

# the Warbler



since 1969

## Unsere Vögel (Our Birds) by Julie Norkoli

My family was first introduced to the hobby of birding in the spring of 2009 when we stumbled across the Audubon Center at Chatfield State Park during a morning hike. We came back a few days later to observe bird banding and thought it was one of the coolest things we had ever participated in.



Photo Credit: Julie Norkoli

Meredith taught us about different species of birds, their habitats, behaviors, and the foods they ate. On top of that she allowed us to touch and hold the birds! These up-close experiences with the birds brought us a new appreciation of these beautiful creatures and inspired us to learn more about them.

We began visiting the bird banding station as frequently as possible, and I believe we made 15 trips there in four weeks. With the flexibility afforded to us as a homeschooling family, we modified our science lessons to begin an in-depth study on birds. We found many books about birds, including our favorite: The Burgess Bird Book for Children by Thornton Burgess – (free online <http://www.mainlesson.com/>). It's a delightful book for adults too.

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009, we moved to Germany. We really miss the bird banding station, but we continue to learn about birds. The area is teeming with hawks, and there is a wild animal park nearby whose main attraction is a daily hawk show (given in German). In the wooded/farming area where we live, many birds can be spotted. When we first arrived, my seven-year-old daughter instantly recognized the sparrows. Since then some of the most interesting birds I believe we have identified are European Robins, European Goldfinch, crested Tit, great Tit, yellowhammer, European Magpie, Egyptian Goose, Coot, great egret, and white Stork. I am so thankful for our experiences at the Audubon Center at Chatfield and the wonderful introduction they gave us to birding. You can find us at [highhillhomeschool.blogspot.com](http://highhillhomeschool.blogspot.com) – happy birding!



Photo Credit: Julie Norkoli

## Bird Banding Station Open!

### Watch research in action!

April 28 - June 3 (closed May 18-19)  
Audubon Center at Chatfield - see  
website for directions

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## ASGD Volunteers recognized

By Hugh Kingery

### Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas Volunteers of the Year

Two members of the ASGD Board of Directors, Doug Kibbe and Mackenzie “Kez” Goldthwait, received the 2011 “Volunteer of the Year” award from the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas. Atlas coordinator Lynn Wickersham said they stood out amid many “glowing nominations.”

Doug came to our Atlas after co-chairing the Vermont Breeding Bird Atlas and co-editing *The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Vermont*. Lynn said, “A self-proclaimed Atlas fanatic (Kez calls him an Atlas junkie), Doug’s unwavering enthusiasm for atlasing has been a tremendous asset to COBBAIL”. After his infectious love of atlasing spread to Kez, they adopted the role as Atlas Region 15 co-coordinators. After the project’s 5th season, Region 15 is at the top



Photo credit: Sandra Rapley

of the list for block assignments (100%), with completions just under 70%. Region 15 ranks second for the highest number of species reported (205).

Their contributions would be admirable if their efforts were confined only to Region 15. However, Doug and Kez have adopted 119 (now 127) priority blocks within 14 (now 15)

regions, spreading their skills and efforts across the eastern half of the state through the mountains all the way to Grand Junction. Collectively, they have logged almost 1,900 hours, driven over 33,000 miles, and submitted over 6,300 observations. A heartfelt thank you to Doug and Kez for your tireless dedication to the Atlas!

Their efforts also include owling all over the state. They have, so far, found barn owls in 51 Atlas blocks. (The first Breeding Bird Atlas found only 75 in the whole state). In the process, they demonstrated that these striking owls particularly like to nest under bridges on the plains. Their list includes burrowing owls in 86 blocks and eastern screech owls in 31 blocks (found in only 20 blocks by all volunteers in the first Atlas). ASGD add our congratulations to Doug & Kez for their great efforts on behalf of Colorado birds and our knowledge of them.





# Conservation Report

by Polly Reetz

## **Report on the Chatfield Reallocation project: As of late March, we could report no change.**

Talks among the various US Army Corps of Engineers' staffs about the content of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) continue.

Negotiations between the Corps, the water providers and Colorado's Department of Natural Resources also continue; we believe one sticking point is the Chatfield Marina, which will need to be moved/replaced.

The Chatfield cooperators' meeting scheduled for mid March was cancelled, leading us to believe that substantial progress on these issues remained elusive. The date for the issuance of the DEIS remains unknown. However, ASGD will certainly ask for an extension of the public comment period, no matter when the DEIS appears; it will contain up to 3,000 pages and require weeks of work for a thorough review. If you are interested and have some EIS expertise please call the ASGD office at 303-973-9530.



Photo credit: Dick Vogel

Most people still do not know that the water that might be stored in Chatfield if the project proceeds would **only be available for an estimated 3 years out of 10**. Most of the time the water level will be where it is right now, but all the recreational facilities will be higher upslope, and mature cottonwood gallery forest, wetlands and riparian habitats along the South Platte River and Plum Creek will be cleared out to make room for the (only occasional) high water. The State Park will undergo massive changes, many not for the better. Final judgement will have to await the DEIS.

## **Down at the Legislature:**

Hearings were held in late February on HB 1317, which specifies the make-up includes the 9 members of the Wildlife Commission and the 5 members of Parks board, recommended a fairly balanced board, including 2 sportsmen, 2 members of the agricultural community, 2 recreation specialists, 1 representative of non-consumptive wildlife users, 1 county commissioner and 3 at-large members. Audubon could support this. However, the House sponsor of the bill, Rep. Jerry Sonnenberg, changed this to 3 ag producers, 3 sportsmen (including one outfitter) and 5 at large representatives who should know about motorized and non-motorized trail use, wildlife management, business, energy and a host of other issues – which the other 6 didn't need to be familiar with,

evidently. One testifier complained that this setup prescribed a Commission dominated by business interests who wouldn't be advocates for wildlife and parks!

*(cont. next page)*

## Conservation Report *(cont.)*

Audubon has opposed the bill in its present form and will be working with the Senate to ensure a more balanced Commission.

- **House Bill 1007** which calls for a costly and time-consuming cost/benefit analysis of all proposed regulations, passed the House and went to the Senate, where ASGD worked to kill it.

