



THE Warbler

MARCH/APRIL 2009

NEWSLETTER OF THE AUDUBON SOCIETY OF GREATER DENVER

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CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE GREATER DENVER COMMUNITY

ASGD Founders' 40th Anniversary Celebration

by Carol DeStefanis, ASGD Treasurer

What better way to say Happy Anniversary to a good friend than by having a really great party. ASGD is doing just that on the evening of Saturday, April 25, 2009.

Check in with old friends, or meet some new ones. Support ASGD and congratulate all those involved for the significant contribution we have made to the Denver community for 40 years. We'll reminisce about old times, celebrate the contributions of our founders, board members, members and volunteers throughout our 40 years of service. Our staff and board members will be on hand to share all the great things we have in store for the future.

This fundraiser celebration is being hosted by our good friend Pat McClearn at her home, 444 Cherry Street. The reception and silent auc-

tion will begin at 6:00 p.m. and end at 9:00 p.m. You are welcome to come at any time and stay as long as your stories last. Dress is business casual. Hors d'oeuvres and sweets, wine/beer and non-alcoholic beverages will be served.

If you haven't joined us in a while, now is the time to check-in. If you are new to ASGD, now is the time to check us out. We'd love to see you and meet your friends.

What you need to do:

- 1) Send or call-in your RSVP – tickets for the event are \$40/person. (That's right a dollar for every year we've been serving Denver.) Details and a map will be sent as you RSVP. Please

mail checks or cash; credit card information can be taken Monday – Thursday, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

- 2) Invite your friends – we're looking forward to meeting new members and supporters.
- 3) Send us old pictures or share your memories. (e-mail to ljeanstrand@comcast.net or mail to ASGD) We'll be posting your photo and written memories all year on our website; www.denveraudubon.org.
- 4) Volunteer to help or donate silent auction items.
- 5) If you can't join us in person but want to be there in spirit – please send a "Happy Anniversary" card or contribution to the address listed on page 6.

See ASGD 40th Anniversary contd. on page 6

Global Warming Workshop

Don't Be a Fool – Be Cool

Learn and Share Educational Strategies

John Flicker, the President of the National Audubon Society, has described global warming and climate change as the most serious environmental challenge we will ever face. He has stated that global warming has the potential to "undo" all the conservation efforts we have worked on in our lifetimes. One of the strategies chosen by Audubon is to provide training and resources for the people teaching others about global warming and climate change. As a part of that strategy, the Audubon Society of Greater Denver is joining with Audubon Colorado and the National Audubon Society in offering a day long workshop to provide information, resources and networking opportunities to those

who are presenting programs or classes about global warming or climate change both in the classrooms and in the nature centers.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the workshop is to "train people who teach others" about global warming and climate change.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND:

Teachers, naturalists, interpreters, environmental educators, and volunteers who are working on or presenting programs, classes, or creating displays about global warming or climate change.

WHEN: Wednesday, April 1, 2009

See Global Warming Workshop contd. on page 6

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE—

A Time for Celebrating

This year, the Audubon Society of Greater Denver will be celebrating forty years as a chapter of the National Audubon Society. What an exciting time to be a part of a group known for leading the way in education, advocacy, and research, especially about birds. Imagine forty years with all the hikes, the trips to hot spots near and far, thousands of eager kids soaking up nature studies, the distinguished speakers, the researchers, and the willing volunteers who have all contributed to building ASGD, making it the lively, respected, and influential organization it is today. Think of the charter members who recognized the need to protect our world and of all the leaders, members, staff, and friends who helped along the way. Think of everyone who wrote letters to elected officials, all those who attended meetings with community decision makers, all the members and friends who contributed generously to the cause, and all the birders who inspired others to learn about and appreciate the birds they love. And think of the volunteers who helped make the Nature Center at Chatfield a reality, whether by writing a check or cleaning out the stone buildings, planting the gardens, building the trails, and the thousand other jobs to be done. It is not easy to keep a non-profit organization going for forty years, but the dedicated staff, the tireless leaders, generous members, and friends of ASGD made it happen. Congratulations to all during this special year.

Tina Jones, a long time member who has served on the Board of Directors since 2007 is resigning from those duties. Tina is a dedicated volunteer, an outstanding birder, an experienced teacher, and a mentor for the Master Birder program. We thank Tina for her service with the Board, and hope to keep her busy teaching classes and leading trips.



Thanks To Our Volunteers!

ASGD's greatest resource is its volunteers: In 2008, 862 individual volunteers donated 5,624 hours of their time to activities like the following. Thank you!

Second Annual Appeal Mailing

Merikay Haggerty, Helen Hale, Doug Hodous, Vi Nicholson, Lori Sharp, Gloria Vallier

Field Trip Leaders

Doris Cruze, Mary Keithler, Doug Kibbe, Hugh & Urling Kingery, Harold & Betty Oliver, Harriet Stratton, Karen von Saltza

Adopt-a-Platte Bird Count

Fran Campbell, Barbara Corander, Ellie Jones, Peter Mulholland, Joyce Quigley, Tom Reilly, Margaret W. (Peggy) Roberts, Betsy Weitkamp, Ralph & Emilie Wiersma

November/December Warbler Mailing

Merikay Haggerty, Helen Hale, Caroline Hancock, Vi Nicholson, Carolyn Roark, Ruth Schoening, Barb Shissler, Sara Stokes

March/April Warbler Mailing

Jo Ann Bushnell, Marc Goodbody, Doug Hodous, Vi Nicholson, Carolyn Roark, Fred & Gloria Vallier

Audubon Center Volunteers

Linda Strand, Doris Cruze, Kris Koff, Polly Reetz, Tom Parchman, Carol DeStefanis, Fred Griest, Alene Raskin



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MISSION

ASGD is a nonprofit group dedicated to maintaining the health of natural ecosystems through education, political action, scientific research and land preservation, with primary focus on birds, other wildlife and ecosystems of the South Platte River watershed.

MEMBERSHIP

FRIENDS OF ASGD receive the Warbler and additional membership benefits. Members of the National Audubon Society in the Denver Metro Area receive complimentary copies of the *The Warbler*.

The Warbler is published bimonthly by the Audubon Society of Greater Denver (ASGD).

Produced by C. Dale Flowers

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cdale@cda.com

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Audubon Center at Chatfield update

by Karl Brummert, Audubon Center Director

The Audubon Center at Chatfield State Park is located in two historic stone ranch buildings that were remodeled in 2005-06. To date they have been used mainly as a classroom for school children and a meeting place for special events and group programs. As ASGD begins celebrating its 40th Anniversary, exciting new things are happening at the Center.

Between Christmas and New Year's Day, staff and board members spent several days sprucing up the buildings—painting and reorganizing—and adding birdfeeders, exhibits, activities, and furniture. Now we have a wonderful, welcoming space

for families and people of all ages. We have activities and games for kids and adults, guided walks to discover the “wild side” of Chatfield, access to miles of trails to begin your own adventure journey; and a place to just relax and chat with friends and neighbors, visitors from out of town, birders, nature lovers, and outdoor enthusiasts.

