



THE Warbler

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2009

NEWSLETTER OF THE AUDUBON SOCIETY OF GREATER DENVER

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CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE GREATER DENVER COMMUNITY

The year in review

by Carl Norbeck, ASGD Executive Director

June 30 marks the end of ASGD's fiscal year. It is the time of year we add up all of ASGD's accomplishments for the purpose of writing Final Reports to the various organizations that help fund us. These include the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD), The Denver Foundation, and the National Audubon Society. It is also time to share with you, our major source of support, how your donations were invested.

- **Financial.** A recent issue of the Chronicle of Philanthropy noted that charitable contributions fell six percent nationally in 2008, the sharpest drop in 53 years. That said, the support provided by you enabled ASGD to balance its budget for the year.
- **Audubon Nature Center.** The highlight of the year was opening the newly remodeled Audubon Nature Center on weekends starting in January 2009. The response for a fledgling nature center was terrific, 2,574 visitors in the first six months!
- **School Programs.** ASGD connected over 3,500 students with the outdoors with over 1/3 of these through our Naturalist in Residence program offered in Arapahoe and Douglas Counties and being planned for Jefferson County.



Families and school groups enjoy guided hikes and programs - such as Mucking in the Pond - at the Audubon Nature Center while our birding classes and field trips for adults fill to capacity.

- **Classes and Field Trips.** From Beginning Bird Watching to the perennially popular Walk the Wetlands, the programs served over 1,000 people.
- **Conservation.** The Conservation Committee continued its work to preserve wildlife habitat around Chatfield State Park, to provide advice to citizen activists, to offer its annual Legislative Workshop, and to address global warming and bird strikes through the Safe Skies Colorado initiative.
- **Research.** The Lois Webster Fund provided funding for two highly

valued non-game species research projects regarding the Pawnee Montane Skipper (a Federally threatened butterfly species) and the Townsend's Big Eared Bat.

- **Partnership with Chatfield State Park.** ASGD's office and the Audubon Center are located at Chatfield. Working with park staff, we initiated joint programs this year and advertise jointly through fliers, bulletin boards, websites, and ASGD's weekly listserv.
- **Volunteers.** Although we are still collecting volunteer hours, preliminary indications are that the number of volunteers and the hours contributed will exceed last year's totals of 891 individual volunteers contributing over 5,624 hours!

Thank you all for helping make last year a great year for the Audubon Society of Greater Denver!

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NEW PROGRAM

Bird Feeding Class

**Two Saturdays, September 12 and 26, 11am - 12 noon (see Green Pages for details)
Audubon Center at Chatfield**

With ASGD's birdseed sale coming up, we receive lots of calls about "what to feed who?" This class will cover the following:

- selecting feeders and birdseed
 - discouraging squirrels and diseases
- The class will include displays of feeders and birdseed and pictures of the birds they will attract. There will be plenty of time for Q & A and discussion.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE—

Thank you for your grand support during the past fiscal year. It was certainly not an easy year, for you or for us, but we made it. Our budget last year was in the neighborhood of \$225,000. While a large portion came from charitable grants, much of that budget came directly from you as membership moneys, donations, bequests, and in-kind gifts ranging from \$2 to \$32,000. Thank you.

You gave us more than money, however. You gave us YOU. Volunteers contributed over 6,000 hours out of their days. The nature of those precious hours cannot be categorized. Many hours were spent helping Rhonda around the office: stuffing envelopes, cataloging and sorting books, sorting and inputting data and pictures. Down at the newly opened Audubon Nature Center a lot of sweeping, dusting, and furniture moving was done to get it ready and to keep it ready. Once ready, Karl trained and snared volunteers; those volunteers made differences in the lives of children and adults who came to enjoy Chatfield. There are a lot of Bluebirds and Tree Swallows around with new homes because of the hours given by bird-house builders under Fred's tutelage. I know I have missed more hours than I have mentioned. If I missed your gift of time, I apologize, but please know that you are appreciated and needed.

Now we welcome in the new, fiscal, year. This year we project a budget of over \$200,000. That's a lot of Bluebird boxes, but it is also many kids getting to see a House Wren up close at the banding station with Meredith, getting to play in the pond life with Karl, and getting to go for a bird hike from the Nature Center. It is a lot of people being introduced to birds with an ASGD birding trip to Bosque Del Apache or the Crane Festival. It is simply many, many adults and children learning more about their world and feeling better about preserving their world. From this end of the year our budget looks daunting, especially when we look at the drop in grants and the tightened budgets all around us. Fortunately, we still have an incredible staff and an incredible membership. So, please join me in wishing ASGD a Happy New Year, and start thinking about what you can pitch in to help us keep those kids playing in the ponds with Karl.

Welcome to the new, fiscal, year.

Tom Parchman, President

ASGD welcomes 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!

Anne Cain, Annie Soerensen & Cathy Ryan, Ashley Thompson & Nancy Todd, Barbara B. Brennan, Barbara Brophy, Barbara Cowger, Ben Kemena, Bob Santangelo, Bruce Zander, Claudia Deasy, Dan Schwartz, Dean Shoup, Deborah Gauchat, Dick Prickett, Don Hodgkin, Douglas Schoch, Elizabeth Kain, Ellen H. Stroupe, Evan Engle, Garrity-Young Family, Hank & Janice Rosen, Jack & Sue Kadlecak, Jane Hughes, Jennifer Heglin, Jo Monday, Joan Deheck, Joan Tannehill, Karen & John Weslar, Karen Carvalho, Kelly Miller, Kris Lykins, Larry & Roni Wilson, Leigh Kenison, Lorenz Rychner, Marilyn Rhodes, Mary Dakos, Peter Mulholland, Ronald O. Williams, Susan Muir, Yvonne Davidoff.



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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).

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The year ahead

by Carl Norbeck, ASGD Executive Director

July 1 marks the beginning of ASGD's fiscal year. It is the time of year we look ahead and refine our plans for the upcoming year. Here's a preview of upcoming events.