- **House Bill 1115** which allows a 5-day period for industry to comment on fiscal impacts of all proposed legislation with no corresponding opportunity for comment on the costs to public health and environment, passed the House and went to the Senate State Affairs Committee.

- Two Senate bills, also aimed at curtailing State regulation, were still moving through Senate Committees at press time: SB 6, requiring legislative review of ALL state regulations, and SB 27, which requires that the annual review of rules be heard in appropriate legislative committees both violate the separation of powers concept on which our system of government is based. Executive agencies would have to submit their rules to the legislature.

Audubon made opposition to both these bills, and to HB 1115, a priority.

- House Bill 1161, mentioned in the last Warbler but not by number, delays implementation of any rules regulating nitrogen and phosphorus in releases by wastewater treatment plants until additional studies are done and the legislature passes a bill approving the proposed rules.

Again, this assaults separation of powers and makes it harder for the State to meet federal wastewater standards. Eventually we will have to do so, but the cost is reasonable; \$5 per year for an average family over 30 years. Clean water is vital not only for people, but also for fish and wildlife, including fish-eating birds and other species that nest in riparian habitats.

A Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR – NOT a bill) to amend the constitution to allow scratch-card lottery games to benefit veterans hasn't been introduced as of late March. Proponents say this wouldn't affect the current distribution of net lottery proceeds to parks, trails, open space and wildlife. But in fact, the new game will spread the same money to 4 entities (GOCO, Parks, Local Affairs and veterans) rather than 3, which means less for everybody. State Parks in particular will feel the impact, since they get NO general fund monies and depend on lottery and entrance fees only.

While Audubon certainly supports veterans, we feel there must be a better way to help them than taking lottery money away from parks, wildlife, trails and open space – where the public voted 3 times to put it.

For more information check the Audubon Colorado website, [www.auduboncolorado.org](http://www.auduboncolorado.org)

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# Lois Webster Fund

by Margot Wynkoop

## LOIS WEBSTER FUND ANNOUNCES GRANTEES FOR 2012

The Lois Webster Fund (LWF) of the ASGD is pleased to announce the 2012 grant recipients. The LWF received fifteen proposals for research and education projects on Colorado non-game wildlife totaling over \$41,000 for the \$6,500 the LWF had available for funding in 2012. Both the number and quality of the applications this year were impressive. They included both research and education initiatives with a variety of partnerships and significant influence on the conservation of Colorado's non-game wildlife.

The LWF Committee found the following four projects to be particularly outstanding and has awarded them grants:

"Examining what life stage male bias arises in Mountain Plovers, (*Charadrius montanus*)."  
Maggie Riordan, University of Montana, Project Manager.  
Location: Karval, CO."

"Bedrock BioBlitz: Monitoring Riparian Restoration for Adaptive Management."  
Martin Moses and the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, Project Managers. Location: Dolores River, Bedrock, CO."



Photo credit: Hugh Kingery

"Mammalian Habitat Use along a Development Gradient in Northern Colorado." Erica H. Goad, Colorado State University, Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology, Project Manager. Location: Northern Larimer County."

"Effects of Bison on Invertebrate Communities in the Southern Great Plains."  
Amanda Accamando, The Butterfly Pavilion, Project Manager. Location: Baca, Las Animas and Otero Counties."

The LWF was established to fund research and education projects "designed to lead to the conservation of non-game species in Colorado." It focuses on partnering with other organizations, and, this year, nineteen other organizations and government agencies will be contributing to these four projects.

## PRESENTATIONS BY THE LWF 2011 GRANT RECIPIENTS ON THEIR COLORADO WILDLIFE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION PROJECTS

On Thursday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Lois Webster Fund of ASGD, (LWF) will be hosting its annual program with presentations from last year's grant recipients on: "A Comparison of the Declining and Abundant Bumblebee Species, The Colorado Bird Breeding Atlas II, and The Responses of Burrowing Owls to Black Tailed Prairie Dog Alarm Calls."

The event begins at 7:00 pm with a dessert and coffee reception followed by the program from 7:15 to 8:30 pm. It will be held at the The Daniels Fund, rooms, 126-127, located at 101 Monroe St., Denver on the North side of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue east of the Cherry Creek Shopping Center. (Guests are to park in their lot located at 1st Avenue and Madison, WEST of the building.) We hope many Audubon members will join us for a fun and interesting evening!



## Birdathon 2012

### Get Ready... Get Set... Go Afield !

Birdathon month, May, is upon us and we hope you will join in our favorite activity... **BIRD WATCHING!** At the same time you'll be raising funds for ASGD and giving something back to those amazing creatures, most of whom are arriving back in Colorado or passing through on a very long and perilous journey!



Photo Credit: Hugh Kingery

### Here is what you can do:

If you would like to form a team that would be wonderful.

If you want to join a team, let us know and we will connect you with the leader of the team that would be the best fit for you (see two teams you can join below).

Finally, if you want to sign up for one of our May field trips that are "Birdathon" hikes, you can do that. All that is required is for you to solicit at least 2 people to donate toward your effort, either a certain sum per species or a lump sum.

This year we will have ASGD Birdathon hats for folks who sign up on a team with a \$50 donation. We will also award them to teams that raise \$200 per team member. For example, if a team of 5 individuals raises \$1000, they get 5 hats, 1 per team member.

### The rules are simple:

- 1) Get your pledges lined up before the date you conduct your outing (these may be either as \$ per species, or as a lump sum).
- 2) Plan your May outing to encompass the best weather and you favorite birding habitats.
- 3) Conduct your tally (species seen or heard only, no need to count individuals) within any 24hr period.
- 4) Then, be sure to let your supporters know how you did and let them share in your excitement while you collect the pledged amount. We like to let them know everything we saw, the surprises we found including the missed "sure bets" we thought we had pinned down, and the outrageous excuses we generate enroute ("Our navigator fell asleep so we were lost for an hour". or "We were so mesmerized by the Bobolink that we couldn't tear ourselves away".)
- 5) All pledges are tax deductible and donors will, upon request, be given a receipt.

Feel free to contact Mackenzie Goldthwait at [Kezgold@comcast.net](mailto:Kezgold@comcast.net) or Doug Kibbe at [dpkibbe@msn.com](mailto:dpkibbe@msn.com) or Rhonda at the ASGD office and we can answer questions and get you started! Contact Rhonda for pledge sheets and pledge receipts.