During January and February, we opened the Center on a few select Saturdays and Sundays as a “test run”. What we

did not expect was the almost immediate and enthusiastic response from visitors. The Center has only been open three times (as of this writing), and each time, we doubled our numbers. We jokingly say that through the law of exponential growth, we'll have 1 million visitors by June! Although that will probably not happen, we do hope to attract more people throughout the next few months and



The two historic stone ranch buildings that are the heart of the Audubon Center at Chatfield are the home to a multitude of ASGD's year-round activities.

to build a buzz about Denver Audubon's “Journey to Adventure” that starts at the Center.

Beginning in March and April, the Audubon Center will be open the first Sunday of each month and every Saturday (see the schedule in the Field Trips, Classes, and Programs pages—the “green pages”—in the **The Warbler**.)

If you have not visited the Center yet, please drop by, bring your family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers, and enjoy this great resource. Over the next year, we will increase our open hours, introduce public programs, start a kids' naturalist certification program, and offer a series of adult education courses.

Come join in the adventure with others who love nature.

Birdathon scheduled for month of May

by Doug Kibbe

Birdathon is an opportunity to have fun with friends, challenge yourself, and raise money for a good cause. From dawn to dawn - or actually any 24 hour period - from May 1- 31, Audubon Society of Greater Denver members and other interested birders survey the countryside looking for as many different bird species as possible. This event is similar to a walkathon, except instead of walking, participants go birding in teams of 2-4 people to raise money for ASGD.

You can join the fun by forming a team, picking a name, and scouring neighborhoods and natural areas for 24 hours on the big day. Prior to the big day, you will need to find a few individuals (ask your friends, families, neighbors, and co-workers) or businesses to sponsor your team. If you can't make it on the big day, join by pledging a contribution.

Sponsors pledge an amount, such as 25¢ per bird species identified or a fixed amount of \$20, \$50, or \$100. It's whatever amount the donor chooses. After the big day, the teams collect the money from their sponsors, and bring it

to the Birdathon coordinator no later than the June meeting. “Per species” pledge amounts will be calculated based on the total bird species seen. The proceeds from the Birdathon support the ASGD educational activities.

This year, prizes will be awarded to the teams that raise the most money and to the teams that see the most species within the 24 hour period in the Greater Denver area. A third category, open only to youth teams comprised of two or more members under 18, provides an award for the most species recorded.

This is a great opportunity to enjoy the excitement of Birdathon and make a difference by supporting our environmental education programs. Understanding through education is the key to developing a love and life-long appreciation of our valuable natural resources.

Rules, further details, and Birdathon forms available on the ASGD website in April or by contacting: Doug Kibbe, 7953 W. Quarto Ave., Littleton, CO. 80128 dpkibbe@msn.com.



Eagle Eye

Watching Public Policy for the Environment
by Polly Reetz, ASGD Conservation Committee Chair

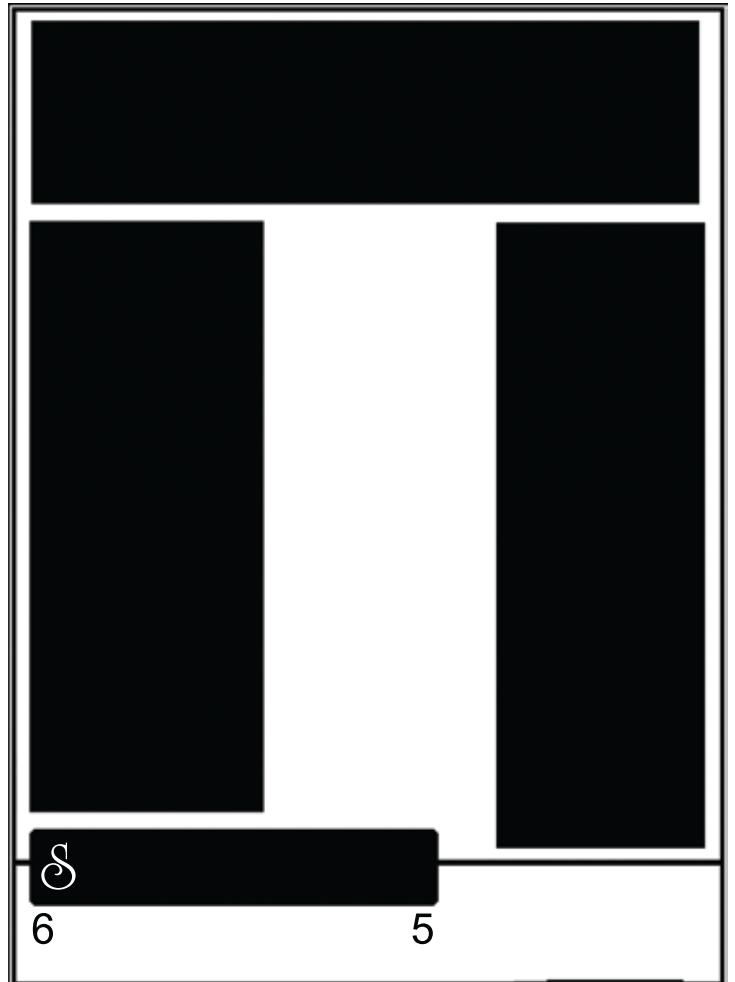
The Colorado General Assembly has now swung into full gear, and the biggest issue for Audubon this year will be defending the new regulations promulgated by the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC) to protect wildlife habitat and human health from the effects of oil and gas exploration and drilling. These rules were written as a result of two laws passed in 2007, and the wildlife-related ones were crafted and revised after exhaustive (and exhausting!) meetings with wildlife advocates, oil company representatives and staff from the COGCC and the Division of Wildlife (DOW) over 18 months. Audubon Colorado, representing all the Colorado chapters, advocated for wildlife habitat protection in all the discussions.

The new rules define two types of areas: Sensitive Wildlife Habitat and Restricted Surface Occupancy (RSOs). These appear on maps on the COGCC website, and if a new oil or gas "location"—i.e. well or drilling site—falls within such an area, the operator has to consult with the Division of Wildlife to figure out how best to avoid or mitigate impacts. If the Commission decides to approve the permit with conditions, they have to select among Best Management Practices listed on their website. These take into account such things as whether technology that protects the wildlife resource is being used, the extent of habitat fragmentation or surface disturbance that could occur, and species-specific factors of the proposed new location. If the operator has written a comprehensive drilling plan, or has a written mitigation plan approved by the DOW, he does not have to consult. Warning: this is a VERY short, drastically condensed description of the new rules. You can view them for yourself on the COGCC website, www.oil-gas.state.co.us they are the last 6 out of 165 pages.

