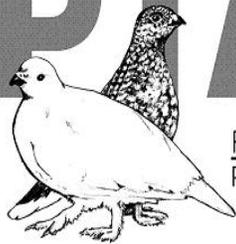


PTARMIGAN



FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY
P.O. Box 271968 • Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968 • www.fortnet.org/Audubon

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

May 2012

Volume 43, Issue 5

History and Management of the Poudre Canyon Bighorn Sheep Herd

Thursday, May 10, 2012

**Fort Collins Senior Center-Multi-Use Room
1200 Raintree Drive, Fort Collins**

Social Gathering: 7 p.m.—Program: 7:30 p.m.

Mark Vieira, Wildlife Biologist with the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission, will present a brief overview on Colorado bighorn sheep management, local history on the sheep in northern Larimer County, and some information from recent (2005-present) management and research projects.

Mark Vieira, grew up largely on the East Coast and Portugal, and attended undergraduate school at St. Mary's College of Maryland. He spent a summer on a National Science Fellowship at Rocky Mountain Biological Lab near Crested Butte and returned again to attend graduate school at CSU; he received an MS in Wildlife Biology in 2000. His graduate work focused on elk movement to private land in response to early season hunting pressure. After graduate school, Mark worked for U.S. Geological Survey in the Badlands of North Dakota on an elk project before returning to Fort Collins in 2001 to work with the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

Join us on May 10 at the Senior Center in Fort Collins. This program is free; the public welcome.



Bighorn Sheep by MarkVieira.

"Life In The Amazon: A 5-Month Reality Show Wherein I, Eric, Help Save The World"

Presented by: Eric DeFonso

**Naturalist, Birder, Bird-Sound Recordist
Thursday, May 24, 2012**

**Loveland Museum and Gallery
503 N Lincoln Ave., Loveland**

Social: 6:45 p.m.—Program: 7 p.m.

In contrast to Eric DeFonso's March presentation on several diverse and intriguing habitats in South America, this talk will be entirely about his five months in the Amazon in 2011. The very name "Amazon" evokes ideas of impenetrable jungle, simmering heat and humidity, and face-painted indigenous peoples shooting arrows or rowing canoes. Eric will puncture some of these myths, but also will

create some new ones as he relates his considerable time spent as a volunteer in Ecuador, Peru, and Brazil. He'll talk about the projects he worked on, his bird-guiding and surveying efforts, and more.

You won't want to miss this continuation of Eric's travels in South America. This program is free and the public is welcomed.



President's Corner

by Bill Miller

"When plunder becomes a way of life for a group of men living together in society, they create for themselves in the course of time a legal system that authorizes it and a moral code that glorifies it."

- Frederic Bastiat

"Probably no nation is rich enough to pay for both war and civilization. We must make our choice; we cannot have both."

- Abraham Flexner

2012 FCAS BIRDATHON PLEDGE SHEET

Please fill out and mail to: Bill Miller, 322 Scott Ave, Fort Collins, CO 80521

Name: _____ Mail Address: _____

Tel. No.: _____ Email: _____

Pledge Amt: (per species) \$ _____ OR fixed amt) \$ _____

Team Leader: _____ Team Member: _____ Donor Only: _____

Birdathon This Month!

It's getting closer: the annual Birdathon—our principal fund-raiser each year! Prior to this annual event we encourage our members to financially support their chapter with tax-

deductible contributions. During the Birdathon, volunteers form teams to look for elusive bird species, donate 24 or more hours of their own time, use their own vehicles, and generally make their own donations to the chapter.



Yellow-breasted Chat by Bill Miller .

I have asked board members to seek five pledges each. I also would like to ask every FCAS member to try to solicit at least two

pledges each beyond their own. If we are all successful in this effort we will be just that much closer to establishing a meaningful scholarship endowment fund. If you successfully solicit one or more pledges then please collect them and turn the funds over to either me or our treasurer, John Waddell.

Also, please consider volunteering to serve on a team. If you don't know a team leader, let me know and we'll assign you to a team. This is a fun event and more eyes spot more birds!

The Birdathon is Friday and Saturday, May 11 and 12, to be followed with an informal "Beer and Brag" get-together at 6 p.m. on Saturday, at Panhandler's Pizza, 1220 W. Elizabeth Street in Fort Collins. We hope to see you then. BYOP (Buy Your Own Pizza!).