### Join a Team!

Join Birdathon team the Great Railed Tackles Saturday, May 12 for a day of birding that intends to see a large number of bird species in a variety of local habitats. The fundraising effort requires you to pay a lump sum to join the team OR find sponsors that will support your impressive day's list with a pledge. Bear Creek Lake Park, Roxborough State Park, Red Rocks, Chatfield State Park, are all possible on this "Big Day" of easy birding. Complete itinerary to be determined. Questions: contact Harriet Stratton. Registration required. 303.973.9530



Photo Credit: Hugh Kingery

Join the 3 B's Birdathon Team for masterful guidance in spotting the largest species count on Saturday May 12. A variety of habitats will be scoured for raptors, songbirds, and shorebirds. Gather pledges



Photo Credit: Hugh Kingery

from sponsors or donate a lump sum to bird with the team. Cheryl Chessick and Sharon Pfeifer, Audubon Master Birder candidates, will chart the course. Open to all levels of birders. Registration required. 303.973.9530

### PROTECT BIRDS & HABITAT, EDUCATE GENERATIONS

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The Audubon Society of Greater Denver (ASGD) offers an opportunity to make a gift or bequest to leave a lasting legacy. ASGD invites friends who share a commitment to protecting birds, other wildlife, and their habitats to consider making a personal investment in the future of our conservation and education programs through one of the following giving techniques:

- Make a current gift of cash, appreciated stocks, mutual funds, or real estate
- Include a bequest to Audubon Society of Greater Denver in your will.
- Name Audubon Society of Greater Denver as a beneficiary of the assets remaining in your retirement plan at your passing.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL 303-973-9530**

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*Legal Designation: If you wish to name Audubon Society of Greater Denver in your will or estate plan, we should be named as: Audubon Society of Greater Denver, a nonprofit organization, organized and existing under the laws of Colorado, with its principal business address at 9308 S. Wadsworth Blvd, Littleton, CO 80128.*

Tax Identification Number: 23-7063701

Date of Incorporation: September 30, 1969

Gifts, bequests and donations to the Audubon Society of Greater Denver are deductible under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

# Backyard Birds

By Hugh Kingery

Verna Lofaro, in east Centennial “had a backyard sighting on Jan. 31 that I still can’t believe. Birds usually come to my feeders about mid-morning and so, I was at the window checking on them. I looked at the fruit trees and saw this big, statuesque figure perched on a low branch. At first, I thought it was artificial, but with my binoculars I found the figure very real. As Mike Henwood kept telling us in our beginning birding class, I kept my eyes on the bird, mentally noting its characteristics. It was so big, close to 2 feet tall. Its breast, sides, and flanks were white and its back, grey. It had a long tail, yellowish- brown eyes. The supercilium was black and as it turned its head, the black mark extended around to the side of its head. It must have been



Photo credit: Norbert Kenntner

We looked up Cooper’s Hawk, but on the facing page there it was - an adult male Northern Goshawk! I am still so excited!”

Habitat Matters. Spotted Towhees caused a discussion on Douglbirds, an ASGD-sponsored email discussion group for bird-watchers in Douglas and Elbert counties. Linda Williams in Highlands Ranch commented that she had towhees off and on through the winter and didn’t realize that they live year-round in the scrub oak habitat in Red Rocks, Roxborough, and Castlewood areas.

perched for about 10 minutes, then turned its head several times and, much to my dismay, flew away! As its tail spread out, I saw black stripes on it.

Then, I got my Sibley book. I checked owls first and moved to hawks. I called my Master-Birder friend, Kate Frost, and she got out one of her books.

Karen Metz (Franktown) responded on Mar. 17: “For years, the number of spotted towhees, have been my barometer and forecaster for the severity of winter. When I’ve seen only 2 or 3 at my place in mid-November, winter has been harsh with deep, long-lasting snow cover. When I’ve seen 7 or 8 in mid-November, winter has been mild with little lasting snow cover. The population has almost always been only males; few, if any females. During this



Photo Credit: Steve Ryan

past November of 2011 I often saw 8 and figured winter would be mild. By December I often saw 11. On a few snowy days I counted 14! In 16 winters here I’d never seen this many. Also, this winter I’ve often seen females, not only males. Did the breeding birds stay and birds from the North join them?...I certainly do not know. All I know is that ‘my barometer’ was on target once again. Also, they’ve been singing for two weeks.”

Karen continued, “Of course, what about the brown thrasher? One arrived here on Nov. 9 and is still here. Another spent all winter at Debbie Trujillo’s in NW Elbert County (20 miles away). At least one other wintered in Wheat Ridge, another near Ft. Collins. Are they all odd birds, or is this a clue to a changing climate?” She described the thrasher’s behavior: “I keep an outdoor chair under the highest portion of our deck, up against the foundation of the house. Under that chair is a mound of reddish-brown scrub oak leaves, some 15 feet from the large tri-leaf sumac where I sprinkle hulled millet, cracked corn and sunflower. The Brown Thrasher survives in cozy fashion, with its warm, camouflaged resting spot close to the food source that it favors.”



## Backyard Birds (cont.)

Robins also figure prominently in this winter's bird assortment, as I mentioned in the last column. Feb. 3, Urling and I watched at least 275 robins fly over the house. Some (50 or so) fluttered back and forth between junipers on the west side of the house; groups of 20 descended onto the trees on either side of the house, moved on; more flocks arrived, flew on, replaced by more. This mob populated our hillsides since mid-autumn. As we pondered their provenance, we also wonder about their impact on the Townsend's Solitaires that showed up a month before the robins. Originally six, now about three. On non-snowy days we see the solitaires fly-catching along our road.

Laurie Duke in Elizabeth, on the other hand, said that she "hasn't seen any robins at my place all winter, but nearby, lots of robins are feeding on the fruit of Russian Olive trees that line my neighbor's driveway."