In the legislature, attacks on the wildlife rules have already begun, fueled by claims that they impose an unreasonable burden on the oil and gas industry. Forget the fact that Exxon/Mobil just announced a \$45 billion profit for 2008. Forget the fact that drilling for gas in shale formations in Texas gives much higher yields than in Colorado gas fields. Forget the recession. Sen. Greg Brophy introduced a bill (SB 4) that would have delayed their implementation until July 2010. Rep. Wes McKinley introduced HB 1167, which declares that the new rules relating to wildlife habitat, feeding, or breeding shall not apply to the repair or maintenance of existing wells. Obviously, activities related to repair and maintenance can significantly impact wildlife habitat: for example, widening roads to accommodate new maintenance equipment can cause increased destruction of vegetation or sedimentation into nearby streams. And the TIMING of maintenance and repairs can disrupt breeding and nesting cycles just as much as new drilling or construction.

These two bills are examples of one strategy: nitpick the rules to death, or delay them. The bigger threat to the rules, however, may result from another step in the rule-making process: the legislature has to approve all the rules written by State agencies. This is done by a joint House/Senate Committee, the Legal Services Committee. Although the new oil and gas rules are actually only a small part of the total package, amendments to weaken the wildlife rules could be – probably WILL be – offered during the Committee’s hearings. If they don’t pass, or are ruled out of order (Legal Services only has to consider whether the agencies exceeded their statutory authority), the amendments will likely be introduced on the floor of the House or Senate, with no testimony or input by the public. Your input will be crucial to beat back weakening amendments, and ASGD members on our activist list may well get alerts from Audubon’s lobbyist in March or April.

Endangered Species: In the January/February issue, I described some last-minute rule changes the Bush administration was making to weaken endangered species protections. In December the rules were declared to cause insignificant changes to the Endangered Species Act and adopted after only 30 days notice. So as of now, federal agencies can decide for themselves if their actions will significantly affect endangered or threatened species – no consultation with Fish and Wildlife Service biologists is required. The Obama administration has put all such last-minute regulations on hold and is reviewing them. We have to hope that eventually these potentially very destructive rules will be revoked.



↗Lois Webster Fund↖

Annual Reception and Program

Mark your calendars now and plan to join Friends of
Audubon Society of Greater Denver
and the Lois Webster Fund at their annual reception and program

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2009
6:00 P.M. - WINE AND CHEESE RECEPTION
6:45 P.M. – PROGRAM

Program on Bats of the Mesa Verde, Pika and Climate Change, Townsend's Big Eared Bat,
and Compilation of Fritz Knopf's Mountain Plover Data from the Pawnee National Grasslands 1985-2007

***THE RECEPTION WILL BE HELD AT THE NEWLY REMODELED
AUDUBON CENTER AT CHATFIELD STATE PARK**

Come hear Dr. Fritz Knopf discuss his report compiling over 20 years of research on the Mountain Plover on the Pawnee National Grasslands and listen to other project managers present the findings from their research sponsored by the Lois Webster Fund in 2008! Enjoy a glass of wine and appetizers while catching up with old friends—and meeting new ones! The Lois Webster Fund hosts this annual event to say THANK YOU to all of our wonderful contributors and to introduce the Lois Webster Fund to others who are not familiar with our activities. We look forward to seeing you on April 1st!

* How to get there: From C-470 go south on Wadsworth Blvd. In about 4.4 miles you will come to a Y in the road. If you go to the right, you will drive right into Lockheed Martin. If you go left (the correct way), you will be on Waterton Road. Take an immediate left into the Audubon Center. There is a large Audubon Center sign at the entrance. For carpooling information and questions, call Margot at 303-733-2868.

Donors to the Lois Webster Fund (for wildlife research)

Friends of the Lois Webster Fund provide its only income. Many of these individuals have contributed every year since its inception. These donors are the Lois Webster Fund. We really appreciate their continued support!

John R. Bermingham, Kathryn Bollhoefer, Ann Bonnell, Ed & Judy Butterfield, Judy Capra, Lorraine Chappell, Doris Cruze, Janet Decker, Carol DeStefanis, Victoria Dreitz, Leo Eisel & Nina Churchman, Mackenzie Goldthwait, Fred-eric Griest, Dave & Cheryl Hill, Karen Hollweg, Tina Jones, Sue Ann Kamal, Kathy Kelley, Hugh & Urling Kingery, Willam Lambertson, Estella Leopold, Patricia McClearn, David Nykerk, Harold and Betty Oliver, Tom Parchman & Elizabeth Smith, Jerry & Arlene Raskin, Polly & Gene Reetz, Paul Slingsby, Allen & Brenda Stokes, Patsy Venema, Frank & Jean Watson, Dorothy Webster, Steven Williams, John Wright, Steve & Margot Wynkoop

LOIS WEBSTER DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF ARDITH RIEKE

Ardith Rieke was a long time friend of Lois Webster and had been a faithful and enthusiastic supporter of the Lois Webster Fund. The Lois Webster Fund extends their deepest sympathy to her many friends and family members and a special thank you to all of them who made donations to the LWF in her memory.

Mildred Beebe, MaryAnn Bender, Neil Best, Marcella Breidenbach, Lynette George, Delilah Jacoby, Martha Morgan, True Morgan, Dorothy Webster

You can help reduce Global Warming AND save the lives of migratory birds

by Joe Bartell, ASGD Board Member

At their January 13 meeting, the ASGD Board of Directors made the decision to initiate a "Safe Skies Colorado" committee as a new component of our Advocacy program. This effort will be similar to the "Lights Out" programs in Toronto, Chicago, New York City, Detroit, Boston and St. Paul, Minnesota. As in these cities, Safe Skies Colorado aims to reduce emissions of CO2 from office buildings that keep their lights burning at night when they are unoccupied. Turning off their lights would cut those emissions by about 1.6 pounds of CO2 per light fitting per hour, contribute substantially to the effort to combat global warming, and would also save the buildings' operators some serious money.

Furthermore, we know that on those nights when cloud cover prevents migrating birds from seeing the stars

that guide them, two things, both detrimental to bird populations, can happen. Either the birds are attracted to the windows of the illuminated empty office buildings and fly into the glass, or they circle these structures until they fall to the ground exhausted. In both situations the results are usually the same – dead birds. Researchers estimate that each year about one billion birds die from striking glass.

We think Safe Skies Colorado is a win-win proposition: migratory bird deaths can be reduced, building owners and operators save money, and greenhouse gas emissions are cut.

If you would like to help in saving our migratory birds, reduce global warming and improve the quality of the air call Joe Bartell at 720 524 8622.

ASGD Founders 40th Anniversary contd. from p1

Want more information? Call 303-973-9530 or e-mail info@denveraudubon.org. Mail RSVP's to ASGD, 9308 S. Wadsworth Blvd., Littleton, CO, 80128.

Global Warming Workshop contd. from p1

WHERE: Audubon Center at Chatfield. The Center is located at the southern end of Chatfield State Park - DO NOT enter the Park. Turn south on Wadsworth from C-470. Travel 4.4 miles to Waterton Road, and then quickly left again into the Audubon Center parking lot. A map is located on our website www.denveraudubon.org.