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"We are the most dangerous species of life on the planet, and every other species, even the earth itself, has cause to fear our power to exterminate. But we are also the only species which, when it chooses to do so, we'll go to great effort to save what it might destroy."

—Wallace Stegner

"The resources of nature, like those of spirit, are running out, and all that a conscientious man can aspire to be is a literal conservative, hoarding what remains of culture and of natural wealth against the fierce appetites of modern life."

—*The Conservative Mind*, page 362

Birds of Colorado: An Exceptional Opportunity

Join us for an exceptional opportunity to learn about the birds of Colorado from birding professionals. There are three sets of trips remaining: in May, June, and July. This program allows you to learn from the experts while traveling through various Colorado life zones. Each trip is limited to nine participants along with a leader and a driver. Trips are scheduled for the third Saturday and Sunday of each month.

May 19 and 20: Eastern Plains (Vacancies: One on May 20.)

Migrating passerine birds of the east and west mix together at Great Plains migration hot spots provided by islands of forest habitat among a enormous grass sea. The tour will visit a variety



Mountain Plover by Bill Miller .

of birding hot-spots in Weld County in search of rare passerine migrants of the eastern forests among the breeding birds of the western High Plains.

June 16 and 17: Rocky Mountains

(Vacancies: One on June 16; six on June 17.)

In June, about a hundred species of Colorado's montane-nesting birds are on their breeding territories. An elevational tour of western Boulder County will start at the foothill canyons and end at the alpine tundra, noting the changing bird

populations in each habitat belt. Birds: Northern Goshawk, American Three-toed Woodpecker, MacGillivray's Warbler, Western Tanager, Green-tailed Towhee, Lincoln's Sparrow, Mountain White-crowned Sparrows, and

Lazuli Bunting. Leader: Ted Floyd, editor, *Birding* magazine.

July 21 and 22: High Plains of North Park

(Vacancies: One on June 21; four on June 22.)

Water bird nesting in the High Plains is no more interesting than in North Park (Jackson County). Mammal encounters can include moose, elk, mule deer, pronghorn, muskrat, yellow-bellied marmot, porcupine, prairie dogs, ground squirrels, chipmunks, and others. Birds: Pied-billed and Eared Grebes, Double-crested Cormorants, American White Pelicans, American Coots, California Gulls, Willets, Wilson's Phalaropes, Marsh Wrens, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Greater Sage-Grouse, Sage Thrasher, and Brewer's Sparrow. Leader: Chuck Hundertmark, president, Denver Field Ornithologists.

Cost: \$75 per trip for FCAS members. \$100 per trip for non-members. Payment due on the first of month attending.

For more information and/or reservations, contact Joann Thomas at 970-482-7125, 970-222-0741, or jthomas91@aol.com; or Bill Miller at 870-493-7693 or 5mcorp@comcast.net.



Eared Grebe with Chick by Bill Miller.



Spring...a little early!

An amazing number of species greeted me as I walked through the rear doors of the Moose Visitor Center near Cameron Pass. Within three minutes I saw six species: Pine Grosbeak, Pine Siskin, Mountain Chickadee, Stellar’s Jay, Cassin’s Finch, and Red-winged Blackbird. As a small group gathered, we noted the volume of the chorus from the nearby willows and the distant conifers. The sound rose as magnificently as a choir singing Handel’s Hallelujah Chorus. If I was a good birder by ear, which I’m not, I would have had more species, I am sure!



Cassin’s Finch by Bill Miller .

Scaled Quail, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Greater Roadrunner, Chihuahuan Raven, Juniper Titmouse, Curved-billed Thrasher, Canyon Towhee, and Rufous-crowned Sparrow. Of these birds, I’ve only seen two.

This series of bird tours is the chance of a lifetime to develop a clear perspective on the great diversity of life zones that exist in Colorado. And, considering the effects that climate change is having on spring this year, we could see more southern birds creeping north. Check out a fuller description of each month’s weekend tours on our Web site at www.fortnet.org/

Yes, spring, early tho’ it may be, is here! On our first FCAS bird tour in March, the Saturday group had 51 species and the Sunday group had 47 species. And, while each day started splendidly, the weather deteriorated into gusting winds and blowing dust—welcome to spring in Colorado.