Photo credit: Dick Vogel

Then — blackbirds. Jill Holden said, in February, "The wicked winds of last night blew in snow and a huge flock of red-winged blackbirds, along with a new visitor to my feeder. I love to see the red-winged blackbirds come with their colorful wing patches, and they don't tend to stick around too long, so it has not been too much of a problem of them taking over. I have scanned through the flocks in the past

hoping that maybe someday I would find a yellow-headed blackbird amongst them. Well, that day finally came — a single beautiful male with his bright yellow hood! He stuck around long enough to give me a good look, but soon left in one of the waves of the comings and goings of blackbirds flocks. If I made any movement inside, they would startle and all take off with a sound like a crashing wave. At one point I had about 300 blackbirds spread across the deck, the tree by the deck, the Fat Alberts, the yard, and of course the feeders. I don't put enough seed out for 300 blackbirds, but they were taking advantage of the little bit of seed that I had sprinkled on the deck up near the house where the overhang would keep the falling snow from covering it too quickly."

Kathy Dressel in Franktown saw them too. "Every year for the past 6 years, we have had red-winged blackbirds at our feeders. At first it was about 30. Each winter the flock grew larger. This year we have had about 150-200 at a time, but they cannot get the seed from several of our feeders because they are in cages. They stay 30-60 minutes depending on the weather and then move on." On Jan. 14, Urling and I counted 150 at a neighbor's feeder, then 400 flying to roost somewhere above our cliff, but only a few persisted through the winter.



Photo Credit: Dick Vogel

Cynthia Madsen from Centennial, on Feb. 17, "I was sitting at my kitchen table, copying field trip notes into my birding journal when I glanced up and saw an American Kestrel male hanging underneath my caged feeder, trying to extract a female house sparrow. He must have been fast because the house sparrows



Photo Credit: Dick Vogel

don't seem to "park" in the caged feeder like house finches. I've seen a sharp-shinned hawk pull this off, but this is the first time I have ever seen a kestrel take a bird from my yard. I had just finished counting 13 house sparrows so I don't think their numbers will be hurting."

## Backyard Birds *(cont.)*

Mary Fran O'Connor says, "Midsummer we had a hooting great horned owl move in. By October another arrived. Since November they have been



Photo credit: Dick Vogel

hooting to each other. I was lucky enough to see them in a large poplar in the pre-dawn light just before Christmas. Their tail feathers move upwards as they hoot."

Debbie, from Elbert County: "I saw a great horned owl on the ground, at 11:30 a.m. I thought he might have been hurt so I watched him. He stayed on the

ground for quite a while

and two magpies approached the owl, also walking on the ground. They did not try to mob him; instead walked toward him, the owl moved away after lunging at one magpie, which then pecked at something on the ground where the owl's feet had been. With my binoculars I saw blood on the ground. That's what the magpies were interested in and the owl was not hurt, but had just killed and eaten some critter. Pretty soon the owl flew to a fence post and then his favorite perch in one of my pine trees and stayed there most of the day."

Mary Fran also reported, "Our latest celebrity is two divisions north at Cherry Knolls Pond. A female wild turkey arrived in mid-November. She is deathly afraid of the ubiquitous honkers and retreats to the pines and poplars when they land on the water. She is best buddies with the Mallards because the neighborhood kids love to feed them. She is adept at ice skating and has managed to elude the coyotes and Christmas bb gunners."



Photo credit: Dick Vogel

Linda commented, "I know that some of you dislike the Eurasian Collared-Doves, but we've had no problems with the species at all. The pairs that visit our yard are docile, well-behaved, and never bother other birds—including their cousins, the mourning doves. I will be interested to see if the EC's become more aggressive as their suburban numbers grow. Right now, they are still welcome guests at our house." Leon and Mae Rollin

called in 6 bushtits that visited their Littleton yard.

Bill Wuerthele's long-tailed duck in City Park persisted through January. "I walked over to City Park to check it. I compared my photographs that show a striking change. Nov. 22, it had dark, uniform bill, extensive dark crown, limited white on the face, and a dark back. By Jan. 31<sup>st</sup>, it had a bi-colored pink and black bill; limited dark area on the crown, white face, and white back feathers — all pointing to an immature molting male."

Polly Reetz, on Jan. 8, "walked over to Cherry Creek (we consider it practically our back yard) and saw two small ducks zip under the bridge and up the creek. We walked a bit east and saw them where an outflow has created a small bay: a pair of hooded mergansers! Plus a gadwall and two mallards. This is the first time we've seen hoodeds on the creek."

**I welcome your contributions to this column.**

**Send a note or postcard to:**

**P.O. Box 584,**

**Franktown CO, 80116**

**or email me: [ouzels8@aol.com](mailto:ouzels8@aol.com)**

### **Kayak the Niobrara in Nebraska** **July 24 – 27, 2012**



The Niobrara River flows through a unique ecosystem in the sandhill area of the northwest part of Nebraska. The river canyon, with many lovely waterfalls, contains remnants of the eastern deciduous forest and the northern boreal forest. This part of the Niobrara is an easy float in single person, recreational kayaks (more stable and comfortable than canoes), moving with the current at about 7 miles per hour. Most of the river waters are about hip-deep. We will listen and look for birds along the river, at the cabins, and during our other stops along the way. wild turkeys are usually seen.

This will be the sixth time Audubon has done this trip. The trip is limited to 18 participants and usually fills early. We will stay in two cabins at the Niobrara River Ranch, located just north of Smith Falls State Park. The cabins have an expansive view of the river valley and sandhills. The trip is scheduled for Tuesday, July 24 through Friday, July 27, 2012. Tuesday is a travel day in personal cars from Denver to the Niobrara River Ranch, stopping early for breakfast.

We then stop for lunch at Buffalo Bill Cody Park in North Platte, and enjoy dinner in Valentine. Wednesday is a river day, kayaking about 12.5 miles from the Cornell Bridge put in to the Smith Falls State Park take out. Thursday we will visit The Nature Conservancy Niobrara Preserve, Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge and Smith Falls. Friday morning we will kayak the other 12.5 miles of river, taking out at Sunny Brook Camp. By mid-afternoon Friday, we will head back to Denver.

The trip fee includes all meals from Wednesday morning through Friday lunch, park fees, river fees, a donation to the Nature Conservancy, shuttles, and single recreational kayak rentals for two days on the river. Not included: breakfast on Tuesday, lunch for that day, and dinner in Valentine. Children over the age of 10 who are able to handle their own kayaks are welcome. Kayak rentals, transfers, and people shuttles for the river will be handled by Sunny Brook Camp Outfitters. Each participant is expected to join in group plans and help our super chef prepare at least one meal and help clean up after one meal. The weight limit for single person kayaks is 250 to 275 lbs.. Free kayak practice time in Denver before the trip can be arranged. We travel in private cars. If you want to carpool, ASGD can provide trip contacts.