- **Financial.** ASGD's planning and budget for next year are conservative. We plan to maintain current income sources, add additional sources, and modify programming as necessary to be able to balance the budget.
- **Audubon Nature Center.** Now that the Audubon Nature Center is becoming known, we anticipate the attendance more than doubling to over 6,000 visitors. In addition, new programming is being developed (see Get Out, Go WILD & Be Healthy
- **School Programs.** These will remain strong with an anticipated 4,000 students connecting with the outdoors. We plan to add a Naturalist in Residence program in Jefferson County.
- **Classes and Field Trips.** With every class and field trip filled to capacity, the response tells us, "Add more classes and field trips!" We'll do it!
- **Conservation.** The Conservation Committee will continue to offer

its perennially popular advocacy training and the Legislative Workshop.

- **Research.** Even with the economic downturn, the Lois Webster Fund will be able to provide funding of up to \$5,400 to support critical Colorado non-game wildlife research and education. Requests for 2010 project proposals will be announced later this Fall for submission by early January.
- **Partnership with Chatfield State Park.** Working with park staff, ASGD will be offering more joint programs and continuing to advertise jointly through fliers, bulletin boards, websites, and ASGD's weekly listserv.
- **Volunteers.** The Audubon Nature Center and the educational programs need YOU! A few hours a month would be a HUGE help. No prior experience necessary. We'll provide the training (see article on page 15).

That's the crystal ball for next year! If you have suggestions, please let us know: 303-973-9530. After all, it is your generous donations that make it all possible.

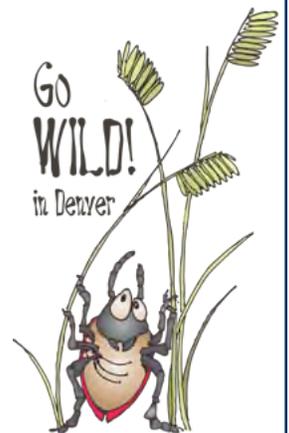
NEW PROGRAM Military Veterans Breakfast Club

Sunday, September 13, 9am – 11am (see Green Pages for details)
Sunday, October 11, 9am – 11am
Audubon Center at Chatfield

ASGD will provide coffee, donuts, bagels AND nametags. Whether you are interested in improving your birding skills or solving the problems of the world (again), this is the place to be for good conversation and camaraderie. If you have kids or grandkids, bring them. Our trained naturalists will keep them busy and enthralled, along with other kids at the Center that day. Please RSVP if bringing kids so we can be adequately staffed.

Get Out, Go WILD, & Be Healthy!

Go WILD! In Denver, our new series of outdoor adventures at the Audubon Nature Center at Chatfield, began in July 2009 with a successful "Mucking-in-the-Pond" Adventure (see Kylie Mattes report on page 4). The series continues throughout the year, exploring a variety of nature topics, as well as how to enjoy the outdoors safely, and how to be prepared for hikes and other activities. The goal is to provide an opportunity for children and parents to learn together, build their "nature knowledge," and discover fun ways to get fit. (See the Green Pages for details)



You are invited...

ASGD Fall Members Dinner

Saturday, October 24, 2009
6:30 p.m.
(doors open at 6pm)

First Plymouth Congregational Church
3501 S. Colorado Boulevard, Englewood
(on the SW corner of Hampden and Colorado Boulevard)

Reservations are required and space is limited.
Dinner and Program: \$35 per Friends member; \$40 per non-member

For more information, call 303-973-9530
or email info@denveraudubon.com.



Eagle Eye

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

Though Colorado's legislature isn't in session, lots of things are happening at both state and national level.

The Clean Water Restoration Act, SB 787, a bill to clear up confusion about what waters are protected by the Clean Water Act, passed out of its US Senate Committee and goes to the full Senate sometime soon. This is one of National Audubon's priorities. Recent decisions by the US Supreme Court have thrown doubt about the protection of ephemeral streams, prairie potholes, and other wetlands and streams that aren't directly connected to a "navigable" waterway. We have many ephemeral streams in Colorado; without protection, toxic mine waste could

be dumped in a dry streambed that, sooner or later, will again fill with water, possibly emptying into a municipal water supply, wildlife refuge or agricultural reservoir. The current version of this bill will protect all such waterways and wetlands. The US House of Representatives has yet to come up with a companion bill so it will be a while before this measure is close to passage. But keep your eyes peeled for alerts and articles about it!

In early August, Governor Ritter released a revised draft of the Colorado Roadless Area Conservation Rule. Originally developed to replace the Clinton-era Roadless Rule after a court threw it out, Colorado's rule does allow more road-building in our last roadless forests than the Clinton version, though it protects an additional 150,000 acres this time. But it allows road-building for treatment of beetle-kill pine trees outside community boundaries, for oil and gas development, for electric transmission facilities and for several other reasons. The public is invited to read the Rule at www.dnr.state.co.us, and comment through October 2, by email to Roadless.comments@state.co.us, or to Roadless Rule Comments, Colorado Dept. of Natural Resources, 1313 Sherman, Rm. 718, Denver 80203.

Mucking in the Ponds

by Kylie Mattes, ASGD Nature Reporter

H! My name is Kylie. You have probably heard of me from my story, I Want to be an Ornithologist, in the last issue of The Warbler. Well if you haven't, that's OK. I'm 9 years old. I have a little sister named Payton and my mom and dad. A few days ago we went to the ASGD program, "Mucking in the Pond." Mucking in the Pond is a program that involves kids and adults learning about creatures that live in the water. We met at the Audubon Center at Chatfield. Karl Brummert was the leader of our group. We got going straight away to the pond with our nets, buckets, trays and magnifying glasses. The first place where we set up was the bridge. The first thing I scooped up in my net was a big crayfish. Then I caught a tiny tadpole, a water strider and a snail. Others caught 2 big tadpoles, 5 more crayfish and a damsel fly nymph. We used magnifying glasses to look closely at the creatures. They were very interesting. While we were walking to the next spot, Karl told us about the plant life next to the pond. He showed us



*Kylie Mattes recording scientific data at ASGD Bird Banding Station.
Photo by Veronica Mattes.*

the poison ivy right away and that was good to know. At the next spot, we got to go in the water. We didn't catch much, but it was fun, just getting wet in the pond. There was a full grown bullfrog that we did get to see up close. There's a story of a snapping turtle that lives in the pond, but we didn't see it. We traveled all around the pond until we made it back to the bridge. It was a great day to be at the pond, not too hot, and just enough clouds to shield us from the sun. Also, we did not get eaten by any mosquitoes. That was really cool!



