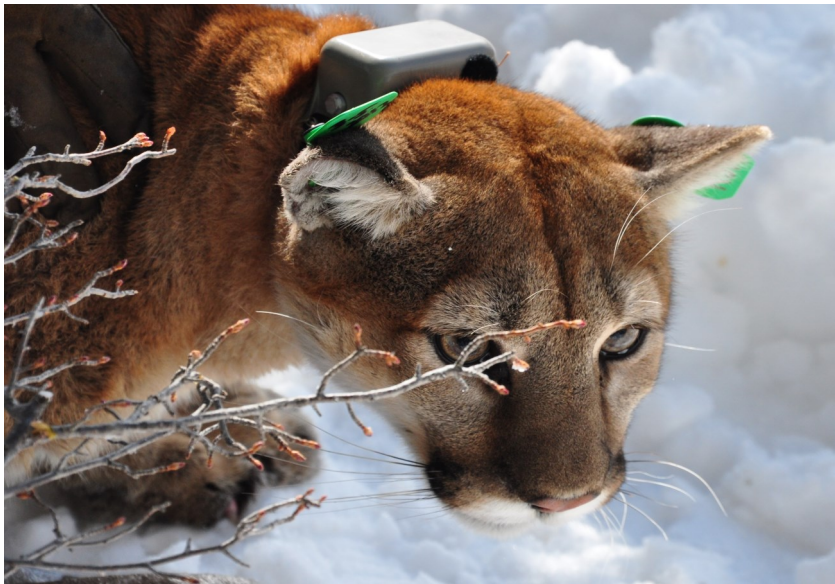
Announcements, 7 p.m.; Program, 7:20 p.m.

Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Dr.

*****This program also will 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/82537848617>

Mat Alldredge, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, will discuss the history of mountain lions, basic biology and ecology of lions, and mountain lion management. He also will discuss some of the research CPW has done regarding population estimation and mountain lion interactions with humans, emphasizing how lions are using the urban interface along the Front Range of Colorado. Mat will share ideas on how



we can live with mountain lions and what to do if we encounter one.

Mat has worked for Colorado Parks and Wildlife since 2006, primarily focusing research efforts on large carnivores (mountain lions and black bears).

Join us on April 14 for this free informational program meeting. The public is welcomed!

Mountain Lion from CPW file photos.

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 of the newsletter or on our website at www.fortcollinsaudubon.org.

President's Corner

by John Shenot

In our February newsletter I reported that FCAS would continue to offer our monthly meetings throughout 2022 in a hybrid format: in-person at the Fort Collins Senior Center and broadcast live via Zoom. I see the emergence of effective, free online meeting tools as one of the few silver linings of the COVID pandemic. Through our use of Zoom, FCAS is now able to offer our programs to people who live far from Fort Collins, can't easily travel to the Senior Center, have childcare or other obligations that keep them at home in the evenings, are in high-risk categories for COVID, or just want the convenience of tuning in from home. Our organization is now more accessible to a broader swath of the public we hope to serve than ever before!

But having touted the benefits of online meetings, the purpose of this month's column is to encourage those of you who can to come back to the Senior Center and attend our meetings live. There are many advantages to attending our meetings in-person. First and foremost, there's the opportunity to socialize with other attendees in a way that isn't possible online. You also can talk with FCAS board members. People who attend in person often chat with our guest speaker and ask questions they didn't want to ask during the presentation. We always have a display table with

membership information and nature-themed items for sale. Sometimes we even have free giveaways! And soon we will resume offering refreshments.

In short, we miss seeing you in person and hope you'll consider dropping by the Senior Center in April. However, if you have any concerns about COVID, please contact me directly. FCAS always follows the COVID safety requirements and recommendations of Larimer County public health officials and any additional policies adopted by the City of Fort Collins for its facilities.



Education and Volunteer Opportunities for FCAS Coming Soon

Stay tuned for some exciting opportunities as the weather warms up. We are working with our many partners to get dates and times for upcoming events for which volunteers are needed. In March, there was a FCAS program for residents at the Fort Collins Affinity for Living Center. We are planning another "Wings and Wheels" event along the Poudre River and are working on another fundraiser. We are partnering with the City of Fort Collins on World Migratory Bird Day, May 14, featuring a program on "lights out" for birds, along with games and other activities.