*\$550 /person for Friends of Audubon Society of Greater Denver, \$580/person for nonmembers. Single room supplement is \$180. A \$275 non-refundable deposit is due May 14, with the balance due by June 18. To register call ASGD at 303-973-9530. For more information about the trip, please call volunteer trip leader Ann Bonnell at 303-979-6211.*

### **Bird Brazil** **August 4-19, 2012**

Hyacinth macaws, hoatzins, greater rheas, southern screamers, jabirus, toco toucans, white woodpeckers and bare-faced curassows are only a few of the many birds we'll see on this trip to the southern Amazon Basin and Pantanal.

In the Amazon, we stay at the superb Cristalino Lodge which is surrounded by 5.5 million acres of primary rainforest and where over 570 bird species have been recorded. The lodge's 150 foot tower gives us access to the forest canopy where we may see the black-girdled barbet, red-fan parrot, Amazonian pygmy-owl and white-whiskered spider monkey.



The Pantanal is the world's largest freshwater wetlands — about the size of New York state. Among the birds we'll seek here are the sungrebe, maguari stork, golden-collared macaw, black-collared and savanna hawks, Chaco chachalaca, red-billed scythebill and numerous species of herons, egrets, ibises and kingfishers.



Photo credit: Bill Eden

Mammals we may encounter include the giant otter, capybara (the world's largest rodent), Brazilian tapir, black howler monkey, crab-eating fox, puma, and the elusive jaguar.

We'll also be visiting Chapada dos Guimaraes, an area of mesas and deep canyons with waterfalls and home to birds such as the blue-winged macaw, collared crescent-chest, Chapada flycatcher, and white-eared puffbird. Our trip ends at Serra das Araras where we have a chance to see the harpy eagle.

The tour leader is Brazilian guide Paulo Boute, who includes Roger Tory Peterson among his clients, and ASGD's Bill Turner.

The physical requirements of this trip are easy to moderate. There will be some walking over uneven, but mainly level, terrain in warm to hot conditions and some travel in small boats in the Amazon and Pantanal. Most land travel will be in an air-conditioned coach.

*\$5295/person double occupancy land cost from Cuiaba, Brazil (based on current exchange rates). Add \$75/person for non-Friends members. Land cost includes flights from Cuiaba to Alta Floresta and return. Roundtrip airfare Denver to Cuiaba is estimated to be \$1600. The land cost price is based on a group size of 8. With fewer people, a small group surcharge will apply.*

Maximum group size is 10.

For a detailed itinerary and any questions, please contact Bill Turner at (303) 795-5128 or e-mail [toursbyturner@aol.com](mailto:toursbyturner@aol.com).

## NORTHERN CALIFORNIA SPECIALTIES

**SEPTEMBER 9-14, 2012**

Join Harry Fuller for 5 days of Pacific Coast lifers to add to your list— if California is new to you. Have you not seen those black oystercatchers and chestnut-backed chickadees since you purchased a digital camera? Come see the embattled yellow-billed magpie, a California endemic decimated by habitat loss and West Nile Virus. In one day alone, see Brandt's cormorant, Heermann's Gull, California towhee, chestnut-backed chickadee, Pacific loon, Clark's grebe, Hutton's



Photo credit: US Fish & Wildlife

Vvreo and Townsend's warbler plus a few dozen more western birds.

Harry Fuller has been birding California for decades and can even tell you about Brandt, Heermann, Townsend, and Clark. Among the birds with limited range you should see: wrentit, the only babbler in America; surfbird; black

turnstone; white-tailed kite;

the western scrub-jay that is soon to be split from its inland congener; Nuttall's woodpecker; oak titmouse; and California quail.

As an extension, go on one of the Pacific Coast's finest pelagic trips (Shearwater) to enjoy some of America's most elusive species: albatross, skua, and auklet. The whales, sea otters, California sea lions, giant sequoias and redwoods are a bonus. If you eat after birding, this trip guarantees some of the best food in a region full of foodies. Or you can eat in your room, if you prefer.

*\$1,390/person (estimated), including lodging for 6 days of birding, 5 nights, five breakfasts, lodging taxes, bird guide, driver, trip planning and other services. Single supplement \$390. \$150 to \$200 will likely be your cost for additional meals at restaurants and box lunches. See Itinerary at [www.pibird.com/NorthCalif-2010Sept-1.html](http://www.pibird.com/NorthCalif-2010Sept-1.html). Call Charles Thornton-Kolbe at 888-203-7464, ext. 912 or by email at [charles@pibird.com](mailto:charles@pibird.com) to discuss or book this trip. Also, feel free to call Harry Fuller toll free at 888-203-7464.*

## The Birds and Natural History of Oaxaca, Mexico

**Mark Pretti Nature Tours, L.L.C.**

**December 4 - 14, 2012**

Harboring about ten percent of Earth's biodiversity, Mexico is one of the most biologically rich countries in the world. During this natural adventure, we'll explore and learn about some of that richness as we travel through the valley of Oaxaca, the bordering sierras, and the lovely Pacific coast.

Tropical deciduous forest, the lush evergreen forests of the Sierra Madre del Sur, mangroves, beaches, and the arid scrub of the Oaxaca valley make up the sites we'll visit as we enjoy the birds, natural history, and culture of southern Mexico. During our journey, experience fantastic birding as we search for species



Photo credit: Dominic Sherony

such as dwarf jay, red warbler, bumblebee hummingbird, mountain and citreoline trogons, white-throated magpie jay, ocellated thrasher, gray-breasted woodpecker, gray-barred wren, russet-crowned motmot, spot-breasted oriole, and many others. Tour the Zapotec ruins of Monte Alban, visit a master weaver in Teotitlan del Valle, tour the Oaxacan Cultural Museum, and spend an unforgettable day with Seasons of My Heart Cooking School, as we tour the Mercado Abastos, enjoy a superb lecture on regional farming, culture and cuisine, and savor a delicious lunch.