Florissant, it was forty years ago...

by John Wright

Way back when, the Beatles sang "It was forty years ago today, Sgt. Pepper taught the band to play." Well, it will soon be forty years ago that Florissant Fossil Beds became a National Monument. Had not a dedicated group of individuals been so adamantly persistent, the Florissant landscape would now be dotted with houses rather than featuring the distinctly unique, and scientifically significant, fossil finds. During these forty years, tens of thousands have come to Florissant to appreciate and learn the stories the fossils tell us rather than having what would be left of them serve as decorations for a just a few to live amongst.

The Monument's founding is a story of persistence and is a story with strong ties to ASGD (or simply Denver Audubon as it was then called). Two members of Denver Audubon, Vim Wright and

Dr. Estella Leopold, were at the heart of the political struggle that it took

ries that literally came down to the wire. After numerous delays, the US Senate finally appropriated the money to purchase the land from developers whose bulldozers were fueled and ready to carve home sites burying eons and icons of earth's evolutionary history in the process.

On the weekend of August 22nd & 23rd, a 40th year celebration to commemorate the Monument's original designation will take place at Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. Dr. Leopold will be one of the featured speakers. The National Park Service is hoping you will come and celebrate Florissant. For more information, please contact Superintendent Keith

Payne at 719-748-3253 or see their website at <http://www.nps.gov/flfo>. Colorado is privileged to have so many wonderful and significant natural areas and Florissant can be counted among them. Come and celebrate why!



Dr. Estella Leopold, Betty Willard and Vim Wright pose at the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument

to have the land, planned for development, instead become a National Monument. A third person, Betty Willard, completed the trio of citizen activists credited for preserving this land for the public. It was one of those sto-

Join S & S Optika & Front Range Birding
for a special
★ **"DigiScoping Workshop"**



Our presenter will be digiscoping expert -
Clay Taylor



Sponsored by **SWAROVSKI OPTIK**

Event date is Saturday Oct. 10th
at the Carson Nature Center in So. Platte Park



Space is limited so
reservations are requested,
please make your's early.
303-789-1089



S & S OPTIKA
6579 South Broadway
303-789-1089 Toll Free: 877-396-3352

Store Hours:
Tues-Fri 10 am - 6 pm
Saturday 10 am - 5 pm

Environmental heroes

by Joe Bartell

One never knows when an environmental hero will make an appearance. This particular one is a Colorado based company. Natural Grocers is now bag free! Each customer must bring or purchase their own sack to carry their items home. Of particular interest is the reduction in plastic bags. These are rarely recycled and become tiny plastic particles which act as a sponge for toxic chemicals and are able to concentrate them by a factor of one million. These tiny toxic particles contribute to the demise of many pelagic species including many species of birds.

There are five Indian factories making plastic bags and they use about 17 million barrels of petroleum and large amounts of natural gas annually. Both require drilling to produce and both are non-renewable. One million plastic bags are used every minute and of these, about 4 billion end up as litter every year. The trillion or so bags last about 1,000 years in a landfill.

So let us hope that other stores will follow the example of Natural Grocers and stop the use of plastic bags.



Fall Bird Count Schedule 2009

Denver has conducted Fall Bird Counts for over 20 years. Denver Field Ornithologists and ASGD sponsor this tradition. No fees, but some sites require a state parks pass or pre-registration. Bring binoculars, scopes for the reservoir counts, field guides, and lunch. Everyone welcome to help – more eyes see more birds.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

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

Leader: Hugh Kingery, 303-814-2723

Meeting Place: Audubon Center at Chatfield

Cherry Creek Reservoir

Leader: Bob Brown, 303-791-6204

Meeting Place: Meet at 7:00 am at the Marina, inside west gate near Cherry Creek High School.

State Parks Pass required.

Chatfield State Park

Leader: Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748.

Meeting Place: Meet at 6:30 am at West (Deer Creek) entrance to park. State Parks Pass required.

Barr Lake Periphery. This trip does not involve much walking and will be good for people with limited mobility or stamina.

Leader: Jackie King, 303-287-1644. jackie.king@ccd.edu

Meeting Place: Meet at 7:00 am at entrance gate to Barr Lake State Park.

Barr Lake State Park. This is a ten-mile (or equivalent), all-day hike around the lake

Leader: Dick Schottler, 303-278-8035.

Meeting Place: Meet at 6:30 am at RMBO, 14500 Lark Bunting Lane. South off Bromley Lane; from I-76, first road east of railroad track. State Parks Pass required.

Lower Bear Creek & Marston Reservoir

Leader: Mike Henwood, 303-716-8551, hawkhen@aol.com; and Bob Andrews, 303-249-5220, raconamaz@yahoo.com

Meeting Place: Meet at 6:30 am at the parking lot adjacent to the Conoco Station on the NW corner of C-470 and Morrison Road. We will bird Bear Creek Lake Park and the Bear Creek Greenbelt in the morning and Marston Reservoir in the afternoon.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

Castlewood Canyon State Park

Leader: Randy Lentz, 303-680-3381. If his phone sounds like a fax receiver, send him a fax!

Meeting Place: Meet at 6:30 am at the Homestead. From CO 86, 0.5 miles west of Franktown, turn south on Castlewood Canyon Road, go two miles to old entrance; Homestead is first parking lot on the left. State Parks Pass required.

Rocky Mountain Arsenal

Leader: Urling Kingery, 303-814-2723

Call leader to sign up before Aug. 18.

ASGD Art and Photo Contest and Sale

Colorado Wildlife, Birds and Plants

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, December 4 – 6, 2009

Calling artists and photographers of all ages – the Audubon Society of Denver is sponsoring an art and photo contest. Amateurs and professionals—**submit your art and photos** for judging and showing. Prizes will be awarded for the best submissions, and artists and photographers will have the opportunity to sell their work at the show. What a great idea for holiday presents. Art and photos must be delivered to the Audubon Nature Center on Saturday, November 28, 2009 or Sunday, November 29, 2009 between the hours of 10 am and 2 pm.

Rules and regulations are posted on the website at www.denveraudubon.org or can be mailed by calling 303-973-9530 or by e-mail at info@denveraudubon.org.

Winning entries will be displayed at the show at the Audubon Nature Center on Friday, December 4 through Sunday, December 6.