WE NEED YOU

Remember we also have field trips, and a flight and feathers and native plant class at the Senior Center (listed in the *Recreator*). Sheila Webber, FCAS Education Coordinator, leads a monthly bird hike, Scott Rashid runs a banding station the first Saturday of the month at the High Plains Environmental Center, and we are adding a bird count at Chapunga Sculpture Garden. The High Plains Environmental Center native plant sale is now online; you can order and sign up for a pickup time and date. We will participate in the "Live at Lunch" series with Fort Collins Natural Areas and the 2022 Poudre River Fest. These events will be listed on our website fortcollinsaudubon.org, on our Facebook page, and will be announced at our monthly program meetings. Call Barbara Patterson at 970-214-3888 or email bpatters1957@gmail.com to find out more about these events, times, dates, and how you can help. We need you!

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www.fortcollinsaudubon.org

Visit us on Facebook:

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



Bird City USA

Fort Collins Audubon and other local conservation groups were invited by the City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Department to participate in applying for the Bird City USA status as part of accomplishing one of the City Council's priorities for 2021-2023: Priority No. 9, "Help Bird Species Recover." This effort includes hosting an International Migratory Bird Day event, drafting a resolution supporting International Migratory Bird Day, and attaining Bird City status for the Fort Collins community. The application team members consist of representatives from Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, FCAS, Audubon Rockies, Gardens on Spring Creek, and city staff from Natural Areas and Parks Departments.

Bird City Americas is a conservation and education program developed by Environment for the Americas and American Bird Conservancy to catalyze communities throughout the western hemisphere to take action to protect habitat and promote policies that protect birds, fight climate change, and by extension, make each town a better place to live for everyone. The focus is on building coalitions and sparking creative ideas to incorporate bird-friendly spaces and management plans in parks, natural areas and trails, golf courses, streets, urban landscapes, residential yards, and buildings.

The application for Bird City status covers six categories with points awarded for achievements in each area: 1) habitat protection and monitoring, 2) municipal habitat — community forest/grassland management, 3) threat to birds, 4) education and inclusion, 5) climate and sustainability, and 6) World Migratory Bird Day. Fort Collins has a host of successes that meet the criteria and complement the goals, such as the Tree City USA (41 years) status awarded by the Arbor Day

Foundation and platinum-level Bicycle-Friendly Community. The team is highlighting our achievements in natural areas protections, the Natural Areas Department educational programs, integrated pest management and wildlife protection in our parks and trails, using native plants in urban landscapes, Habitat Hero Gardens, protecting pollinators, xeriscape conversion

programs, the city transportation and streets policies, renewable energy policy, water conservation, and building codes.

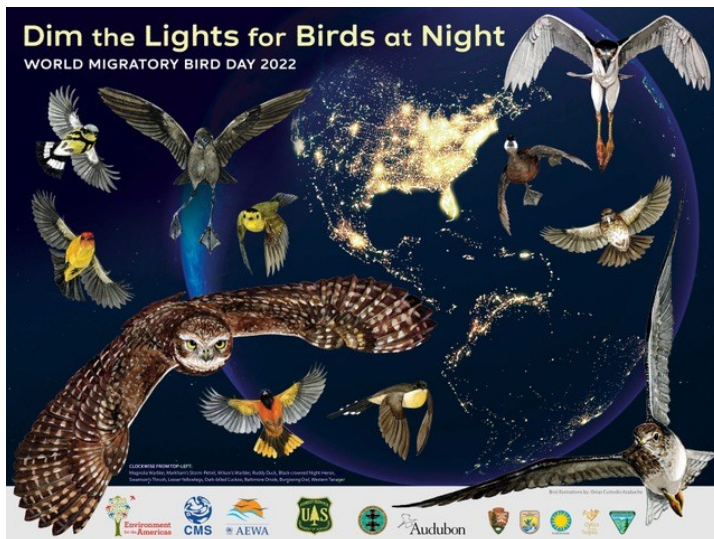
The FCAS has much to add to the application through our work on the Poudre River IBA, educational programs, field trips and bird monitoring, sponsorship of the Christmas Bird Counts, field guides and birding checklists, posters in the trail kiosks, and environmental education scholarships. The FCAS will partner with

the city for the first International Bird Day Event on May 14. Details to come in the May *Ptarmigan*.