In addition to the natural wonders, a major trip highlight is the unique and superb lodging situations. All have excellent food, warm hospitality, and terrific views, and some have great birding right outside your front door.

Led by naturalist and bird guide Mark Pretti and local guide Benito Hernandez.

*\$2850/person (with a full group of 8), double occupancy. Includes all lodging, meals, admissions, donation to the ASGD, and transportation from Oaxaca City.*

*Gulf Slope extension available December 15-19, 2012.*

*Group size limited to 8 participants. For more information, contact Mark at (520) 803-6889 or [mpnaturetours@earthlink.net](mailto:mpnaturetours@earthlink.net)*

## South Florida January 2013

Florida is pleasant and warm with excellent resident birds. Trip includes Everglades National Park, Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary and many more excellent habitats (wet prairie, pine flatwoods, palmetto palm forest and more).

The trip starts with numerous

specialty species in the Miami area (red-whiskered bulbul, common Myna, spot-breasted oriole and several parrot species), then the marshes of the Everglades for warblers, tri-colored heron, reddish egret, roseate spoonbill, limpkin, anhinga and purple gallinule. With some luck, we may also find mangrove cuckoo,



Photo Credit: Bill Schmoker

swallow-tailed kite and snail kite. Next, explore nearby forested areas for red-cockaded woodpecker and scissor-tailed flycatcher, and then cypress swamp and marsh at Corkscrew with painted buntings and much more. Winter also offers the opportunity for some rare Caribbean strays (such as fork-tailed flycatcher and La Sagra's flycatcher).

\$1690/person with Colorado's own Norm Lewis. To learn more, call Charles at the Partnership for International Birding at 720-320-1974 or [www.pibird.com](http://www.pibird.com).

### **Galapagos: Birding and Wildlife with ASGD October 24 to November 4, 2013**

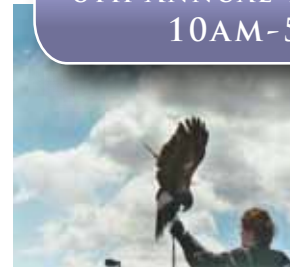
Galapagos is a lifetime destination for almost every naturalist and birder. This trip focuses on studying all aspects of Galapagos natural history, Galapagos wildlife and nearly all endemic bird species. This trip offers opportunities for birders to find these endemic species and an opportunity to enjoy the bounty of unique, rare, and extraordinarily tame wildlife.

The islands host fascinating seabirds, endemic land birds, iguanas, giant tortoises, Galapagos Sea Lions and a flora all their own. Xavier Munoz, one of Ecuador's most experience bird guides, shares guiding with a local Galapagos naturalist to help you find and learn to identify Galapagos wildlife.

\$4,290/person for 10 days or \$4,490/person for 11 days. Total tour package is 20% less than our nearest competitor. To learn more about this trip of a lifetime, call Charles at the Partnership for International Birding at 720-320-1974 or [www.pibird.com](http://www.pibird.com).



### 8TH ANNUAL FRBC OPEN HOUSE-MAY 12TH 10AM-5PM - LIVE MUSIC, GREAT BBQ



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9956 West Remington Place  
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Open 7 Days A Week  
M-F 10-6 Sat 10-5 Sun 12-5



### New Scopes & Binoculars in Stock

10% off storewide purchases  
plus FRBC will donate an  
additional 5% to ASGD for  
mentioning this ad



Offer Expires: June 30, 2012. May not be combined  
with any other offers. Optics not included.



## Programs

### **Walk the Wetlands**

**Sunday, May 6, 8am**

**Sunday, June 3, 8am**

Everyone welcome, members and non-members alike! Hike along the South Platte River looking for spring migrants and breeding birds.

This is a wonderful adventure for all ages. BBFGWS.

We can lend you binoculars and field guides if you don't have them.

*Meeting Place: Audubon Center parking lot*

*Leaders: Karen vonSaltza and Master Birders*

*Registration NOT required; No fee*

### **Nocturnal Wildlife Hike**

**April 13 & May 18**

**Fridays, 7pm–9pm**

Join us at the Audubon Nature Center to discover who is out and about at night and what activities these creatures are up to! Please wear shoes to hike in, weather appropriate clothing, and bring a flashlight if you'd like.

\*If the weather is inclement, this outing may be cancelled. Please call our office (303-973-9530) before 4pm the day of the hike to see if it has been canceled.

*Meeting Place: Audubon Center at Chatfield*

*Registration required: \$5/Friends members; \$8/non-members; \$10/family*

### **Little Fledglings Preschool Nature Hour**

**For Children ages 3-6 (and parent/guardians, too!)**

**Wednesdays, May 2 & 16, from 10-11am**

**Wednesdays, June 6 & 20, from 10-11am**

Explore a theme (see next page) each month with stories, songs, crafts, and activities exploring wildlife and the natural world. This program introduces science skills and encourages active outdoor play.

May - Birds, Beaks, & Nests–Birdbanding Station

Where do birds live? How do they make their homes? And find out why birds' beaks have specific shapes.

June - Trees and Nests — How do birds build their nests? Find out what nest materials they use and which trees they use to build them!

*Meeting Place: Audubon Center at Chatfield.*

*Registration Required: Friends Members: \$5 per child and their adult; \$2 each additional child*

*Non-members: \$8 per child and their adult; \$4 each additional child*

### **Take your Birdwatching Skills to a Higher Level**

**Tuesdays, May 1 and May 8, 6:30-8:30pm**

Defining and distinguishing characteristics of similar appearing bird species is the emphasis of this class. Go beyond the basic introductory birdwatching skills! Includes common Colorado resident birds and seasonal migrants. A few of the birds you will view: ibis species, yellowlegs, dowitchers, the small sandpipers, female tanagers, Cassin's and purple finch, terns, and resident flycatchers.

Increase your confident with identification skills. Don't forget to bring your bird field guide to class.

*Meeting Place: Audubon Center at Chatfield*

*Instructor: Tina Jones, long time Colorado teacher and Audubon Master Birder. Questions call Tina Jones, 303-906-5479*

*Registration required: \$10/Friends member; \$12/non-member*



### **30th Annual Spring Bird Count – May 11, 12, & 13**

FREE! Choose your favorite metro Denver birding spot. All abilities needed – members & non-members. Everyone welcome – just show up. More eyes spot more birds. A citizen science project in its 30<sup>th</sup> year! Registration NOT required (except for Rocky Mountain Arsenal). No fee.