Theme:

Colorado Wildlife, Birds and Plants

All entries must in some way represent the natural elements

of Colorado whether it's a photo of the South Platte, a sculpture of a fox or cottonwood tree, a painting or drawing of a deer beside the stream, an aspen quilt, or a stained glass cat-tail window.

Categories

Paintings/Drawings

Sculpture, Glass, Textiles

Photos (Traditional and non-enhanced digital)

Digital Art and Photos

Age Groups:

Youth under 12

12 - 18

18 - over

Professional (Age does not apply to this category.)

Art will be judged by category and by age. Prizes will be awarded in category/age groups that have a minimum of 3 entries and a single award for best of show.

ASGD Calendar of Events

SEPTEMBER 2009

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	7:30pm Full Fruit Moon	*5
8am Walk The Wetlands *6	ASGD Office Closed Labor Day 7	7pm ASGD Board Meeting 8	9	10	11	FALL COUNT 11am Bird Feeding Class *12
FALL COUNT 9am Veterans Breakfast Club *13	14	15	16	7pm Beginning Birdwatching Class 17	18	Rosh Hashanah *19
7:30am Rocky Mtn. Arsenal FT *20	21	22	23	24	25	7am Fountain Creek Park FT 11am Bird Feeding Class *26
*27	Yom Kipper 28	29	30			
*The Audubon Center is Open 10am-3pm Saturdays and Sundays during September						

OCTOBER 2009

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	*3
9am Walk The Wetlands *4	5	6	7	8	9	8am South Platte Park *10
Dawn to Dusk THE BIG SIT! 9am Veterans Breakfast Club *11	ASGD Office Closed Columbus Day 12	7pm ASGD Board Meeting 13	14	15	16	*17
*18	19	20	21	22	23	*24
*25	26	27	28	29	30	*31
*The Audubon Center is Open 10am-3pm Saturdays and Sundays during October						



FIELD TRIPS, CLASSES & PROGRAMS

To Register Call 303.973.9530

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

The Audubon Center is located on Waterton Road off S. Wadsworth Blvd 4.4 miles south of C-470.

Your Autumn Adventure begins at the Audubon Center at Chatfield!

September & October Hours
Saturday & Sunday, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Discover nature, go on a hike with one of our naturalists, spend time outdoors with your children, explore with other adults, and celebrate with fun close to home.

~ PROGRAMS AT THE AUDUBON CENTER ~

Walk the Wetlands

Sunday, September 6, 8 am

Sunday, October 4, 9 am (note time change)

Leaders: Hugh and Urling Kingery (303-814-2723),

Doris Cruze and other Master Birders

Pre-registration not required

Donations to ASGD are appreciated

MEETING PLACE: Audubon Nature Center at Chatfield.

DESCRIPTION: We will hike along the South Platte River and look for fall migrants and winter arrivals. We always have a surprise. Dress in layers for the weather. Wear long pants because the poison ivy is lush and the knapweed prickly. Bring binoculars, field guides, water, and a snack. We can lend you binoculars and field guides if you don't have them.

Evening under the Full Fruit Moon

Friday, September 4, 7:30-9:30 pm (note evening time)

Leader: Karl Brummert

\$8/Friends member, \$10/non-member

Pre-registration preferred

Admission available at the event

MEETING PLACE: Audubon Center at Chatfield

DESCRIPTION: The September "full fruit moon" refers to the harvest. We hope to harvest glimpses of night creatures in moonlight or hear birds as we walk along the ponds and South Platte River habitat. A campfire and snacks welcome us back from the walk. Relax as a local storyteller spins tales of the natural world around the campfire.

NEW PROGRAM

Military Veterans Breakfast Club

Sundays, September 13, 9-11 am

Sunday, October 11, 9-11 am

Leader: Carl Norbeck

Pre-registration: If you are planning on bringing kids or grandkids, please call ASGD and RSVP so we can be adequately staffed.

Donations to ASGD are appreciated

MEETING PLACE: Audubon Nature Center at Chatfield

DESCRIPTION: ASGD will provide coffee, donuts, bagels AND nametags. Whether you are interested in improving your birding skills or solving the problems of the world (again), this is the place to be for good conversation and camaraderie. If you have kids or grandkids, bring them. Our trained naturalists will keep them busy and enthralled, along with other kids at the Center that day. When you get there, ask for Carl Norbeck (U.S. Navy).

NEW PROGRAM

Bird Feeding Class

Saturdays, September 12 and 26

(note offered twice), 11 am-12 pm

Leader: Tom Bush, owner Front Range Birding Company

Free for Friends member, \$5/non-member

Pre-registration not required

MEETING PLACE: Audubon Nature Center at Chatfield

DESCRIPTION: With ASGD's birdseed sale coming up, we receive lots of calls about "what to feed who?" This class covers:

- selecting feeders and feed, and
- discouraging squirrels and diseases

The class will include displays of feeders and feed. There will be plenty of time for Q&A and discussion.

FIELD TRIPS, CLASSES & PROGRAMS

To Register Call 303.973.9530

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



FAMILY SPECIAL ~Family Adventure Series~

Go WILD! in Denver

Get Out, Go WILD, & Be Healthy! Explore nature with your children, expand your "nature knowledge", and discover fun ways to lead a healthier lifestyle.

Get Lost...Or How to Avoid It

Saturday, September 19, 10 am-12 pm

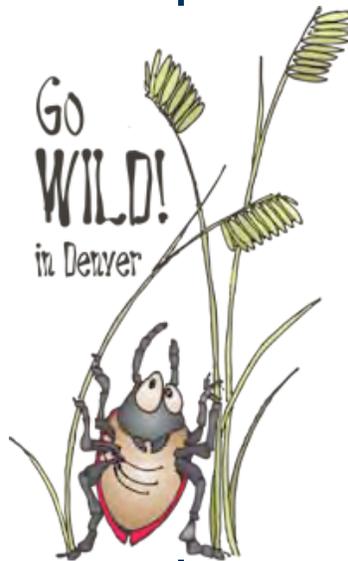
Although it's nice to "lose yourself" mentally in the wild, getting physically lost out there is no fun. By knowing map and compass basics, you can avoid ending up on the evening news.

A Mucking in the Pond Adventure

(offered again by popular demand!)