The status is renewed each year with the hope for continued progress on tough issues such as reducing feral cat colonies and the dangers of bird collisions with buildings and urban lighting, especially during spring

and fall migration. The World Migratory Bird Day will become an annual event and provide the perfect opportunity to educate and promote the "Keeping Cats Indoors" and "Lights Out Colorado" programs and keep the pressure on city officials for action.

Achieving the Bird City USA status is a wonderful opportunity to strengthen conservation efforts to protect bird habitat in Fort Collins and across the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Every action we take adds up to raise awareness and improve the outcomes for birds.



Prairie Partners: Farmers, Ranchers, Conservation Organizations, and Consumers

Spring on the eastern plains of Colorado is a hope-filled time, much of which is centered around the stories told by the arrivals and departures of birds that announce seasonal changes. Many will pass through; others will stay and work to raise the next generation of feathered musicians. Phenology, the study of cyclic



Greater Prairie-Chicken
by Ellen Nelson

and seasonal natural phenomena, is a tool for ranchers and farmers on the grassland steppe found from Colorado's eastern slope to our neighboring prairie states. Soil moisture and temperature, departing Snow Geese, and arriving meadowlarks

signal next steps in growing food and fiber.

Over millennia, the development of adaptations to live in a place of such extremes is shared by the vegetation, wildlife, and people. Terms like "pyric-herbivory" (interplay between fire and grazing techniques) and "high temporal ecological variability" (when the landscape undergoes annual and cyclical extremes) are reflected in how both wildlife and ranchers and farmers adapt.

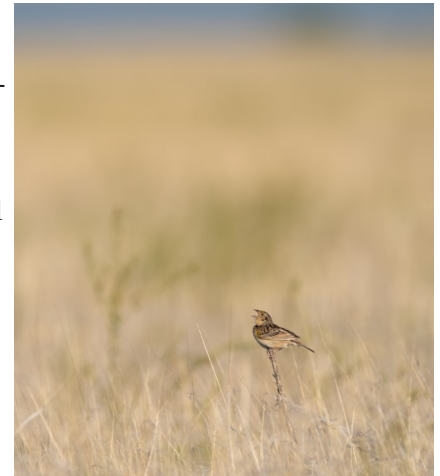
Ranchers and farmers look at the land as a stewarded resource that can yield different outcomes based on soil, climate, topography, availability of water, and timing of activity. The result is a mosaic of land use practices: irrigated and dryland crops, a myriad of grazing systems, fallowed fields, cover crops, hay ground, rested rangeland, restored grasslands, and living snow fences and shelterbelts. These practices support and are supported by local towns. For birds this means a wide

range of habitat types to select from. Historically, native grazers were influenced by indigenous people's action, fire, and weather. Native grazers moved to find what they were looking for and they, along with soil, topography, water, and land use, created vegetative mosaics on the landscape.

Managing for the whole suite of grassland nesting and migratory birds that rely on Colorado for some part of their life cycle reflects this diversity of habitat preferences and complexity. The type, height, and spacing of desired vegetation varies greatly from a Thick-billed Longspur to a Grasshopper Sparrow. Not all grasslands are viewed as equal in the eye of the bird beholder.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife, other state and federal agencies, conservation organizations, and agricultural associations are working alongside farmers and ranchers to enhance bird habitats. Efforts include polyculture plantings of tall grasses and forbs to benefit Greater Prairie-Chickens and pollinators, and conservation easements that require producers to heavily graze rangelands to allow prairie dogs to benefit Mountain Plovers.

The result is a continued gradient of short grasslands of Grama Grass and Globe-Mallow to tall Bluestems and *Rudbeckia* (Coneflowers and Black-eyed Susan). These efforts promise a home for our feathered sojourners looking anew to spring.



Grasshopper Sparrow by
Evan Barrientos.

Species Highlight

To celebrate the New Year and 25th Great Backyard Bird Count, we are highlighting a bird species in each newsletter this year, and on Facebook and Instagram. This month's highlight is the Spotted Towhee, a large member of the sparrow family, Passerellidae. It loves thick underbrush and areas to hide. It often will move into backyards if given the proper habitat. A fun fact about this species is that when two towhees fight, one bird will likely pick up an object and fly away indicating its submission.

Want to submit a suggestion or photo? Email nbunting@rams.colostate.edu

Spotted Towhee by
Mason Maron, Macaulay Library.