#### **Friday, May 11 Cherry Creek Reservoir**

Cherry Creek State Park. State Parks pass required

*Leader: Bob Brown (303-791-6204).*

*Meeting Place: 6:30am at the Marina on west side (near Cherry Creek High School)*

#### **Saturday, May 12 Waterton Canyon Downstream.**

4-5 mile hike. Wear long pants (not shorts) due to bare-leg-unfriendly plants such as poison ivy, thistles, and knapweed.

*Meeting Place: 6am at Audubon Center*

*Leader: Hugh Kingery, 303-814-2723.*

#### **Chatfield State Park**

*Leader, Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748.*

*Meeting Place: 6am at West (Deer Creek) entrance to park.*

*State Parks Pass required.*

#### **Lower Bear Creek**

*Leader: Mike Henwood, 303-716-8551, cell 720-840-5070) hawkhen@aol.com.*

*Meeting Place: 6am at parking lot on Morrison Road at C470, northwest corner, next to the Conoco station.*

**Barr Lake State Park.** This is a ten-mile, all-day hike around the lake. State Parks pass required.

*Leader: Dick Schottler, 303-278-8035*

*Meeting Place: Call leader if you plan to go. 6am at Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory. Exit I-76 at Bromley Lane; go east about quarter-mile and turn right (south) on Lark Bunting Lane, to end of road.*

#### **Castlewood Canyon State Park**

*Leaders: Kirk & Kyle Huffstater, 303-660-9298*

*Meeting Place: 6:30am at old entrance. From CO 86, 0.5 miles west of Franktown, turn south on Castlewood Canyon Road, go two miles to old entrance. State Parks pass required.*

#### **Sunday, May 13**

##### **Barr Lake periphery**

This trip does not involve much walking — good for people with limited mobility or stamina.

*Meeting Place: 7:30am on access road to entrance station at Barr Lake State Park*

*Leader: Dick Anderson, 303-757-4582*

##### **Rocky Mountain Arsenal**

*Leader: Urling Kingery, 303-814-2723.*

*Space limited; contact Leader to register*

#### **Mother's Day Bird Banding Breakfast**

##### **Sunday, May 13, 9-11am**

Treat your mother to a one-of-a-kind experience! After a light continental-style breakfast, enjoy a leisurely spring hike and a visit to our popular bird banding station! Give the gift of seeing songbirds up-close as they migrate through the South Platte River corridor!

*Meeting Place: Audubon Center at Chatfield*

*Mothers Free!*

*\$15/additional adult, \$8/child*

*Registration required*

To register, call 303-973-9530 or go to [info@denveraudubon.org](mailto:info@denveraudubon.org)  
BBFGWS: bring binoculars, field guides, water, and a snack.

## **Chico Basin**

### **Wednesday, May 16, 5:45am**

Visit this migrant trap and bird-banding hot spot 35 minutes SE of Colorado Springs. Unusual species throng with usual migrant warblers, vireos, sparrows, waders, and waterfowl. A conservation easement covers the riparian ponds and woods at this 87,000 acre working cattle ranch.

BBFGWS & Lunch. Limit 10

*Meeting Place:* 5:45am. King Soopers parking lot on SE side of I-25/Founders Parkway, Castle Rock (Exit 184). Return mid-afternoon

*Leader:* Laurie Duke 303-204-1963; lcd317@earthlink.net) and Bill Maynard.

*Registration required:* \$25 Friends member, \$27 Non-member

## **Denver Parks - Red Rocks Park**

### **Saturday, May 19, 9am-11am**

We will check out the Trading Post feeders and look for nesting birds, including raptors. We will walk through the park on medium difficulty trails (about 1 mile) and may need to drive to find these likely species: red-tail hawks, peregrine and prairie falcons, Townsend solitaires, western tanagers, gnatcatchers, bluebirds, chats, swifts, swallows, and hummingbirds. Wear sun protection. BBFGSW.

*Leaders:* Audubon Master Birders Bob Santangelo and Tom Bush

*Meeting Place:* Trading Post parking lot at Red Rocks Park. Take I-70 west, exit 259, left 1.5 miles to park entrance. Follow road up to Trading Post parking lot.

*Registration required.* No fee. Donations to ASGD are appreciated.

## **Highlands Ranch – Grigs Road Wilderness Area**

### **Saturday, May 19, 8am**

Walk this backcountry wilderness that descends off a plateau through prairie grasslands, Gambel oak, cliffs, and pines. Birds include jays, buntings, orioles, grassland sparrows, Lewis's Woodpecker, shrikes, and raptors — eagles, long-eared and saw-whet owls, and prairie falcons.

Dress in layers for the weather; wear long pants, and sturdy shoes due to prickly brush and possibly rattlesnakes. Parts of the trail are narrow and moderately steep. Elevation, 6300 ft. BBFGWS

*Meeting Place:* Parking lot at Grigs Road, 11700 Grigs Road in Highlands Ranch; Grigs road crosses Daniels Park Rd.

*Leaders:* Cindy Valentine, Barbara Shissler

*Registration Required:* No fee, but you must sign up with the Highlands Ranch Community Center at 303-791-2500; Limit 25. For additional information contact Hope Marasco, Highlands Ranch Wilderness Area Coordinator 303-474-8878 or Cindy Valentine, Audubon Coordinator, 303-790-2805. The trip number for the Grigs Road Trip is #982138AO.

## **Denver Parks - City Park**

### **Saturday, May 26, 9am-11am**

Various colony-nesting water birds should be on view at Ferril Lake along with other singing and nesting songbirds in City Park. We will take a short stroll through the park and see and hear the spring bird activity. We may have the opportunity to watch some birds feeding their young. BBFGSW.

*Meeting Place:* Corner of Colorado Blvd and 17<sup>th</sup> Ave., behind the Zoo, and Denver Museum of Nature and Science.

*Leaders:* Audubon Master Birders Barb Shissler, Cindy Valentine, and Kathy Bollhoefer

*Registration required.* No fee. Donations to ASGD are appreciated.