PROGRAM:

- 10:00 - 10:15 Welcome and Introductions
- 10:15 - 10:30 Quiz Show
- 10:30 - 11:00 State of Birds
- 11:00 - 11:15 Break
- 11:15 - 11:45 Impacts to Colorado and the Western States
- 11:45 - 12:30 Break and pick-up lunches
- 12:30 - 1:00 Social Marketing—How do you help people care?
- 1:00 - 2:00 Share exhibits, web resources, programs and collateral materials (five or six presentations by participants)
- 2:00 - 2:15 Break
- 2:15 - 2:45 Audubon Power Point Programs - Resources available to participants.
- 2:45 - 3:45 Group Exercise
- 3:45 - 4:00 Evaluation and wrap-up

REGISTRATION: The cost of the program is \$12 to cover lunch and drinks. **You must pre-register.** We are limited to 30 participants so please call to register now. Call 303-973-9530 or Email info@denveraudubon.org.

If you wish to share one of your global warming or climate change programs, brochures, or displays, please send information about your presentation and we'll call for the details.

ASGD Founders' 40th Anniversary Celebration Saturday, April 25, 2009 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. 444 Cherry Street Denver, Colorado

RSVP for _____ **people at \$40/person. \$** _____

**I'd love to be there but can't,
here is my contribution for:** \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____

Zip Code _____

Phone: _____

E-mail address: _____

**Mail to ASGD
9308 S. Wadsworth Blvd.
Littleton, CO, 80128**



AUDUBON SOCIETY

of GREATER DENVER

Calendar of Events

MARCH 2009

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
9am Walk the Wetlands Audubon Center Open 9am-2pm 1	2	3	7pm *An Evening with Audubon 4	5	6	Audubon Center Open 10am-2pm 7
8	9	7pm ASGD Board Meeting 10	2pm Field Trip Committee 11	12	13	8:30am Coal Creek Park FT Audubon Center Open 10am-2pm 14
15	16	7pm Conservation Committee 17	18	19	10:30am Mountain Mamas 20	Audubon Center Open 10am-2pm 21
22	7pm DFO Members Meetng 23	24	25	7pm Beginning BW Class 26	27	8am Beginning BW FT Audubon Center Open 10am-2pm 28
29	30	31				
* Formerly ASGD Monthly Member Meetings						

APRIL 2009

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			10am GW Workshop 6pm *An Evening with Audubon 1	2	3	8am Beginning BW FT Audubon Center Open 10am-2pm 4
8am Walk the Wetlands 9am Nesting Raptors of the FR Audubon Center Open 9am-2pm 5	6	7	8	Passover 9	Good Friday 10	8am Beginning BW FT 8:30am Ponderosa Preserve Audubon Center Open 10am-2pm 11
Easter Sunday 12	13	7pm ASGD Board Meeting 14	2pm Field Trip Committee 15	16	17	8am Beginning BW FT Audubon Center Open 10am-2pm 18
19	20	21	22	23	24	8am Beginning BW FT Audubon Center Open 10am-2pm 25
26	6:30pm Beyond Birding 101 27	28	29	30		
* Formerly ASGD Monthly Member Meetings						



ASGD FIELD TRIPS, CLASSES & PROGRAMS

To Register for Trips & Classes Call the ASGD Office at 303.973.9530

Join FRIENDS of ASGD and Receive Discounts on Field Trips and Classes

Walk the Wetlands

Date: Sunday, March 1
Sunday, April 5
Time: 9:00 a.m. on March 1
8:00 a.m. on April 5
Leaders: Hugh and Urling Kingery (303-814-2723)
and the Master Birders
Fee: None
Pre-registration is NOT required.

Meeting Place: The *Audubon Center at Chatfield on Waterton Road off S. Wadsworth Blvd 4.4 mi south of C-470.
(*The Audubon Center will also be open from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. with activities. Restroom facilities available at the Audubon Center.)

Description: This 2-3 hour leisurely hike with our expert birders is a great opportunity to learn how to find and identify the birds found in the pond, forest, grassland, and river ecosystems around the Audubon Center. All ages and abilities welcome. Make sure to bring water, binoculars and field guides.

An Evening with Audubon

(formerly ASGD monthly Members Meeting)

Date: Wednesday, March 4
Wednesday, April 1
Time: 7 p.m. on March 4
6 p.m. on April 1
Fee: None
Pre-registration is NOT required.

Meeting Place: NEW LOCATION – Chambers Center, The Women's College of the University of Denver, located on the NE corner at Asbury and High Street. Do NOT park behind the building; parking there is by permit only. Parking is available across the street for \$1/hour or on the street for free for one hour. The Chambers Center is two blocks directly south of the University Light Rail Station.

March Program: Since 2007, thousands of people across the country have been collecting and sharing important climate change data on the timing of leafing and flowering of trees and flowers through Project Budburst. This national field campaign targets not only native plants but also weeds and ornamentals - you can collect the data in your own back yard! Join us for a fascinating talk with Sandra Henderson, Director of Project Budburst in Boulder, about this very exciting citizen science project.

April Program: SPECIAL EVENT—LOIS WEBSTER FUND ANNUAL RECEPTION AND PROGRAM
(see Special Announcement on page 5).

Audubon Center at Chatfield

No Need to Travel Far – And It's Free to Visit!
Discover nature, hike the trails, go outdoors with your children, explore with other adults, and celebrate the start of spring with fun close to home.

"Your springtime adventure begins at the Audubon Center at Chatfield."

Dates: Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
March 7, 14, 21, & 28
April 4, 11, 18 & 25
Dates: *Sundays, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.
March 1 & April 5 Only

*Note: March 1 and April 5 are Walk the Wetlands Sundays

Location: The Audubon Center at Chatfield is located on Waterton Rd off S. Wadsworth Blvd 4.4 mi south of C-470. Call 303-973-9530 or e-mail info@denveraudubon.org for more information and directions.

Beginning Bird-Watching Class

Date: Classroom Session: Thursday, March 26
Time: 7-9 p.m.
Field Trips: Saturdays, Mar. 28, Apr. 4, 11, 18, 25, and May 2; 8 a.m.-2 p.m.
Locations: Bird-watching sites around Denver including Chatfield, Barr Lake, and Castlewood Canyon State Parks, Wheat Ridge Greenbelt, and Genesee Mountain Park.
Leaders: Urling & Hugh Kingery
Fee: \$145/members, \$165/non-members (includes membership)

Pre-registration is required.
Call 303-973-9530 or rshank@denveraudubon.org.

Meeting Place: The March 6 class will be at the Audubon Center at Chatfield on Waterton Road off S. Wadsworth Blvd 4.4 mi south of C-470. Other meeting places will be announced at the class.

Description: Are you new to birding but don't know where to begin? Join Colorado's foremost—and most entertaining!—birding couple as they introduce you to the art and science of birding as no one else can. Learn how to identify birds, choose a good pair of binoculars, select field guides, and much more. We'll take trips to some of the best birding spots in the Denver metro area. Learn to observe and develop a practiced eye and ear. Meet new friends and change the way you spend time outdoors. You can make up any field trips that you miss during future fall or spring class sessions.

