COUNTING LYNX KITTENS
IN THE COLORADO ROCKIES - 2005

Tanya Shenk Recounts Her Experiences

Intense searches for lynx dens began in the high elevations of the Colorado Rockies in the spring of 2000. The finding of dens and the counting of kittens would tell the success or failure of the reintroduction of lynx into the Colorado Rockies. Tanya Shenk of the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) has piloted this project, which began in the spring of 1999. By spring of this year, she and her crew had succeeded in placing radio collars on 34 adult females.

During May and June, the adventure of locating the resulting dens began. All of the 2005 dens were scattered throughout the high elevation areas of Colorado, south of Interstate 70. Most of the dens were in Engelmann spruce/sub-alpine fir forests in areas of extensive downfall. Elevations ranged from 3,117 to 3,586 meters (10,226 — 11,765 feet).

Upon locating dens with kittens, further drama continued as the kittens were weighed, photographed, PIT-tagged and their sex recorded. Blood samples were also taken from the kittens for genetic work in an attempt to confirm paternity.

Tanya Shenk gives many, many thanks to the CDOW pilots and the lynx field crew for their complete dedication in finding den sites. Without their help, it would not have been possible to document this huge increment of success in the Colorado lynx reintroduction program. As busy as she is, Tanya is willing to share the excitement of this tale with us. So be sure to join us the evening of October 13 in the Ludlow Room of the Lincoln Center for more fascinating details of the lynx reintroduction saga.

Photos of the kittens can currently be found on the Colorado Division of Wildlife website at http://wildlife.state.co.us/species_cons/lynx.asp.
### OCTOBER-NOVEMBER FIELD TRIPS

All field trips are free of charge and open to the public. All experience levels are welcome. Attendees should dress appropriately for the weather. Bring snacks, water, and binoculars and/or spotting scopes if you have them. Carpooling is encouraged. A $2.00 (unless otherwise specified) contribution per passenger to the driver is suggested. Visit [http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon](http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon) for more information. For all field trips and surveys, please contact the trip leader for signup and trip details, or contact the Field Trip Coordinator, Gary Lefko, at lefkogt@greatpikespeakbirdingtrail.org or 970-897-2454.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/1/2005</td>
<td>Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey</td>
<td>Cole Wild at 970-310-3735 or <a href="mailto:birdingwild1@yahoo.com">birdingwild1@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>Fort Collins’ newest natural area, Bobcat Ridge Natural Area, is projected to be open in 2006. Fort Collins Audubon performs a monthly bird census for the city. All levels welcomed. Participation limited.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/8/2005</td>
<td>Search for Migrant Species</td>
<td>Beth Dillon at 970-490-2610</td>
<td>From 8:00 am to 1:00 pm, we will visit various lakes in eastern Larimer and western Weld counties to search for migrant species. Limited to 8 participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/15/2005</td>
<td>Larimer Lakes</td>
<td>Nick Komar at <a href="mailto:quetzal65@comcast.net">quetzal65@comcast.net</a> or 970-416-7527</td>
<td>From 8:00 to 11:00 am, we will visit various Fort Collins and/or Loveland area lakes looking for migrant waterfowl. Limited to 10 participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/16/2005</td>
<td>Fossil Creek Reservoir Bird Survey</td>
<td>Nick Komar at <a href="mailto:quetzal65@comcast.net">quetzal65@comcast.net</a> or 970-416-7527</td>
<td>Fort Collins Audubon performs a monthly bird census for the county. All levels welcomed. Participation limited to five plus leader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/5/2005</td>
<td>Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey</td>
<td>Cole Wild at 970-310-3735 or <a href="mailto:birdingwild1@yahoo.com">birdingwild1@yahoo.com</a></td>
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Note: Occasionally, new field trips may be announced or details may be finalized between issues of the *Ptarmigan*. Please visit our website and click on “Field Trips” to check for updated field trip information.