FCAS Welcomes New and Renewing Members

Diane Adams
Steve Armstead
Eileen Baker
Van & Sheila Baker
Donald Beaver
Linda Bell
Glenn Blanchard
Richard Bourdon
Jim Branch
Kathleen Branch
Lisa Browne
Marcee Camenson
Aimee Chlebnik
Kristy Clark
Marion Clement
James DeMartini
David Dennis
Beth Dillon
Kim Dunlap
Libby Edwards
Glenn Elmore
David Farmer
Willard Flowers
Martin Forstenzer
Andrew Goris
Vince Griesemer

Michaelle Haefele
Melannie Hartman
Pamela Herrlein
Nancy Hitchins
Janet Holley
Neil Holstein
Judy Holt
Mary Humstone
Joel Hurmence
Hank Thode III
Julie Janicek-Wilkey
Joyce Jones
Kristin J. Joy
Laurie & Tom Kleespies
Loretta Klingenberg
Michael Knowles
Katie Kohnen
Charles Kopp
Elizabeth Kostiuk
Diane Kristoff
James Kuhn
Janet Larsen
Cristie Lee
Tad Leeper
Robin Long
Bob Lucas

Rosemary Lucas
Thomas Lynch
Ian & Barbara MacGillivray
Janae Malpas
Michelle McKim
Bill Miller
Andrew Monson
James J. Nachel
Paul Opler
Jerry Partin
Elizabeth Perna
Phil Phelan
Sandra Pitcaithley
Margaret Reek
Eileen Scholl
Matthew Van Scoyoc
Dan Siegfried
David Sitzman
Chloe Sobon
Doug Swartz
Ryan Tewedt
Robin Welsh
Karen Wheeler
Bob Willhour
Sandra M. Winkler



Upcoming Field Trips

Register at www.facebook.com/groups/123106328705, <https://www.instagram.com/fcaudubon/>, or fortcollinsaudubon.org. Registrants will be posted one week before the scheduled trip. Attendance is limited to a maximum of 14 individuals. Bobcat Ridge surveys will not require registration.

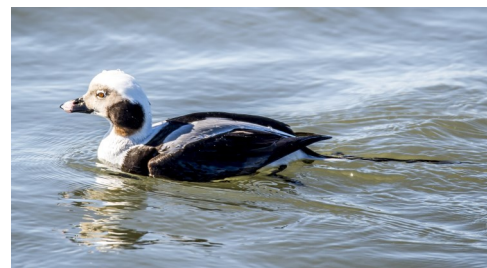
Sunday, April 10, Post-Fire Bobcat Ridge Survey. Leader: Denise Bretting, dbretting@swloveland.com or 970-402-1292. The hike is a little more than four miles covering moderate to flat terrain. The survey lasts a couple of hours. There is no limit on the number of people who can attend, but please email or text Denise that you plan to attend. Meet at 7 a.m. in Bobcat Ridge Parking lot. Check the city website for trail closures.

Saturday, April 16. Leader: Justin Hollis, csufo@gmail.com. A joint event with CSU Field Ornithologists (CSUFO). Open for all skill levels, but limited to seven FCAS members and seven CSU members. Meet at 8 a.m. at Watson Lake, east side.

Thursday, April 28, Kingfisher Point Natural Area. Leader: John Shenot, johnshenot@gmail.com, 802-595-1669. Very little walking required and suitable for all skill levels. The ponds at this natural area frequently attract a variety of ducks, and shorebirds have started to frequent this spot after recent restoration activities. Meet at 7 a.m.

Great Backyard Bird Count Results

This was an amazing year for the Great Backyard Bird Count. There were 7,099 species across 192 countries seen during the four-day survey, and more than 300 thousand checklists were sent in.



Long-tailed Duck by Laura Frazier.

This is the largest global participation in the count's history. The United States had the most checklists with over 198 thousand submissions with 689 species identified; however, there were 1,240 species seen in Columbia. Remote parts of the world were explored, including South Georgia Island in the sub-Antarctic. There were many countries that submitted endemic species to the list, such as the Seychelles Blue Pigeon.

Locally, Larimer and Weld counties had some fantastic birds. In Larimer County, there were 114 species with 643 checklists turned in. Highlights included an Iceland Gull and Long-tailed Duck. In Weld County, there were 75 species with 158 checklists. Highlights included a Snowy Owl in Briggsdale, and a feral Chukar.



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.