Saturday, October 3, 10am-12pm

We'll grab our nets and explore life in the underwater world of our ponds. Be prepared to get wet and maybe even a little muddy.



To visit the Audubon Nature Center – drive approximately 4.4 miles south on Wadsworth Blvd. from C-470, turn left onto Waterton Road and then quickly left again into the Center parking area.

Nature Scene Investigation

Saturday, October 17, 10am-12pm

No crimes have been committed, but we'll search for clues to help us figure out what happens in nature when we're not around.

Trek or Tweet

Saturday, October 31, 10am-12pm

We'll take a trek up Waterton Canyon and do some birding (that's the "tweet" part) along the way. There may even be treats when we get back to the Audubon Nature Center.

FAMILY SPECIAL PRICING INFORMATION

FREE for ASGD "Friends" Members

For non-members: \$4/session;

\$14 for 4 sessions (over the age of 12)

Parent and child (12 and under)

\$6/session; \$22 for 4 sessions

(additional child under 12 - \$3/session;

\$10 for 4 sessions -

maximum 2 children per parent)

(Become an ASGD member!

\$25/individual; \$35/family)

Please pre-register by calling

303-973-9530 or by email to

info@denveraudubon.org.

Beginning Bird Watching Class

Classroom Session at the

Audubon Nature Center at Chatfield

Thursday, September 17, 7-9 pm (note evening time)

Field Trips: Saturdays, Sept. 19, 26;

October 3, 10, 17, 24 - 8 am - 1 pm

Leaders: Hugh and Urling Kingery

\$145/Friends member, \$170/non-member

Pre-registration required

DESCRIPTION: Are you new to birding but don't know where to begin? Colorado's foremost - and most entertaining! - birding couple introduces you to this popular outdoor hobby like 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. (You can make up any field trips you miss during future spring or fall class sessions.) Limited to 20 participants.

~ PROGRAMS AT OTHER LOCATIONS ~

Jim Baker Reservoir - North Denver

Saturday, September 12, 8-10 am

Leader: Candice Ruiz

\$8/Friends member, \$10/non-member

Pre-registration required

MEETING PLACE: Jim Baker Reservoir located south of 64th between Lowell and Tennyson. Parking on Tennyson Street, just north of the railroad tracks and south of 64th.

DESCRIPTION: This is a flat 1.4 mile loop that can accommodate wheelchairs and strollers. This is an excellent place to see white pelicans, ducks, American Coots, loons, and sometimes if we are quiet and lucky...Great Blue Herons. Bring your binoculars and bird books.



ASGD PARTNERING ORGANIZATIONS

For More Information or to Register See the Trip Descriptions Below

Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge

Sunday, September 20, 7:30 am (half day, bring lunch)
Leader: Urling Kingery
\$8/Friends member, \$10 /non-member
Pre-registration required

MEETING PLACE: Enter the Refuge at 56th and Havana Street. Proceed 1.5 miles to the Visitor Center. Description: If you haven't visited the Arsenal before, this is your chance to join Urling Kingery, longtime RMA volunteer and leader of Fall, Spring, and Christmas bird counts there. We'll look for migrants and resident birds. We'll tour the Arsenal in a van and get out at the best birdwatching spots. Be prepared to walk over rough ground. Bring binoculars, water, snacks, and lunch if you want to stay to review the birds and walk around Lake Mary. Limit: 12 participants.

Fountain Creek Park

Saturday, September 26, 7 am (3/4 day trip)
Leader: Mackenzie Goldthwait
\$10/Friends member, \$12/non-member
Pre-registration required

MEETING PLACE: Meet to carpool at the Contractor entrance of Lowe's at the south end of the Castle Rock Outlets parking lot. We will drive to the Fountain Creek Visitor's Center and walk approximately 3 to 4 miles along the creek and around several ponds. Should time permit we will move to a second location along the creek to look for shorebirds. Description: Fountain Creek is a floodplain habitat just south of Colorado Springs that is a favorite corridor for migrants and lowland riparian breeders. Over 50 species of birds nest in this park and more than 260 species have been observed. Bring lunch, water and dress in layers. Weather is changeable: afternoon thunder showers probable. Contact Mackenzie Goldthwait for details at 720-981-5689.

South Platte Park

Date: Saturday, October 10, 8 am-12 pm
Leader: Doris Cruze, 303-798-8072
Pre-registration required
Fee: \$8/Friends member, \$10/ non-member

MEETING PLACE: Carson Nature Center, South Platte Park (west on Mineral from Santa Fe; right at 1st traffic light; between 2 RTD parking lots). Meet in parking lot north of two story log building.

DESCRIPTION: Explore an amazingly rich habitat along the South Platte River on this easy, wheel chair accessible hike. You'll see water birds as well as a variety of land birds in the cottonwood groves. Bring binoculars and water.

Program Offered in Partnership With— Denver Field Ornithologists

The Big Sit! at Chatfield State Park

Date: Sunday, October 11 - dawn to dusk, come any time
Leader: Joey Kellner
Pre-registration not required
Fee: None

MEETING PLACE: Heron Overlook, Chatfield State Park. From the Wadsworth Blvd. entrance, go right at the T and continue around the reservoir. One half mile after you cross the South Platte River, make a hard left into the large parking lot. At the far right corner, a trail leads to the Heron Overlook.

DESCRIPTION: The Big Sit!, an international birding event, has exacting, loose, and frivolous standards. Big Sitters count all the birds they see or hear from within a 17ft diameter circle. Counting Sitters may send out scouts and beaters to find and identify birds as long as a Sitter sees the bird from within the circle. All around the world on this date, people Big Sit! Join Joey Kellner and other recruits for an hour, a morning, or all day. Drop by when you like or substitute for The Big Sit! leaders for an hour or two. Joey maintains an hourly chart of the birds. In the past three years, he has tallied 55-65 species. Bring chairs, breakfast, lunch, dinner, picnics, coffee, binoculars, scopes, field guides, and other essential birding equipment.

Programs Offered in Partnership With— City of Aurora Parks & Open Space Department Information and registration: 303-739-2428

Star K Ranch

Saturday, September 12, 8:30 am

DESCRIPTION: Enjoy a fall stroll along Sand Creek to look for raptors, resident species, and fall migrants.