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**Fort Collins Audubon Message Center**

FCAS now has a telephone number you can call to hear a recording about upcoming events. You can also leave messages with suggestions or questions for FCAS. Call 970-490-BIRD.

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**October’s Trivia Question!**

Name five species that are interdependent with prairie dog colonies. Answers will be accepted (small prizes awarded) at the October program meeting.
Make a Difference! Take Part in Fort Collins Audubon!

Are you interested in giving something back to our natural environment? Are you looking for a way to make a difference in your community and in Larimer County? Are you excited about the mission of Fort Collins Audubon? Is there a leader within you, eager to take our society to new levels? Fort Collins Audubon is ready to give you the chance! FCAS is now offering the following positions to people like you:

- Field Trip Coordinator
- Membership Chair
- Conservation Chair
- Scholarship Chair and committee members
- Fundraising/Development Chair
- Hospitality Chair
- Booth Coordinator
- Annual Meeting/Silent Auction Committee

Plan to attend our job fair before the program meeting on October 13, from 7:00 to 7:30 pm. Committee chairs, officers, and board members will be on hand to discuss the job descriptions for these positions. If you are eager to find out more, visit www.fortnet.org/Audubon/positions.htm, or contact Joel Hurmence at jhurmence@hotmail.com or 970-481-2124. The vitality of Fort Collins Audubon depends on you!

Field Trip Leaders Seminar
Being a field trip leader proves two old sayings: learn by doing and learn by teaching others. The FCAS Field Trip Leaders Seminar will help you discover a whole new perspective on birds and birding by training you to help other people catch the fire! This day-long seminar will focus on such topics as planning and logistics, group dynamics and special populations, instruction and interpretation, timing and pacing, and a whole lot more. And of course, the seminar has a flip side: learning what makes a good field trip can help you enjoy future field trips as a participant even if you never lead one! For more details or to register, call Kevin Cook at 223-8392 afternoons or evenings.

**Instructor:** Kevin J. Cook  
**Date and Time:** Saturday, November 19, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm  
**Place:** Rocky Mountain Field Seminars facility, 1895 Fall River Road, Estes Park.  
**Cost:** $20. Participants will receive a $20 rebate in return for leading two field trips for FCAS.

Fort Collins Audubon Birding Classes

Birding for Beginners
A four-week birding class for beginners will be offered during October.

Topics will include how to find and observe birds, how to use field guides more effectively, how to select and use optical equipment, and most importantly, how to have more fun with the birding time and experiences you have. This class is intended for people who are just awakening to the pleasures of birding.

Dates: Oct. 3, 10, 17, and 24. Field trip will be arranged after the start of the class sessions.

**Instructor:** Kevin J. Cook  
**Place:** Conference Room, JAX Outdoor, 1200 N. College Ave.  
**Cost:** $8 per session or $7 if FCAS member. Four sessions are $30 or $26 for FCAS members.  
**Time:** 6:30 to 8:30 pm  
Visit www.fortnet.org/Audubon or call Kevin Cook at 223-8392 on MWF afternoons or any evening.

Birding after the Beginning
A four-week birding class during November will address the next step for birders who have made their start and are eager to advance.

With a special slant toward winter birding, the class will focus on challenging groups such as hawks, gulls, and sparrows to highlight such identification factors as age, geographic variability, seasonality, and color oddities.

Dates: Nov. 7, 14, 21, and 28. Field trip will be arranged after the start of the class sessions.

**Details**  
**Instructor:** Kevin J. Cook  
**Place:** Conference Room, JAX Outdoor, 1200 N. College Ave.  
**Cost:** $8 per session or $7 if FCAS member. Four sessions are $30 or $26 for FCAS members.  
**Time:** 6:30 to 8:30 pm  
Visit www.fortnet.org/Audubon or call Kevin Cook at 223-8392 on MWF afternoons or any evening.

