

PTARMIGAN



FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY
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Promoting the appreciation, conservation, and restoration of ecosystems,
focusing on birds and other wildlife, through education, participation, stewardship, and advocacy.

February 2010

Volume 41, Issue 2

The *Buzz* on Colorado Bees

Have questions, concerns about, or encouragement for the bees in your yard?

Whitney Cranshaw, entomologist and professor with Colorado State University, will make an informative overview

presentation on Colorado bees (and some wasps) at the co-sponsored meeting of the

FCAS and the Northern Colorado Native Plant Society on Thursday, February 11. Primary topics covered will include bee recognition, life history, and habits. Learn steps that can be taken to encourage and conserve some bee species. Informal discus-



sion is invited!

Whitney also has authored several books and will have available for sale two of his books: *Garden Insects of North America* (\$25) and *Guide to Colorado Insects* (\$15).



Before the evening presentation, *Buzz on Colorado Bees*, Douglas Kibbe, Region 15 Coordinator for the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas II, will give a brief Power-Point update on the status of the Project in 2009. See Page 5 for more information.

Thursday Evening Program – February 11, 2010

Co-Sponsored by: FCAS and Northern Colorado Native Plant Society

Social hour begins 7 p.m. Presentation: 7:30 p.m.

Fort Collins Lincoln Center-Columbine Room
417 W Magnolia St, Fort Collins, CO

Fort Collins Bird Notes

by Eric DeFonso

Welcome to another installment of Fort Collins Bird Notes, a short summary of birdly goings-on in and around the Fort Collins area. Information is compiled from area listservs and word of mouth, and is not yet examined by the Colorado Records Committee.

The *white-winged Crossbills* that David Leatherman found at the Grandview Cemetery on November 22 are still around. The male-female pair is best located by searching the tops of the spruces covered in cones, but also listen for their staccato “ved-ved-ved” calls.

Another remarkable rarity—a juvenile *red-shouldered hawk*—was first reported at the Kodak State Wildlife Area (SWA) in Windsor by Dave Elens; it has been seen regularly since about January 6 and sometimes heard vocalizing. The best place to search for it is along the paved Poudre River Trail just north of the actual SWA, although the SWA also can provide viewing opportunities as well. Check the taller trees closer to the river, although not necessarily at

the tip-top. The bird is smaller than a *red-tailed hawk* and has distinctive buffy crescents on the tops of the wings, which are visible when it flies. The *red-shouldered hawk* has been documented in northern Colorado in only three of the past 40 years!



Red-shouldered hawk by Steve Messick.

A few *short-eared owls* were spotted in the late afternoons in the past few weeks down by Lower Latham Reservoir near Greeley. This species is a regular winter visitor to our area, but not often seen. They frequently share habitat with *Northern harriers* and hunt with a similar style. Weld County Road 48, a dirt road just south of the large reservoir, is the best area to look, so check the fence posts for perching owls and open fields for raptors coursing a few feet above the ground.

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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

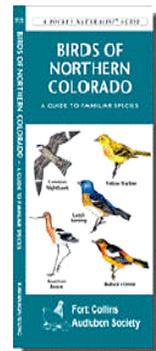
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(970) 482-1662

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144 N. College
(970) 472-4284



Conservation Corner _____ by Bill Miller

"I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach...." — Henry David Thoreau

"If you talk to the animals, they will talk with you and you will know each other. If you do not talk to them, you will not know them, and what you do not know you will fear. What one fears, one destroys." — Chief Dan George

"We are living on this planet as if we had another one to go to."
— Terri Swearingen, U.S. environmental activist

Global Climate Change Isn't the Only Problem We're Facing

Climate change is either directly causing or is indirectly related to many of our current environmental woes, but even if it wasn't playing a role, our ecosystems still would be in great trouble. About 80 percent of the world's forests would still be gone; 90 percent of the large fish in the world's oceans would still be absent. If you haven't yet, watch the video, *An Inconvenient Truth*, at this Web site: <http://planetgreen.discovery.com/videos/reel-impact-an-inconvenient-truth-premiere.html>

Five major environmental crises are enumerated in the article, "5 Environmental Crises You Should Care About that Aren't Global Warming," By Mickey Z., Astoria. The original article can be found at: <http://planetgreen.discovery.com/work-connect/environmental-crisis-global-warming.html?campaign=daylife-article>

Those five crises are:

1. Nuclear Waste: Radiation is, for all practical purposes, forever. The half-life of uranium-235 is 704 million years, and for uranium-238, it's about 4.47 billion years. *Take Action:* Learn why nuclear power is not and can never be clean energy. See: <http://www.greenamericatoday.org/programs/climate/dirtyenergy/nuclear.cfm>