ASGD FIELD TRIPS, CLASSES & PROGRAMS

To Register for Trips & Classes Call the ASGD Office at 303.973.9530

Join FRIENDS of ASGD and Receive Discounts on Field Trips and Classes



Mountain Mamas Spring Fling

Date: Friday, March 20

Time: 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Leaders: Joy Opp, founder of Mountain Mamas

Fee: None

Pre-registration is NOT required

Meeting Place: The Audubon Center at Chatfield on Waterton Road off S. Wadsworth Blvd 4.4 mi south of C-470.

Description: Join the celebration of the first day of Spring as we enjoy the trails at the Audubon Center at Chatfield. There will be guided bird-watching hikes for moms with babies and toddlers and hands-on activities at the Center. We will draw for some prizes and have goodies for everyone. You don't want to miss this spectacular spring kickoff event! Colorado Mountain Mamas provides outdoor activities for moms and their children ages newborn to four years old. See their website at www.comountainmamas.com for more information.

Global Warming Workshop for Educators

Date: Wednesday, April 1

Time: 10 a.m.

Leaders: National Audubon Society Presentors

Fee: None

Pre-registration is required.

Call 303-973-9530 or e-mail rshank@denveraudubon.org

Meeting Place: The Audubon Center at Chatfield is located on Waterton Rd. off S. Wadsworth Blvd 4.4 mi south of C-470.

Description: SPECIAL EVENT-GLOBAL WARMING TRAINING BY AUDUBON (see Feature on p.1).

Nesting Raptors of the Front Range

Date: Sunday, April 5

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Leaders: Harold and Betty Oliver

Fee: \$10/ Friends member; \$12/ non-member

Pre-registration required.

Call 303-973-9530 or e-mail rshank@denveraudubon.org

Meeting place: Exit I-25 at exit # 225 at 136th Avenue. Meet at north end of WalMart parking lot on west side of I-25. Lunch at McDonald's - bring your own or buy there.

Description: This trip is back by popular demand. The Olivers, who scout nesting locations before the trip, can almost guarantee you'll see bald eagle, red-tailed hawk and great-horned owl hatchlings. Make sure to bring your binoculars and field guides. This is mostly a car trip with very little walking. Limit 10 participants. This trip fills fast, so reserve your spot today!

Beyond Birding 101

Date: Monday, April 27 & May 4

Time: 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Instructor: Tina Jones, Master Birder Instructor

Fee: \$30 members/\$40 nonmembers

Pre-registration is required.

Call 303-973-9530 or rshank@denveraudubon.org

Meeting Place: The Audubon Center at Chatfield on Waterton Road off S. Wadsworth Blvd 4.4 mi south of C-470.

Description: Do you feel you've learned the basics of bird identification, but you now want to take your bird identification skills to the next level? In this class participants will learn about field marks which experts use--that are not shown in many of the North American Field Guides. Learn how to I.D. the same bird species in its different spring and fall plumages. The following are just some of the birds which will be discussed in this indoor class: Greater and Lesser Scaup, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs and other confusing shorebirds, look alike Colorado Sparrows, Colorado Terns, Flycatchers, Vireos and fall plumaged Warblers. Learn specific behaviors of birds as a means to I.D. them. Participants with different levels of birding backgrounds are welcome, although this indoor class hones in on more of the difficult bird identification field marks. Extensive handouts on field I.D. will be provided. For more information call instructor at 303-906-5479 (cell).

– LOOKING AHEAD –

Audubon Master Birder III

Our third Audubon Master Birder course will begin in August, 2009. Twenty evening lectures cover the birding gamut, including bird topography, migration, identification of difficult groups, answering wildlife questions, ASGD activities, and so much more. Twenty-five field trips range from the Denver area to Pueblo, Pawnee National Grassland, Rocky Mountain National Park, Loveland Pass, and other prime spots. The program has seventeen rigorous requirements. Upon completion, you will truly be a Master Birder!

Applications, testing, and interviews occur in June and July. Classes begin in August. Applicants must pass a bird identification test, commit to the course, and volunteer 48 hours per year to ASGD for at least two years after graduation.

Look for additional announcements in future Warblers and on the ASGD website.



ASGD TRAVEL

For More Information or to Register See the Trip Descriptions Below

Join FRIENDS of ASGD and Receive Discounts on Field Trips and Classes

The Columbia and Snake Rivers: A Small-Ship Experience

April 17 - 24, 2009 (7 nights/8 days)

Roundtrip from Portland, OR on the Spirit of '98

(96 guests)

Step back into history as we follow in the footsteps of Lewis and Clark on the Columbia and Snake Rivers on this Cruise West expedition.

For Lewis & Clark, the Snake River was an area of almost continual rapids and waterfalls. Today, the area is starkly beautiful, with a mixture of orchards, farmland, and rangeland where beef cattle and deer graze. Many scenic parks dot the shoreline. Several areas have also been set aside as wildlife refuges by the Corps of Engineers to mitigate natural habitat areas lost when water backed up behind the dams. Look for osprey, golden eagles, and numerous species of hawk along the cliffs, bluffs, and shorelines.

As our small ship approaches the mouth of the mighty Columbia, you disembark to visit Fort Clatsop. Other new wonders await around every bend-- dramatic waterfalls and ancient petroglyphs carved into the 4,000 foot cliffs. And a fascinating look at how the rivers themselves were tamed in the 1930s, as you transit almost 1,000 miles and navigate eight major sets of locks and dams.

Cruise West staff and exploration leaders will guide a series of excursions to help you recapture the past. You'll learn about the hardships of establishing the Whitman Mission in the wilderness; the contributions of the Nez Perce in the shaping of this region and their vision for the future, and about modern environmental issues of salmon survival and irrigation rights. The trip offers an exquisite balance of discovery, adventure, relaxation, and personal exploration.

Group pricing per person, double-occupancy cabins start at \$3,069 for Quynana Members and \$3,235 per person for first time Cruise West passengers; add \$50 for non-ASGD Friends member. Cruise includes meals, gratuities and selected shore excursions. Save up to \$330 per person off of brochure rates. Single share roommate match available in some cabins. Trip will be led by ASGD Second V.P. Ann Bonnell. For complete itinerary or additional information, contact Becky Beckers, 303-766-5266, AgentBecky@aol.com or go to www.TravelForTheBirds.com

Bird Southeast Arizona

May 1 - 7, 2009

Southeast Arizona is one of the most biologically diverse areas in the United States. Habitats include the Sonoran Desert with its dramatic columnar cacti, the Chihuahuan desert with its grasslands and desert scrub, and the dramatic "Sky Islands" where species from the Rocky Mountains and Mexico's Sierra Madre come together. During our journey, we'll explore most of these habitats, encounter a tremendous diversity of plants and animals, and enjoy fine weather at one of the richest times of year. We'll visit many of the birding and wildlife hotspots - Madera Canyon, the Patagonia area, Ramsey and Garden Canyons in the Huachuca Mountains, and the San Pedro River. Species we're likely to see include elegant trogon, vermilion flycatchers, painted redstart, Grace's, Lucy's, red-faced and other warblers, three species of Myiarchus flycatchers (ash-throated, brown-crested, and dusky-capped), thick-billed kingbird, up to ten species of hummingbirds, and many others. We'll also spend time learning about the general ecology of the area and explore the fascinating relationships among southeast Arizona's birds, plants, mammals, reptiles, insects, geology, and regional climate.