April’s tour should be a great birding adventure. This trip will be challenging, but potentially very rewarding. Led by Jeff Gordon, professional field guide and president of the American Birding Association, the tour could include

[Audubon/](#) and click on the April newsletter for the latest information. We have several spots open on the Sunday trips of the remaining months. We’d love to have you join us.

Alas, I will not be here for the April bird tour. But, I will be birding—in the Camargue bird sanctuary in Provence France—a region that has over 400 species of birds and, as the guide book says, “...some of the most ferocious mosquitoes to be found anywhere in France.”

Adieu, mes ami and great birding to us all. See you on the May tour!



Upcoming Field Trips



May 14, Sunday, Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Denise Bretting, dbretting@swloveland.com, work: 970-669-1185, home: 970-669-8095. Call for any change. Meet at 6:30 a.m. in the parking lot. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the city of Fort Collins. All levels are welcome.

May 19, Saturday, Birding the Big Thompson. Leader: Connie Kogler zblueheron@gmail.com. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at Railroad Dr/Fairgrounds Park in Loveland.

June 23, Saturday Burrowing Owl and Mountain Plover Field Trip. Leader: Bill Miller, 5mcorp@comcast.net, 970-493-7693. Reservations and car pooling required. Limit: 15 plus leader. Meet at 6 a.m. at the Harmony Transportation Center at I-25 and Harmony. Travel to the Pawnee National Grasslands in search of Burrowing Owls, Mountain Plovers and anything else we encounter. Bring your hats, sunscreen, water, snacks, binoculars and scope if you have one. We’ll try to return by 1 p.m.



High Plains Environmental Center Bird Watches

Once more, FCAS volunteers will provide guided opportunities for Audubon members and members of the public to experience the changes of the seasons at Equalizer Lake in Loveland, west of the Medical Center of the Rockies. The Bird Watches will be held on the fourth Thursday of each month at 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. The dates are: May 24, June 28, July 26, August 23, and September 27.



FCAS Welcomes New and Renewing Members

Herman & Patricia Adams
Alison Baukney
Carol Bergersen
David Hartley
Star Jorgensen
Brian & Marlene Myres
Susan Peterson
Robert M. Schurman
Daniel Voss
Dwight Whitney

Thank you for your membership! Your support makes our programs and conservation efforts possible and helps us achieve our mission of connection people to the natural world.

Welcome New National Members

FCAS welcomes new National Audubon Society members by sending complementary copies of our newsletter for one month. We invite you to 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 the *Ptarmigan* after the complementary issue, please join FCAS. See the details on the last page of the newsletter or on our Web site at www.fortnet.org/Audubon.

Looking Ahead: Help Wanted

We are looking for a replacement newsletter editor. Our current editor is retiring from the position, but is willing to train a new editor on the software. If anyone is willing to put in five to 10 hours a month in producing the *Ptarmigan*, please contact Bill Miller at (970) 493-7693 or at 5mcorp@comcast.net.

Hummingbirds of South America and Colorado

Come to the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory (RMBO) in Fort Collins on Thursday, May 3, at 7 p.m. to see Eric DeFonso's photos of South American and Colorado hummingbirds. Seating is limited, so contact Lauren DeRosa, wbufortcolins@gmail.com, or 970-225-2557 to RSVP. The RMBO office is located at 230 Cherry Street, Ft. Collins.



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

The Matter Book-
Store/Bean Cycle
Coffee
144. N. College
(970) 472-4284

Jax Farm & Ranch
1000 N. Hwy. 287
(970) 484-2221





Fort Collins Audubon Society
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 Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968

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Membership Application

Join Fort Collins Audubon Society (FCAS), National Audubon Society (NAS), or both. Check all applicable::

Name: _____

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 (Receive *Ptarmigan* by email)

Address: _____

New or renewing FCAS Chapter Member \$30
 (Receive *Ptarmigan* by mail)

City: _____ State: _____

Lifetime Chapter Member \$750
 Receive *Ptarmigan* by email ____
 Or receive *Ptarmigan* by mail ____

Zip: _____

Phone #: _____

Additional Support for FCAS's Mission \$_____

New NAS Member \$20
 (Receive *Audubon* magazine by mail)

Email: _____

Renewing NAS Member \$35
 (Receive *Audubon* magazine by mail)

Total Enclosed \$_____

Please make your tax exempt checks payable to FCAS and mail with this form to:
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 Membership applications may be completed online at: www.fortnet.org/Audubon