2. Factory Farming: Each day, factory farms produce billions of pounds of manure that end up in lakes, rivers, and drinking water. Eighty percent of U.S. agricultural land is used to raise animals for food and grow the grain to feed them. Animals raised for food are the primary consumers of water in the United States. It takes more than 2,400 gallons of water to produce one pound of cow flesh, whereas it takes about 180 gallons of water to produce one pound

of whole-wheat flour. *Take Action:* Consider reducing your consumption of meats. See: <http://planetgreen.discovery.com/food-health/vegan-portman-join-fight.htm>

3. Deforestation: According to Greenpeace, an area of natural forest the size of a football field is chopped down every two seconds. The Nature Conservancy reports that over 32 million acres of the planet's natural forests are lost each year to logging. *Take Action:* Recognize the connection between what we eat and why trees are clear cut. See: <http://planetgreen.discovery.com/work-connect/cheeseburger-deforestation-weather-patterns.html>

4. Overfishing: "Populations of top predators, a key indicator of ecosystem health, are disappearing at a frightening rate," explains Greenpeace, "and 90 percent of large fish have been fished out since large scale industrial fishing began in the 1950s." The connection between human survival and the oceans has never felt more vital. See: <http://planetgreen.discovery.com/travel-outdoors/ways-save-ocean.html> *Take Action:* Consider reducing your consumption of fish and shellfish. See: <http://www.treehugger.com/files/2009/04/you-wouldnt-eat-a-tiger-so-why-would-you-eat-bluefin-tuna.php>

5. Pesticide Use: The annual use of pesticides today is about 500 billion tons. Pesticides are found in most waterways and in the food chains of both humans and animals. About 860 Americans suffer from pesticide poisoning; worldwide, the death rate from pesticide poisonings is more than 200,000 per year. *Take Action:* Consider going organic with your food purchases. See: <http://planetgreen.discovery.com/food-health/organic-childrens-book-review.html>



Upcoming Field Trips



All field trips are free of charge (unless otherwise noted) and open to the public. All experience levels are welcome. Participants should dress appropriately for the weather. Bring snacks or lunch, water, binoculars, and spotting scopes. Carpooling is encouraged. A \$3.00 (unless otherwise specified) contribution per passenger to the driver is suggested. Visit www.fortnet.org/Audubon for more information. For all field trips and surveys, please contact the trip leader for signup and trip details

Feb. 6, Saturday. Boulder Area Birding. Leader: TBA. Come for a leisurely morning of birding around Boulder County. Meet at Walden Ponds, and we'll go from there. If there is open water on the reservoirs, we'll check it out. If not, we'll bird the foothills, feeders, and riparian strips. Dress for the weather, expect to do some carpooling, and get ready for lots of fun. Questions? Contact Ted Floyd: ted-floyd57@hotmail.com.

Feb. 14, Sunday. Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Denise Bretting, dbretting@swloveland.com; work, 669-1185; or home: 669-8095. Meet at 7 a.m. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the city of Fort Collins. All levels welcomed and encouraged!

Feb. 21, Sunday. Small Nocturnal Montane Winter Owls. Leader: Nick Komar. Co-leader: Eric DeFonso, voericd@yahoo.com or 970-472-1761. Join us as we head out into the winter night to find Northern saw-whet owls in Rist Canyon and Boreal owls at Cameron Pass. Both species begin their courtship calling in mid-winter, and therefore should be easy to detect. We'll be looking and listening for these birds from the road primarily. We cannot guarantee that we'll see the birds, but our chances are improved if we can



Boreal owl by Bill Schmoker.

hear them. This is a great opportunity to learn new things about these mysterious birds that live near us year-round, yet so few people ever actually experience. We will meet at 8 p.m., at a location to be determined, and return to Fort Collins around 2 a.m. Carpooling will be required to reduce potential impacts on the owls as they enter their breeding season as well as simply ease transportation. If the weather is uncooperative our backup day may be one week later on Saturday, February 27.

March 3, Sunday. Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Denise Bretting, dbretting@swloveland.com; work, 669-1185; or home, 669-8095. Meet at 7 a.m. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the city of Fort Collins. All levels welcomed!

March 2010, with a specific date TBA. Gull Identification Workshop. Leader: Nick Komar, quetzal65@comcast.net, or 416-7527. Meeting place and time TBA. Join us as we take a closer look at the numerous gulls that grace our area in the cold season. Gulls can be challenging to identify, but they have the benefit of being easy to find and generally cooperative. We may visit one or several lakes and reservoirs, depending on recent gull activity.