Our guide will be Mark Pretti who was formerly the naturalist at Ramsey Canyon. Mark is thoroughly knowledgeable about all aspects of this area's natural history as well as expert in finding the regional bird specialties.

The cash discounted price for ASGD members is \$1595 (\$1645 for non-members) with the trip starting from Tucson. Assistance with travel arrangements to Tucson will be available. The land cost includes meals, accommodations in attractive bed and breakfasts and hotels, van transportation during the tour, guiding, and park entrance fees. Both tours have similar itineraries - they are essentially the same tour. Maximum group size for each tour is nine.

For a detailed itinerary and additional information, please contact Bill Turner, the ASGD representative accompanying these trips, at (303) 795-5128 or e-mail toursbyturner@aol.com.

IT'S COMING SOON!

WHAT'S COMING?

ASGD'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL, JUNE 7TH

WHERE?

AT THE AUDUBON CENTER AT CHATFIELD

A FESTIVAL YOU SAY?

YOU BET--FOOD, FUN, AND FESTIVITIES FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

**LOOK FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS IN THE MAY-JUNE WARBLER AND ON ASGD'S WEBSITE
SEE YOU THERE!**

ASGD PARTNERING ORGANIZATIONS

For More Information or to Register See the Trip Descriptions Below



– DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS MEMBERS' MEETING –

Date: **Monday, March 23**

Monday, April 27

Time: **Doors open at 7:00 p.m. and are locked at 7:30 p.m.**

Mark your calendar for each meeting and plan to come by 7:15 p.m. Meetings are held at the Ricketson Auditorium in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Park on the north side of the museum and walk around to the west door. If late, you can enter through security/volunteer door.

Fee: **None**

Pre-registration is NOT required

March Program: SPECIAL EVENT—BOOK SIGNING AND PROGRAM BY TED FLOYD, EDITOR OF BIRDING MAGAZINE

(see Special Announcement on page 12).

April Program: International Grasslands Conservation Issues with Chris Pague of the Nature Conservancy. Chris has travelled extensively in Mongolia and will share his experiences and the challenges of expanding international bird and other conservation efforts in Mongolia.

– AURORA PARKS & OPEN SPACE MONTHLY BIRD WALKS –

Coal Creek Arena

Date: **Saturday, March 14**

Time: **8:30 a.m.**

Leader: **Mary Ann Bonnell**

Fee: **None**

Pre-registration is required:

Registration, directions, and meeting place information at 303-739-2428 or www.nature@auroragov.org.

Description: Coal Creek Arena is a common roosting location for bald eagles, red-tailed hawks, American kestrels and great-horned owls.

Ponderosa Preserve

Date: **Saturday, April 11**

Time: **8:30 a.m.**

Leader: **Mary Ann Bonnell**

Fee: **None**

Pre-registration is required:

Registration, directions and meeting place information at 303-739-2428 or www.nature@auroragov.org.

Description: Ponderosa Preserve offers montane birding in a prairie setting. We may see pygmy nuthatches, scrub-jays, great-horned owls, American goldfinches and red-tailed hawks.

– COLORADO DIVISION OF WILDLIFE –

Prairie Chicken Watching Tours

Date: **Weekends, March 27 – April 26**

Time: **Sunup to Sundown**

Leaders: **Division of Wildlife Staff**

Fee: **Cost varies from \$120 to \$135 per person; includes motel room.**

Pre-registration is required.

To register, visit: www.wraychamber.net or call the Wray Chamber of Commerce at 970-332-3484.

Meeting Place: Wray, Colorado (about 3 hours NE of Denver)

Description: This field trip is an opportunity to watch greater prairie chicken courtship dances as the sun comes up on the eastern plains. An early morning bus trip takes participants to specially designed viewing blinds for optimal experience. Guided tours include an evening educational program presented by the Colorado Division of Wildlife and hosted by the Wray Museum. For more information on wildlife festivals see www.wildlife.co.us/Viewing.

VIP Book Signing with Ted Floyd

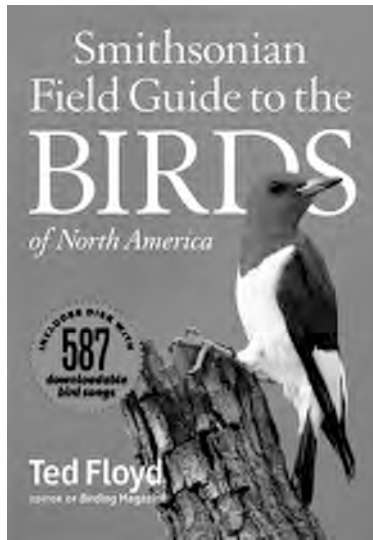
Audubon Society of Greater Denver (ASGD) members are invited (and at no charge) to the Denver Field Ornithologists lecture by Ted Floyd on Monday, March 23. Ted will address "Birding at Night: The Ultimate Frontier" or, alternatively, "Chipping Sparrows and Other Things That Go Bump in the Night"

At 7 p.m., Ted will be signing his most recent book, "Field Guide to the Birds of North America" (Smithsonian and Harper Collins, 2008). So come early. ASGD will have copies of Ted's Book for sale.

At 7:30 p.m., the DFO meeting will begin and Ted will start his entertaining and engaging presentation at about 7:40 p.m.

Besides being the editor for *Birding Magazine*, Ted is one of the DFO's favorite speakers.

Ted started birding when he was thirteen years old. After college (B.A. in Biology, Princeton University) and graduate school (Ph.D.



in Ecology, Penn State University), he taught biology at several colleges and universities. Then he migrated into the nonprofit realm, first heading up the Nevada Breeding Bird Atlas for the Great Basin Bird Observatory and now serving as editor of *Birding*, the flagship publication of the American Birding Association.

Ted has also written more than 100 articles on birds and bird watching, for popular and professional publications. He is a frequent speaker at birding festivals and ornithological meetings, and he has led birding trips throughout North America.

DFO meetings are held at the Ricketson Auditorium in Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. If late, you can enter through se-

curity/volunteer door, but this does create problems for our hosts at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.

Bluebird Open House

by Kevin Corwin, Chair, Colorado Bluebird Project

The bluebirds are returning for another season and so are we! Come join us for the Colorado Bluebird Project's fourth annual Bluebird Open House on Saturday, March 21st, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the **Audubon Office** at Chatfield (directions below).