## **Fossil Creek Reservoir (near Fort Collins)**

### **Saturday, May 26, 7am (half-day or longer)**

Look for Bald Eagles, hawks, and a nesting Great Horned Owl in the trees along the edge of the lake. Trails lead to great overlooks and easy viewing of waterbirds. Because you look from the south, over-the-shoulder light is excellent all day.

Bring a scope if you have one. BBFGWS. Lunch optional.

*Meeting Place:* Division of Wildlife, 6060 N. Broadway. Exit I25 at 58<sup>th</sup> Ave, turn west and in a block turn right on Broadway and right into the Division parking lot just beyond the railroad tracks.

*Leaders:* Megan Miller

*Registration required:* \$10 Friends member, \$12 Non-member

To register, call 303-973-9530 or go to [info@denveraudubon.org](mailto:info@denveraudubon.org)

BBFGWS: bring binoculars, field guides, water, and a snack.



## **Explore Chatfield State Park**

**Saturday, May 26, 7-11am**

**Saturday, June 30, 7-11am**

Join volunteer naturalist and bird expert Joey Kellner in exploring various habitats in Chatfield State Park to search for feathered treasures. All ability levels welcome. Wear sturdy shoes for hiking (1-3 miles) and dress for the weather. No pets. Sunscreen and insect repellent as needed. BBFGWS

*Meeting Place: Platte River parking lot within Chatfield State Park, past Kingfisher Bridge over the Platte, right turn. Parks pass required.*

*Leader: Joey Kellner*

*Registration NOT required: No fee*

## **Denver Parks - Cook/Garland Park**

**Saturday, June 16, 9am-11am**

We should see a variety of songbirds, and possibly a kingfisher, as well as ducks and geese along Cherry Creek. Some walking both along and off trails will be required to get the best views. This is a good area to see wetland and beaver activity. We plan to visit both Cook and Garland Parks. BBFGSW.

*Leader: Audubon Master Birder Kathy Bollhoefer*

*Meeting Place: 7100 Cherry Creek Dr. South, the Cook Park Rec Center parking lot.*

*Registration required. No fee. Donations to ASGD are appreciated.*

## **Highlands Ranch – Wildcat Mountain Trail**

**Saturday, June 16, 8-11am**

This circular trail travels prairie grasslands, a tree-lined stream, a pond, and a ridge with cliffs where eagles and hawks nest. Birds: grassland sparrows, ducks, swallows, stream and mountain birds. Look for reptiles — leopard frogs, chorus frogs, toads, rattlesnakes, bullsnakes, and western garter snakes; mammals — deer, elk, maybe a mountain lion. Dress in layers for the weather; wear long pants, sturdy shoes due to prickly brush and possibly rattlesnakes. Parts of the trail are narrow and moderately steep. Elevation 6300 ft. BBFGWS

To register, call 303-973-9530 or go to [info@denveraudubon.org](mailto:info@denveraudubon.org)  
BBFGWS: bring binoculars, field guides, water, and a snack.

*Meeting Place: Parking lot at Wildcat Ridge off Monarch, 1950 Monarch Blvd.; follow Quebec until it becomes Monarch past the High School and Middle School in Highlands Ranch.*

*Leaders: Cindy Valentine, Mary Driscoll*

*Registration Required: No fee, but you must sign up with the Highlands Ranch Community Center at 303-791-2500; limit 25. For additional information contact Hope Marasco, Highlands Ranch Wilderness Area Coordinator 303-474-8878 or Cindy Valentine, Audubon Coordinator, 303-790-2805. The trip number for Wildcat Mountain is #982138Bo.*

## **Herpetology Field Hike**

**June 16, 8-11pm**

Hike in the Chatfield Basin while learning about the reptiles native to the Chatfield Basin! (time subject to change).

*Meeting Place: Audubon Center at Chatfield. May carpool to other locations within the park. Please bring a state park pass if you own one.*

*Registration required: \$15/person (may also need to purchase a State Parks day pass)*

## **Entomology Field Hike**

**June 30, 9am-12pm**

Join Victorian era scientist “Phinneas” to learn about the insects native to the Chatfield Basin and the South Platte River! (time subject to change)

*Meeting Place: Meeting at Audubon Center at Chatfield.*

*Registration required: \$15/person*

## **Lair o’ the Bear Park**

**Sunday June 10, 8am – noon**

Lair o’ the Bear is at its peak in June, with lazuli Buntings, cedarWaxwings, black-headed grosbeaks, Bullock’s Orioles, hummingbirds, vireos and goldfinches. Not to mention the wildflowers! Be prepared for foothills hiking, a bit of elevation gain and magnificent birds.

BBFGWS, and sun protection. Optional picnic lunch after the hike.

*Meeting Place: Lair o’ the Bear Park. From C-470 take the Morrison exit. Drive about 4 miles west of Morrison along Colorado 74, past Idledale, to the park entrance on the left.*

*Leaders: Audubon Master Birder Candidates Jeff Stroup, Diane Hutton and Michele Ostrander.*

*Registration required: \$10 Friends member; \$12 Non-member*

# Volunteers, Donors, New Members and Officers

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### In Kind Donations

Marc Goodbody donated a bird jigsaw puzzle and bird books.

### Memorial

Elise Brougham made a donation in memory of Louise F. Turner

Andrew Melnykovich made a donation in memory of Nicole Claire Shaw

**Our apologies to those we failed to acknowledge in the last newsletter:**

Herbert Anderson  
Jane Axtell  
James A. Broderick

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## New Friends

Barb Page	Jennifer Felsburg
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## Thank you to volunteers for the work on the ASDG booth at the Echter's Garden Center

Echxpo : Sharon Pfiefer, Angela Grun, Jimmy and Doris Cruze, Julie Dorosz, Char Gottlieb, Meg Miller, Celia Greenman, Deb Wittwer, and Dick Anderson.

## Officers & Directors

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Bridget Milnes, Carl Norbeck, Phil Reynolds, Carolyn Roark, Ginger Sawatzki, Esther Weiner

## Field Trips & Classes

Dick Anderson, Tom Bush, Laurie Duke, Kate Frost, Tina Jones, Kris Koff, Marilyn Rhodes, Barbara Shissler, Cindy Valentine

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## Website/Media

Dick Anderson,  
Mary Urban

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Mary Urban



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