Sand Creek Park

Saturday, October 10, 8:30 am
Leader: Mary Ann Bonnell

DESCRIPTION: Bird Sand Creek and adjacent detention ponds for fall migrants.

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



Elk Bugling Weekend Grand Lake

Friday, Saturday, Sunday, October 2 - 4, 2009

Leaders: Harriet Stratton and Master Birders

Meeting Place: TBA near Grand Lake, Friday at 5p.m.

Description: During the Fall mating season, bull elk stage their own passion play of sorts. The characteristic rutting call of bulls can be heard from just before dusk to dawn. We'll head to Grand Lake just past Rocky Mountain National Park for a family style visit to a 5 bedroom contemporary mountain cabin. From our scenic retreat we'll find meadows of elk enacting their historic ritual. The traditional pot of chili will simmer to warm spirits after the evening adventures. Saturday's agenda includes an easy hike into Rocky Mountain National Park with time for exploring the shops and restaurants of Grand Lake. Dusk finds us Elk Bugling with dinner later out on the town. Sunday offers another opportunity for a mountain walk before the scenic drive home.

Price: \$185 per person. Non-members \$225

Details: Registrants will provide their own transportation and are responsible for their own Saturday lunch and dinner. Friday chili and Saturday and Sunday breakfasts will be provided. Audubon can coordinate carpooling.

Birding the Bosque del Apache

January 15 - 18, 2010

The Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, with its abundance of prairie, wetlands, and southwestern desert birds, is the premier winter birding destination in the intermountain west. More than 100,000 snow geese (both white and blue forms) and 20,000 sandhill cranes winter on the ponds, marshes and grain fields in and near the refuge located south of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Thousands of ducks, some shore and wading birds, many species of songbirds, and raptors such as bald eagles, Cooper's, red-tailed, ferruginous, and rough-legged hawks, are also easily visible. This exciting excursion, led by Hugh and Urling Kingery, typically sells out quickly, so sign up soon!

Price: \$749 per Friends member (double occupancy), \$899 per Friends member (single occupancy). Non-members add

Nicaragua Ecotour

Date: February 20-28, 2010 (8 nights, 9 days)

Our program begins with a short flight from the capital, Managua, to the small town of San Carlos located on the shores of Lake Nicaragua. Here we board boats and head down river birding along the way. This wetland environment is teeming with water birds and many tropical forest species. Explore El Castillo (The Castle), an old Spanish fort that dates back to the time of Henry Morgan and the Pirates of the Caribbean! Then we go to Solentiname Island located in the lake which has distinctive flora and fauna. We then fly back to Managua and explore the western shore of the lake including the colonial city of Granada and the volcanic island of Ometepe, where we bird in both forest and agricultural environments. There will be some free time in Granada to absorb the culture and also do some shopping. Our trip ends at San Juan del Sur on the Pacific coast where you can enjoy the beach before returning to Managua.

Price: \$1850 per person includes most meals, services of a local guide, transportation and internal airfare. Deposit of \$500 per person required. Does not include travel insurance (which is strongly recommended), tips, departure tax, or roundtrip international airfare from Denver to Managua (currently pricing at \$700 per person).

Detailed information, itinerary, and registration contact Becky Beckers at 303-766-5266, email at AgentBecky@aol.com, or visit www.TravelForTheBirds.com.

\$60 per person. Price includes round-trip motor coach transportation, guide services, three nights accommodations, driver gratuity, park entrance fees, 3 breakfasts, 3 lunches and 3 dinners. Deposit of \$100 due at registration with the balance due December 15, 2009.

Details: The trip departs from Denver at 8:00am on Friday, January 15. Stops along the way include the Maxwell National Wildlife Refuge, south of Raton, NM, and the Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge. We spend the first night in Santa Fe. (Note: We will arrive too late to explore the city, since most shops and galleries close by 6:00pm in winter) and the other two nights in Socorro.

Book Review

No Way Home: The Decline of the World's Great Animal Migrations

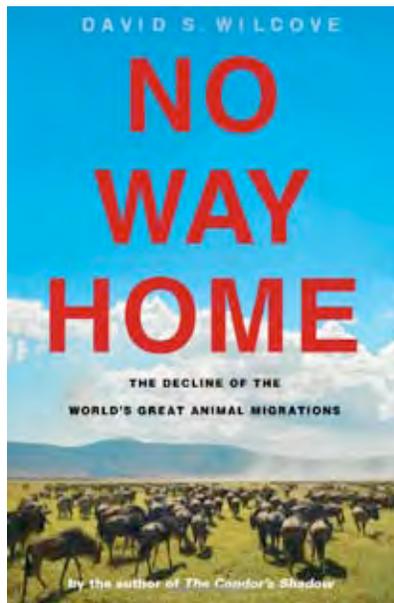
Reviewed by Michael Lazare, ASGD Member

Is migration magic on the way out? Not necessarily. In a recent issue of "Orion" magazine, David S. Wilcove writes: Take a very simplistic example: "You drive to Breckenridge every weekend for some good skiing. Suppose the Eisenhower Tunnel is permanently closed one day. It's a major inconvenience, but you adapt."

But if you happen to be a migrating bird or whale or butterfly, a bison or wildebeest or giant sea turtle, and suddenly your migration route is closed, it's more than an inconvenience; it's a major disruption of patterns that have existed for eons. Life and death are at stake.

This is the premise addressed by Wilcove, Professor of Public Affairs and Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Princeton, in his book.

Try to read this opening paragraph without being drawn in: "Pick a September night, perhaps, away from the rumbles and groans of urban life and



listen carefully. Soon you will hear soft chirps and whistles drifting down from the sky. These are the calls of migrating

songbirds. A thousand feet above you, extending for hundreds of miles in all directions, is a vast highway of birds – millions of thrushes, warblers, flycatchers, tanagers, vireos and sparrows – heading south."

In this book he describes the encroachments that human development has made and is making on countless varieties of wildlife thanks to commercial fishing, damming, immense industrialization, urban construction and, of course, global warming. He describes what past migrations looked like, how they are today, and what they are likely to develop into.

The time to save a migration is while the animals are still relatively abundant. Governments and the public must be prodded to take action. If you care about nature, the environment, and what kind of world your grandchildren will live in, you should read this book.