We'll have presentations and workshops on:

- The Project, our goals and progress over the past year
- The natural history of bluebirds
- Building and mounting nest boxes (and we'll have boxes for sale, both pre-built and in kit form)
- Why it's so important to provide nesting habitat
- How to monitor boxes during the nesting season
- Safeguarding your nest boxes from parasites and predators
- Keeping good field notes and reporting your results

- Updates on Cornell's new database and the North American Bluebird Society's plans for their 2009 convention in Pennsylvania.

We'll also be showing a 15-minute video illustrating what really happens inside a nest box during the nesting season. Even some of our more seasoned nest box monitors were surprised by what they saw!

The party is free and open to the public. Please RSVP at 303-973-9530, so we'll know how many snacks to bring.

Driving directions to the **Audubon Office** at Chatfield: From C-470 & Wadsworth Blvd, drive south on Wadsworth about 1 mile to the Chatfield State Park entrance and turn left into the Park. A State Parks Pass is not required. Follow the signs to the Audubon Office which is up on a hill amidst a group of ranch houses.

- ASGD Donation Programs -

Donate a Vehicle

Help Birds! Help Kids!

The Audubon Society of Greater Denver (ASGD) and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Colorado (BBBSC) have joined forces. When you donate a vehicle to ASGD, you also benefit BBBSC. Here's how it works: ASGD handles the initial calls; BBBSC handles the details.

To donate a vehicle, call ASGD at 303-973-9530 or send an e-mail to rshank@denveraudubon.org.

Leave A Legacy

Protect Birds! Protect Habitat!

The Audubon Society of Greater Denver has initiated a Planned Giving Program. Making a gift or a bequest is becoming a popular way to leave a lasting legacy. Protecting the birds, wildlife and places that make Denver special might be simpler than you think.

For more information, call ASGD at 303-973-9530 or send an e-mail to rshank@denveraudubon.org

backyard birds....

by Hugh Kingery



“HOW MANY ANGELS can dance on the head of a pin? How many birds on a suet cage? One, if it is a Downy Woodpecker, flicker, junco, nuthatch, or Black-capped Chickadee. 13 – count ‘em – 13 Bushtits at a time, enjoyed a little suet together this morning.” So wrote Audubon president Doris Cruze on Jan. 2. Joy Schieving, from south Denver, first reported Bushtits to Backyard Birds several years ago, had a flock of 1-20 intermittently, November through January. Others saw them too: Bill and Suzanne Wuerthele (east Denver), Greg Pasquirello (Littleton), in Franktown, Karen Metz and us; in Aurora Cheryl Teuton and Dan Brooke (where they “seem very fond of our chamisa and New Mexican privets”); Flo DeCesare in Greenwood Village, (“10 eating from one suet feeder today with one little Bushtit hanging upside down, dangling on one leg from the feeder.”); Barbara Hyde Boardman (Littleton; “the third winter that they have come to our neighborhood in the dead of winter. They arrive in flocks of 10-20; are very feeder-savvy, flying first to the Viburnum next to the porch; then directly to the grid-type suet feeders. I have counted as many as seven clustered on the feeders, with the rest waiting their turn. Their heads are so small they fit into the interstices.”).

PINE SISKINS INVADED many yards this winter. Flo saw a small flock (“Maybe I should say a herd, because they are dominating the thistle and black seed feeders. There are so many flying around it looks like bees attacking honey. Richard chopped an opening in the waterfall so the siskins can drink and – lo – within a short time the siskins were bathing and splashing in the waterfall.”) Mary and Dave Driscoll added siskins to their yard list in December. Joy saw one in December, Bill and Suzanne had a couple over New Years, Barbara Shissler recorded a pair in Littleton, and Stan Harwood in Willow Springs had 20 on Jan. 7.

LARGE FLOCKS OF SISKINS throughout Denver metro generated a Cobirds discussion – up to 150 in one yard. Urling and I have seen 75-100 daily for the last month; the racket they make drowns out all the other bird sounds. Joy also has 1-6 American Goldfinches, Nan Brehmer (Green Mountain) hosted three, and Stan had some Jan. 7.

A COMMON REDPOLL (a Colorado rarity, even rarer in the city) graced Char Gottlieb’s Arvada yard Jan. 16 to at least Jan. 28. Only Joy (daily in November and December) and Barbara Shissler saw Red-breasted Nuthatches (one each, after last year’s invasion). Ken Gammon reported the only Evening Grosbeaks, from Franktown. Susan White, in Littleton, reports “my little Spotted Towhee really kicking up a leaf storm under a snowball bush. It was one busy bird.”

PEGGY WAIT followed Urling’s advice to send an email “about ALL the Cedar Waxwings that I saw yesterday (Dec. 6) near the Orchard Street Light rail station in the DTC. They moved around so quickly and often I didn’t get a good count but I feel safe in saying there were over 20, mostly hanging

out in a big cottonwood tree.” The only one we’ve seen this winter in Franktown showed up Nov. 15 while we hosted the Audubon Master Birders, and apparently our water attracted it. Polly Reetz saw a flock of 7-8 flying around the trees in her east Denver front yard. They ate buckthorn berries and the last few withered crabapples, in company with a larger group (maybe 20) of robins. They returned on Jan. 8, again with robins.

ROBINS THROGGED the section of Douglas County that stretches along the escarpment east of Franktown, three miles north and south from our house which includes Castlewood Canyon; I estimate at least 1500. Urling one day saw 150 fly out of the forest next to our house. Jackie Dunn, in Elbert, saw 10 on Jan. 7, the first time she’s seen a winter flock. Robins returned to Polly’s yard on Jan. 7, along with starlings. “We had about 15 robins at our birdbath and on the ground nearby, maybe 35-40 robins in all, some perched in trees in the neighborhood.

DOUGLBIRDS, a listserv sponsored by Denver Audubon, reports on birds in Douglas and Elbert counties. (You can sign up for it by going to the webpage and clicking on ‘listserv’ in the upper right hand corner.) I solicited subscribers for robin observations and heard specifically of 1277 in December. Reports came from Parker, Franktown, Castle Rock, and Elizabeth: Dale Brinker, Karen Metz, Meg Johnston, Buzz and Shirley Bowers, and us.

TOWNSEND’S SOLITAIRES – half a dozen -- continue winter serenades in our neighborhood but the Denver Urban Christmas count reported only 20, fewer than in some winters. Judy and Ed Butterfield have a regular solitaire, but their prize: “seven Western Bluebirds drinking at our heated birdbath,” December 21-Jan. 4. Buzz and Shirley saw a small flock Jan. 15, and on Jan. 17, so did Pat Brodbent in Parker. They don’t ordinarily winter here.

POLLY HOSTS a successful Sharp-shinned Hawk. “On Dec. 28, an adult female caught a House Sparrow, then perched on a low post in our garden and proceeded to pluck and eat it. We watched the whole thing; it took about an hour (she took a break after 30 minutes). After she flew off, we checked for remains – there was nothing but feathers, not a beak, not feet, not nothing. On Jan. 10 an immature male (I think, judging by the tail feathers) caught another House Sparrow and ate it while sitting on the ground in our garden. He was a bit faster than the female and finished up in about half an hour. Again, only feathers left. We enjoyed watching him clean his bill on the branches of our cherry tree!”