FCAS Welcomes New and Renewing Members—Thank You for Your Membership!

Cheryl Bates	Mary Conway	Ron Harden	Julie Keahey	Clara Points
Eryl & Fiona Bevan	Sylvia Cooke	Erik Hardy	Barry Lindstrom	Becca & Brad Reid
Miles Blumhardt	Kevin Crooks	Eileen Hazen	Earl McFarland	Marysue Rice
Denise A. Bretting	Alex Dwoinen	Hank Henry	Jessie Meschievitz	Elizabeth Ross
Barbara Bridgman	Suzanne Ferrell	Judy Hobert	Doris G. Miller	L. Saldana
Col. D.D. Campbell	Joan Fishburn	Cheri Jensen	Corey Nielsen	Gregg Somermeyer
Carolyn Chaney	Jessica Forbes	Debra Johnson	Mel & Cheri Orwig	Claudia Strijek
Jon S. Cobble	Bruce Gilbert	Nora A. Jones	Suzanna Petersen	Jennifer Tow
			Phil Phelan	Anne Williams



Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas II (CoBBA II) Project

The Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas II (CoBBA II) Project is a multi-year project initiated in 2007 by the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) and the Colorado Bird Atlas Partnership to provide data on the distribution, abundance, habitat use, and breeding phenology of the avifauna breeding in Colorado. The first CoBBA (1987) resulted in the *Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas*, the most complete synopsis of information on Colorado's breeding birds ever assembled. It is out of print.



Mountain plover by Nick Komar

The results of CoBBA II will be compared to the first Atlas to show changes in distribution and population status of Colorado's breeding birds.

The amazing expansion of the

Eurasian collared dove and Canada goose are two recent examples of species distribution changes.

CoBBA II involves hundreds of volunteers who spend hours collecting data in designated survey units. Colorado is broken into 26 regions; Fort Collins lies in the middle of Region 15 that extends from Rocky Mountain National Park eastward across the Pawnee National Grasslands. Regional coordinators are Doug Kibbe and Mackenzie Goldthwait. Doug Kibbe will solicit volunteers at the FCAS February meeting and present a brief overview of the project prior to the main speaker's presentation.

The Great Backyard Bird Count

Connie Kogler reminds us that the 13th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count, co-sponsored by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, takes place February 12-15. Individuals, families, schools, and organizations are asked to count birds at birdfeeders, in backyards, at local parks, or in other locations. Report your tallies either online through the Bird-Source Web site, <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc>, or go to www.wbu.com/fortcollins and download the count list, manually fill it out, then bring it to Wild Birds Unlimited Nature Shop, 3636 S. College. The data will be entered and you will receive a free bag of seed!



Parents! Kids!
Save the date!

Putnam Science Carnival

Saturday, March 6

11 a.m.- 3 p.m.

Come see: Robots, rockets, ferrets, bird olympics, raptors, make high-speed video magic, play with Little Shop of Physics, make silly slime, race a cockroach, tour our haunted house of lasers, and much, much more!

For more information please email/call Wendy Mosher

wmosher@psdschools.org

(970) 488-7744

\$2 per person or \$10 per family



2010 Colorado Legislative Forum

Join us for the joint Audubon/Sierra Club 2010 Legislative Forum!

Date: Saturday, February 20, 2010

Time: 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Place: First Plymouth Church, 3501 S. Colorado Boulevard, Denver

The Audubon Society of Greater Denver (ASGD) and the Enos Mills Group of the Sierra Club invite you to attend the 2010 Legislative Forum. Audubon Colorado Lobbyist Jen Boulton and Sierra Club Legislative Committee Chair Gary Lindstrom will discuss the 2010 session's environmental bills. We'll hear from speakers on several key issues, and at lunch we'll talk with several Colorado legislators.

The cost is \$12 per person in advance, \$15 at the door. To register in advance, call the ASGD office at 303-973-9530.



Fort Collins Audubon Society
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Membership Application

Join FCAS directly, or automatically become a member by joining the National Audubon Society (NAS). Choose one the following:

- New or renewing member** of FCAS annual dues
 (Receive the *Ptarmigan* newsletter) \$15
- New member** of NAS and FCAS \$20
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 (Receive *Audubon* magazine and *Ptarmigan*)

Did you know? Less than \$1 of your NAS dues goes to fund FCAS. FCAS serves NAS members through its own fundraising efforts. We appreciate your financial support.

Additional donation to FCAS: \$ _____
 Total enclosed: \$ _____

Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

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