Fossil Creek Wetlands Cleanup
We need your help! As you may know, FCAS participates in the “Adopt A Natural Area” program of the Fort Collins Natural Resources Department. FCAS has adopted the Fossil Creek Wetlands Natural Area (between the railroad tracks and Timberline, south of Trilby and north of Carpenter Road), and it needs some cleanup. Enjoy a half-day in the fresh air — join us and help clean up this natural area.

Meet Saturday, October 22, 10:00 am – Noon, on the south side of Trilby between Lemay and Timberline, just east of the railroad tracks. Bring gloves, plastic buckets or trash bags, rakes, and plenty of water to drink. Contact Joel Hurmence at jhurmence@hotmail.com or 970-481-2124 for information. See you there!
Overall, there are still possibilities for volunteers to share programs, public outreach, field trips, photography, backyard thank Sue Quinlan, Shelagh Tupper, Darren Proppe, Maria Some members stepped forward at our last program meeting. I How do we find volunteers for these expanded opportunities? Unlimited. creating a demonstration display for backyard bird and butterfly Fossil Creek Reservoir regional park hosted a "birding fair" on have a bird sanctuary a short distance from the downtown area. with a landowner who may provide the opportunity for us to human energy. As of this writing, the FCAS board is visiting has given us unprecedented opportunities to develop our programming and interpretive directions but again we need more with the Rocky Mountain Raptor Program’s new land purchase nesting), and Kate Bolster’s extended trip to the east coast to care for aging parents, left us without the human resources to organize the backyard habitat garden tour, although we have several exemplary gardens available. Audubon’s involvement with the Rocky Mountain Raptor Program’s new land purchase has given us unprecedented opportunities to develop our various levels of bird skills and enthusiasm with the public, help develop a sanctuary and model habitat garden, design and participate in public outreach on behalf of Audubon and birds, show off photographic skills, count birds, participate in bird science, and spend time with other enthusiastic birders. If you don’t know how, we’ll help you learn. Cole and Nick need more volunteers to help with monthly bird surveys at Bobcat Ridge and Fossil Creek Reservoir (you get to go birding with experts and help science on local birds.) We are offering a training workshop with Kevin Cook to help people interested in being field trip leaders. The city would like us to take on a survey of Soapstone Ranch, a large and nearly pristine property in northern Larimer County near the Wyoming border. To join in, for pleasure and satisfaction, contact our volunteer coordinator Ellen Wride at EVW9609@aol.com, or me at 970-416-1881 or ecoarthull@cs.com.

At future meetings, we will be selling the wonderful new WILDSCAPES book created by Colorado Audubon; all the information on plants and bird species is appropriate to Colorado. Our chapter receives a percentage of the sales price, so think of purchasing some for gifts as well as for yourself!

October and late-fall birding classes will be offered by Kevin Cook. Improve your birding skills with these combined classroom and field experiences. Contact Kevin at 970-223-8392, kjcook@frii.com, or check the Audubon website for more information in October.

Better Birding, Better Living - Lynne Hull, Education Committee Chair

Education program development over the summer has been slow. It has come to the board’s attention that we need to recruit volunteers from the general membership instead of overworking the board members. My major time involvement in a public art project (including an experimental sculpture for Kingfisher nesting), and Kate Bolster’s extended trip to the east coast to for pleasure and satisfaction, contact our volunteer coordinator Ellen Wride at EVW9609@aol.com, or me at 970-416-1881 or ecoarthull@cs.com.

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Birdathon 2005 Results - Philip Friedman, Birdathon Coordinator

This year’s Birdathon took place on the second weekend in May during a 24-hour period beginning on Friday, May 13 and lasting through Saturday, May 14. It was the beginning of peak spring migration on the plains and foothills. The Birdathon was focused around the idea of Important Bird Areas. And we were successful!

Teams obtained pledges based on the total number of birds seen. We received 69 pledges and raised $3,002.

Four teams were formed with about 20 participants. Teams covered the usual terrain from Rocky Mountain National Park, Cameron Pass, Rist Canyon, Dixon Reservoir and Watson Lake, then all the way to Crow Valley Campground and Murphy’s pasture on the Pawnee. The high-count team saw 172 species, with a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher probably being the best bird seen by any team.