Book Review

Crow Planet: Essential Wisdom from the Urban Wilderness

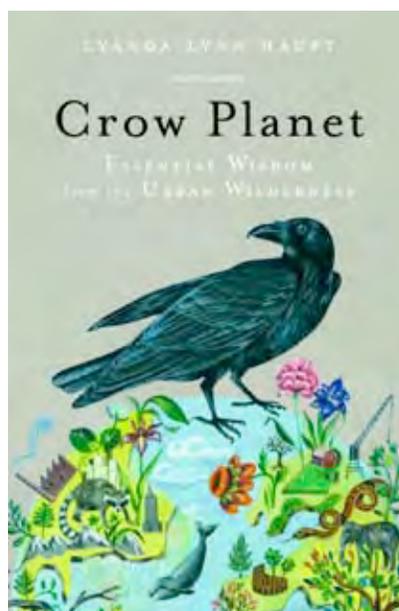
Reviewed by Erika Schickel, Freelance Writer

In her book, Lyanda Lynn Haupt, an ornithologist and nature writer who has run educational programs for the Seattle Audubon Society, frames crows as a mirror reflecting both the natural and the human world.

Haupt, a self-confessed "Earth Mother," had begun to suffer, "a kind of anxious depression, one I attributed to living in the city against the pull of my heart." Haupt might have stayed that way had it not been for a crow's insistent cawing [calling].

Haupt named the crow Charlotte and followed her into the field, which, of course, was urban Seattle. Citing geographer Jennifer Wolch, Haupt calls such a landscape the zoöpolis, "the place where the polis meets the zoo, an overlap of human and animal geographies."

Newly attuned to the zoöpolis, Haupt lists birds she sees between her



house and her local Target store. She was, she realized, "somehow allowing these birds to count less, not quite

meeting the criteria for a "wonder of nature." But of course they do count. "Here, on the road to Target, these birds are as insistent as any secretive forest thrush upon their own wild necessity."

"The more I watch them," Haupt writes, "the more their [crows] stories speak two messages: the seen and the unseen. The crow's vivid scrawl does more than inform me about crows; it reminds me of the other wild creatures that ceaselessly encircle me." This sensitivity to interconnectedness graces "Crow Planet." The author urges us to forge a deeper connection with the contradictions and beauty of the zoöpolis. "Crows," she declares, "press us to our own wilder edges." Living among us -- but not of us -- they illustrate the limits of our attempts to tame nature while also suggesting that "we can learn another kind of attention" to our urban environments.

backyard birds....

by Hugh Kingery



BREEDERS

IN MID-JUNE, Patti & Scott Locke, on their evening walk near Arapahoe & Peoria, saw two frantic Killdeer. On June 15 they surprised the sitting bird and discovered a “nest” with four eggs on the side of the path they walk every evening. The birds had outlined the nest with rocks. On their July 8 walk, three young birds huddled in the nest – almost certainly hatched within the past 12 hours, since Killdeer young become mobile almost immediately after hatching. (I’ve never heard of anyone seeing young Killdeer in a nest.) Since then they still see the adults, with no sign of fledglings, which must have an uncanny ability to hide.

JUNE AND JULY FEATURE nesting activity in the metro area. From Centennial, Mary O’Connor lamented the lack of Bushtits after last year’s nest; instead “nesting Blue-Gray Gnatcatchers have taken the place of the Bushtits, but their nest is so high in the dark hollow of a blue spruce that I cannot see it in my binoculars I imagine it would be difficult to see the nest in the crook of a branch anyhow.”

CYNTHIA MADSEN, who lives in Centennial, reported on June 28, “I hadn’t seen or heard the little chickadees that made a nest in my apple tree. Well, guess who’s back! Not only the parents, but the chicks as well . . . must have been at flight school. I think there are 4 or 5 chicks, all with high-pitched squeaky voices which no parent could ignore. They haven’t yet learned the ‘chickadee dee dee’ call yet (in fact I think one is tone-deaf) but they are definitely trying. I am so glad to have them back. I could hardly get my dinner down fast enough last night so I could sit out front and watch the crew.”

LYNNE DUMAN (PARKER): “I just saw the most amazing thing at our feeder. An adult Spotted Towhee was feeding a juvenile when a juvenile House Finch flew next to it with its mouth open to be fed. So the towhee began to feed it as well. It was right on our deck so I didn’t even need binoculars to see it.”

LISA CRISPIN REPORTED July 23, “I had what looked to me like a family of young magpies in my yard all day yesterday, they were adorable and making a racket. I telecommute and am on the phone with my team all day and my teammates on the other end asked “Do you have monkeys in your house or what?”

SHIRLEY AND BUZZ BOWERS “had about despaired of having any bluebirds in our backyard boxes. (The Town of Castle Rock started building a new road across the Memmen Open Space and dug out all the scrub oak that covered the hillside behind our houses.) But when we got back from the CFO Convention in Alamosa May 26, we found a pair building a nest in one. We’re putting out mealworms just for fun and now they are starting to take them. Also, a pair of Spotted Towhees, displaced perhaps by Castle Rock, deposited four eggs in our neighbor’s backyard. We have never seen them nest so close to human habitation before.”

IN AURORA, Dodi Hampton hasn’t removed the cover from her swimming pool this year, but the torrential rains have left a puddle in the top. Mallards seem to like it and the bird seed she puts out for squirrels. She’s seen four males and three females, and a female laid eggs on the side of the pool. A Cooper’s Hawk also bathes in the water, to the consternation of the local House Sparrows.

BILL HINCKLEY REPORTS that “the dreaded Cooper’s Hawk has struck again, this time just 20 feet from us while we watched. Victim, a dove feeding on the ground. It appeared that the hawk started his lunch while the dove was still quivering. Took him about five minutes to chow down, leaving only feathers.”

KEN GAMMON’S YARD in Franktown, with bird-box enhancements, has Violet-green Swallows (feeding young on June 3), nesting robins (corner of the porch), and Northern Flickers (nest in a hole in his garage; “have a hole to patch up in August”).

STU AND KAT HASKINS, eating on their patio with two friends June 18: “A Sharp-shinned Hawk landed in our bird bath 25 feet away. It stayed for almost half an hour drinking and bathing, oblivious to our presence. Kat took many pictures (Stu mailed me one) and we all enjoyed this unusual event.”