RICHARD HOLMES ANDERSON, in south Denver, noticed on Dec. 30 that “the House Finches and House Sparrows seemed especially nervous/cautious this morning. They usually stay at the feeders gobbling seeds but this day they would dart to the feeders, grab a seed, and head back to the dense shrubs on our fence line. In answer to my speculation, a Cooper’s Hawk sailed over the yard. Needless to say, the feeding birds scattered from the shrubs, pronto! About an hour later the feeding was back to its normal rhythm with the finches and sparrows going after the seeds. The two flickers and pair of Downy Woodpeckers also returned to the suet feeders.”

Backyard Birds continued on page 14

ASGD recognizes our New Friends Members

Thank you for joining ASGD. We hope you will take pride in the award-winning programs your "new" organization offers, and will join us at the Audubon Center at Chatfield for Outdoor Adventures. Welcome!

Adrienne Young, Anders & Julie Kristoffersson, Ann Stoelzle, Bonnie Gavin, Bridget Milnes, Carla Shaver, Cornelia Elliott, David & Janet Johnston, David Snyder, Diana Wilson, Diane Kraft, Doug & Amy Ziegler, Dyana Furmanskyy, George Larsen, Jennifer Hyypio, Joanne & Gregory Wendholt, Joaquin Garcia & Trudy White, Julie Weiss Murad, Kathlyn Schuster, Klasina Vanderwerf, Larry Ingram, Marilynne Barnacle, Mark & Wendy Tarletsky, Martha Hartmann, Mary Geder, Miranda Glasbergen, Peter Hook, Rogene Buchholz, Roger Jensen, Samuel N. Hicks, III, Scott Jacobs, Steve Boand, Susan Richardson, Terry Dinicola, Tim & Kim McAuliffe, Tracy Abell

ASGD Donors continued from page 15

Bill Snyder, Caroline Spangler, Judy St. John, Raymond Stevens, Bob & Nancy Stocker, Allen & Brenda Stokes, Linda Strand, Walter Strandburg, Margaret Stuvell, Joan Sussman, Dorothy Sutherlin, Martha-Ann Sylvester, Joan Tannehill, Philip Tatar, Mary Ann Tavery, John Taylor, Wendy & Kevin Terrien, William J. Thulin, William Titus, Candy Tomlinson, Scott & Linda Trauth, Joyce Treffinger, Susan Trumble, Bill & Mary Turner, Bob Turner, Kellun Turner & Michael Boggess, Edward & Mary Beth Twining, Liz Ullman, Ben Allen & Tracy Valentine, , Jean Van Loan, Marian Vander Ark, Klasina Vanderwerf, Peggy Vedder, Patsy Venema, Robert Vick, , Larry Von Thun, B.J. Walker, Wayne Wathen, Frank & Jean Watson, Robert & Grace Weber, Dorothy Webster, Joanne & Greg Wendholt, William A. West, Joseph & Barbara Wilcox, Sharon Wilkinson, Steven Williams, Carol Wilson, Diana Wilson, Holly Wilson, Elizabeth A. Witt, John A.C. Wright, Bill & Suzanne Wuerthele, Steve & Margot Wynkoop, Lynn & Fran Yehle, Cynthia Yergler, Eunice Yost, Adrienne Young, Bruce Zander, Douglas & Amy Ziegler

In-Kind Donations

Linda Strand – supplies for Audubon Center
Debbie Miller – 19" Computer Monitor

Memorial Donations

In memory of Esther Dittler from Tom Crum

Backyard Birds continued from page 13

NAN BREHMER WONDERED, "Where do the birds sleep? We think of a nest with the babies and mother bird in the spring. Once I recall seeing birds sleeping under the eaves of a house, whose tails were caught in melting snow which froze again by morning. After our January snow I saw several sparrows crawl out of a small Alberta Spruce. But where are all those birds spending the night? They aren't sleeping in the large or leafless trees." I can't answer the question. I once bought Urling a book on the subject but its turgid prose ended up mystifying us, not informing us.

ONE OBSCURE HINT: Ron Kmiecik, our Franktown neighbor, noticed, on Jan. 2, a Black-capped Chickadee which must "roost in close quarters: it has a crooked tail." Dave Rapley had his own Franktown chickadee story: "We have a 20+ foot-high ceiling in our living room. Perching way up high (Dec. 19) in the beams is a chickadee. Any ideas how to get him to return to the outside?" I had a few ideas, but the next day Dave reports that the chickadee dropped down low enough that his wife caught it with a butterfly net.

TWENTY-EIGHT BACKYARDERS participated in the Denver Urban Christmas bird count. They reported 2752 birds (including geese – more geese than eight of the field parties saw). They reported 1108 Canada Geese, 341 House Sparrows, 236 House Finches, 230 starlings, and 200 robins. The count as a whole had a huge number of Northern Flickers – 403 of them – and backyarders reported 66. They saw 8 Sharp-shinned, one Cooper's, and 3 Red-tailed hawks. As usual, Cat Anderson in Englewood saw the count's only Eastern Screech-Owl.

LORI GIESECKE, in Aurora, had few birds on Urban count day but by Jan. 3, "all was back to normal: 5 robins, 7 starlings, 2 woodpeckers, all gorging themselves on my hackberries. In the back yard, a succession of flocks, mostly finches and sparrows, perched in a snowball tree, ate from four feeders (black sunflower seeds with shell, peanut halves, millet, and safflower)." Four chickadees "discovered the 'spudnick' small circular feeder that has special chickadee food in it."

IN LITTLETON, Amy Law-Ziegler saw lots of birds on New Year's Day. "Our standard House Sparrows and finches snacked at the tube feeders. More unusual were Lesser Goldfinches at the thistle bag, juncos beneath the feeders, and robins in the neighbor's Russian olive. Attracted by all the little birds, a male Kestrel decided to try his luck. Starting in a low glide, he flared out right in front of the feeders so I could see the pearls on his rust tail perfectly. The little birds scattered too fast for him, though, so he left empty-taloned."

Rose Ketchum in Sedalia (one of my high school classmates) "tossed out some old freezer stuff – walnuts, turkey, bird seed when my freezer conked out. In to feast came 12 magpies plus Hairy and Downy woodpeckers and chickadees." In Franktown Ken Gammon has three jay species coming to raid the dog food bowl: 2 Blues, 3 Steller's, and 4 Scrubs, and Stan reports the same three. Nan calls the scrub-jays her "yard bosses."

I WELCOME YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS to this column. Drop me a note or post card at P.O. Box 584, Franktown 80116, or Email me: ouzels8@aol.com.

ASGD Recognizes our valued Donors

ASGD has over 3,000 members. In 2008, your generous support enabled ASGD to offer natural science education programs to 4,531 K-12 students and classes and field trips to over 1,000 adults. Thank you!

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