After the Birdathon, we all met at Avogadro’s Number for tall tales, comparative notes, and a comfortable chair! Our goal next year is to field 8 teams with up to 40 participants.

As mentioned in our September newsletter, this year a portion of the Birdathon proceeds was dedicated to the new Fort Collins Audubon Scholarship Fund.

For more on the Birdathon and IBAs check out the following sites:

Fort Collins Audubon Birdathon
http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon/activities/birdathon/birdathon.htm

National Audubon Birdathon
http://www.audubon.org/bird/birdathon/

Colorado’s Important Bird Areas Program
http://www.audubon.org/bird/iba/co.html
http://www.abcbirds.org/iba/colorado.htm
Conservation Corner  
Carol Fiore, Conservation Committee Chair

The Conservation Committee has been working on recommendations to the National Park Service’s Elk and Vegetation Management Plan/EIS during this past year. We have backed wolf reintroduction as a means of elk control. Several members of the committee attended a meeting of the Wolf Working Group. Our Audubon voice is being heard!

The National Park Service has provided a progress and status update on the EIS. If you would like to read a report summarizing comments on the preliminary draft alternatives, log onto http://www.nps.gov/romo/planning/elkvegetation. It is expected that the draft EIS will be available for public review in the winter of 2006.

Alternative D, which would include re-establishing a small population of wolves, is one of the four alternatives being considered.

Join us at our conservation committee meetings, held at 6:15 pm just before the monthly program meetings, to learn about the other projects we are working on.

**TAKE ACTION!**

Help protect Rocky Mountain National Park. Write, call, or email your U.S. Congressional representatives and tell them you support designating RMNP as “wilderness.” Even though it’s a national park, it is not completely protected. Wilderness designation, recommended by the National Park Service itself, is the best way to ensure its protection. Now is the time for our Congressional representatives to introduce wilderness legislation. Phone Representative Marilyn Musgrave at 202-225-4676 and Senator Wayne Allard at 202-224-5941. Tell them you enthusiastically endorse the National Park Service proposal to designate the majority of the park as wilderness.

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**Kudos and Raspberries**

Colorado House Bill 05-1266 has been signed into law. Kudos to members of the Legislature who decided to create a mandatory habitat stamp on all hunting and fishing licenses. The money generated from the stamp will be dedicated to habitat issues including acquisition and access.

However, raspberries to members of the Colorado Senate who voted to add several disappointing amendments. One is that, for the first five years, 60% of the habitat stamp revenue is dedicated to projects benefiting big game winter-range habitat. Another disappointment is that the governor (rather than the director of DOW) will make appointments to the habitat stamp advisory committee—this pushes appointments in a political direction rather than in a pro-resource direction.

Big kudos to our Colorado Audubon lobbyist Jen Boulton for her untiring work! Thanks Jen!
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Membership Application
Join the Fort Collins Audubon Society (FCAS) directly, or automatically become a member by joining the National Audubon Society (NAS). Choose one below:

- New or Renewing Member of FCAS (annual dues) $15
  (Receive the Ptarmigan newsletter)
- FCAS may share my name with NAS
- New Member of NAS & Chapter $20
  (Receive Audubon magazine and Ptarmigan)
- Renewing Member of NAS & Chapter $35
  (Receive Audubon magazine and Ptarmigan)

Did you know? Less than $1 of your NAS dues is left for FCAS funds. FCAS serves NAS members through its own fundraising efforts. We appreciate your financial support!

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Additional donation to FCAS $______
Total enclosed $______

Name: __________________________________________
Address:_________________________________________
City: _______________ State: ____ Zip: ___________
Phone: _______________ E-mail: ______________________

I prefer to receive the Ptarmigan via the FCAS website. Please e-mail me when posted.

Please make your check payable to FCAS and send along with this form to: Fort Collins Audubon Society, PO Box 271968, Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968