CAROL DUECKER’S YARD up Deer Creek Canyon produced 23 species on June 13, a typical foothills nesting array. They included all three species of nuthatch, both chickadees, Black-headed and Evening grosbeaks (they moved on), Green-tailed (unusual for her) and Spotted towhees, Lazuli Bunting (first one but present for three weeks), and Virginia’s Warbler. “Since then we have also had Cordilleran Flycatcher and American and Lesser goldfinches, and we have been hearing a resident Hermit Thrush.”

MIGRANTS

AN EXCITED JILL HOLDEN emailed from Roxborough Vil-



Question: What’s odd about this Bullock’s Oriole (see end of this article for answer). Photo by Caroline Nier.

Backyard Birds continued from page 13

lage on July 3, "I got my first Bullock's Oriole at my feeder this evening!!! He was managing to drink out of the hummingbird feeder, which a couple of hummingbirds were not too happy about. I gave up the hummingbird feeders with the bee guards since I heard that the yellow color attracts hornets, so the holes are maybe a little bigger than what I had in the past. I have never put out oranges to attract orioles as I thought they would attract a lot of unwanted pests and be a great waste of good fruit, so I am thrilled that his pointed beak seemed to allow him to drink out of the hummingbird feeder. What a beauty! I hope he will make this a regular stop."

JOY SCHIEVING HOSTED an oriole three times in May, one stayed a couple of May days in Paula Breese's Park Hill yard, and Mary and Dave Driscoll (east Denver) saw three on June 9. Caroline Nier, from June 10-21, watched a female (frequently) and a male (once) feed on black oil sunflower seeds. "When I do not have fruit out for them, they go to the feeder." She sent a splendid picture proving the female's strange dietary taste.

JOANN MARSHALL (Arvada, June 9 and this year's bird class classmate of Cynthia), "had two surprise visitors to my yard this week – a Say's Phoebe and a Lesser Goldfinch. I have never seen them in this neighborhood before." Merikay Haggerty spotted a late Western Tanager June 9, along Littleton's Highline Canal trail. Mary O'Connor had another no-show-substitute: instead of last year's Indigo Bunting

"we had a Lazuli Bunting at both our thistle and mixed seed feeders May 12-14." Todd Deininger: "While walking to the Rockies game July 22, I saw two juvenile Violet-green Swallows perched on a wire in an alley between Market and Blake on 19th Street."

REX NELSON SENT a recording of a wonderful, flutelike, song that he heard (with extreme surprise) "when I walked out onto our patio in western Lakewood and heard it this morning (May 31)." Swainson's Thrushes move through the plains, from Denver east, in large numbers in late May and early June. Joy Schieving (south Denver) reported one three times in May, but Rex's auditory experience takes a prize.

ANOTHER HEARD BIRD: Joy's neighbor, Bob Righter, on June 15, mentioned that "for the past several days I've heard several Ruby-crowned Kinglets around Observatory Park. While they were frequent in early June as migrants, the middle of June is late and I wondered if they could be breeding or thinking about it. It wasn't that long ago that we were suddenly detecting Red-breasted Nuthatches and Bushtits on the plains during the middle of June, and now they are well established residents." And – Mary and Dave Driscoll enjoyed Red-breasted Nuthatches in May, but by June 9, "still heard but seldom seen."

INTERLOPERS

AN URBAN LEGEND APPEARED around Littleton's Lee Gulch and Heritage High School. On July 2 Terry Gurth said, "While working from home today, I kept hearing a loud two-note whistle that I thought was just a starling imitating a call that I had never heard before. At noon I looked out my kitchen window and a Northern Bobwhite stepped out from under a bush in front of a neighboring townhome. It stepped in and out of the bushes for quite a while, making frequent bob-whoit calls and nonplussing a robin with a worm before moving on. Its loud calls even caught the attention of a couple passing by, who most probably thought that the person with the binoculars was a peeping Tom that was whistling at them!" She sent a series of pictures of her errant bird.

A BOBWHITE (I'd guess the same one) spent early July in Deanna Kristopeit's yard. "It called its distinctive bobwoowite for several days before I actually saw it, when it walked up to my patio door and peered in." A third person also reported this bird (I lost the name). These Bobwhite(s) I attribute to being escapees from game fanciers who obtained them to train hunting dogs or for a similar reason.

THE OTHER INTERLOPER, Eurasian Collared-Doves, continue their relentless colonization of Colorado. Maxine Trujillo laments that she gets only "sparrows, grackles, starlings, and one pair of collared-doves. The doves were here last year and appeared a few weeks ago."

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

Answer to question under photo on previous page: Oriole's don't normally eat sunflower seeds.



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Mike Henwood, Tina Jones, Mary Keithler, Jackie King, Alison Kondler, Karleen Schofield, Lynn Willcockson

Office Help

Phil Reynolds, Carolyn Roark, Grace Weber

Spring Appeal Mailing

Willa Brunkhorst, JoAnn Bushnell, Ben Cooper, Tom Gottlieb, Betty McGinnis, Tom Parchman, Phil Reynolds, Carolyn Roark, Fred & Gloria Vallier

Audubon Center Hosts

Karen Bickett, Kathy Bollhoefer, Frances Commercon, Carol DeStefanis, Angela Grun, Elizabeth Kain & family, Carl Norbeck, Arlene Raskin, Nancy Stocker, Linda Strand, Julie Dorosz

Volunteers... We Want YOU!

We are looking for naturalist educators to lead hikes and programs at the Audubon Nature Center, as well as teach school

programs. If you have an interest in Colorado's wild-life and plants - particularly those within the South Platte Basin - and you are comfortable presenting to groups, please call us!

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Sue Schulman—Bogen tripod

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In memory of Adelaide Helvey from John & Elise Brougham

Wish List

Donations of any of the following items would be a big help to ASGD

- Gift Cards to local bookstores - for children's field guides and books
- Lawn mower
- Wood Pellets for pellet stove
- Gift Cards to hardware stores for Audubon Center maintenance
- Heat laminating machine

Announcements

MEMORIAL BRICKS. The brick order has arrived and will be installed in the Amphitheatre at the Audubon Nature Center in August.

RECYCLING BIN. The recycling bin located at the Audubon Office which had been made available by Waste Management on a complimentary basis was removed at the beginning of August.



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