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Hike for Health

The Audubon Society of Greater Denver is partnering with Kaiser Permanente to encourage children to get outdoors. Children often dedicate most of their free time to television, computers, and video games, rather than putting in some "grass & dirt time." The result is a drastic increase in inactivity leading to higher rates of obesity and other ailments. Kaiser pediatricians are encouraging young patients to get



KAISER PERMANENTE®

outside by distributing a Hike for Health scorecard developed by ASGD. Children and their parents attend three of our Outdoor Adventure Series programs (see green pages) and venture out on two local hikes in the open space parks close to Denver. After they accomplish that, they are entered in a drawing to receive a Hike for Health prize package. If you are a Kaiser member, we look forward to your participation.



Warbler Going Electronic

Beginning with the January/February 2011 Warbler, we will no longer send a hardcopy of the newsletter. We are following the lead of many nonprofit organizations by switching to an electronic newsletter to save money and resources. As a conservation organization, we need to walk our talk: use less paper and lessen our carbon footprint.

If we don't already have your email address, or if you do not have a computer, please call us at 303-973-9530 and we will be sure to add you to our electronic list, or make sure you receive a copy.

Thank you for supporting this effort!

With an Attitude of Gratitude We Announce ASGD's Annual Member Dinner and Program

Please join us at

First Plymouth Church – Hampden and Colorado Blvd.

Saturday, October 23 at 6:30 p.m.

Gratitude to the loyal ASGD members for your generosity in supporting natural science education, environmental conservation, and wildlife research fuels this years' Early Thanksgiving Feast, catered by As You Like It.

The speaker will be **Dyana Furmansky**, whose book *Rosalie Edge, Hawk of Mercy: The Activist Who Saved Nature from the Conservationists* won the 2010 Colorado Book Award. Hear about Rosalie Barrow Edge, the fierce New York society lady who sparked environmental activism and seventy-five years ago founded Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania, the world's first preserve for birds of prey.

In addition, **Anne Price of the Raptor Education Foundation** will bring live raptors for us to meet and greet.

Please invite old and new friends to join us for the dinner, program, and short members' meeting.

The cost is \$35/member (\$40/non-member) for the dinner and program. Tickets may be purchased by calling 303-973-9530 or sending a check to 9308 S. Wadsworth Blvd., Littleton, CO 80128.


PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE—

For many months the ASGD Board of Directors has been working on updating ASGD's Strategic Plan. As times change (and they seem to be changing faster and faster!), this is an important effort in keeping ASGD exciting, relevant, and in touch with its members.

At least two vital ideas keep bubbling to the surface: ASGD is an educational resource for the community, and we are here to minimize civilization's impact on the natural environment. Historically the areas ASGD has focused on have been: natural science education, environmental conservation, and wildlife research.

Central to the discussion is the Board's desire to update its knowledge of member expectations to make sure we serve YOU. On the one hand, the Board looks at ASGD's track record. In 2009 ASGD offered 336 programs, in schools, at the Audubon Nature Center, throughout metro Denver and Colorado, and regionally and served almost 15,000 people. In environmental conservation, the Conservation Committee provided legislative previews of key upcoming legislation, a Legislative Forum to talk to legislators, and a wrap up critique of actions taken by the legislature. And in the area of scientific research, ASGD's Lois Webster Fund helps support important research on issues related to non-game species in Colorado. And we try to keep you informed on all of these activities through the Warbler.

But on the other hand, are we hitting the mark in terms of your specific concerns and areas of interest? This is a plea. Please speak to us: e-mail us, call us, stop by the office. Let us know if we are meeting your needs. Our address and phone number are on the Warbler; our email address is info@denveraudubon.org. Your feedback is important.



Tom Parchman, President

Ghost Bird

What Ever Happened to the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker?

Wednesday, October 13 at 7pm
REI Denver Flagship Store
1416 Platte St, Denver, 80202
303-756-3100

Ghost Bird is a feature length documentary film about an extinct giant woodpecker, a small town in Arkansas hoping to reverse its misfortunes, and the tireless odyssey of the bird-watchers and scientists searching for the Holy Grail of birds - the elusive Ivory-billed woodpecker. Ghost Bird wades into a murky swamp of belief and obsession in this cautionary tale about birders, ornithologists and the citizens of Brinkley, Arkansas who are certain they keep seeing a giant woodpecker that's been extinct for over half a century.

Bird & Brew Trivia III

Wednesday, September 22 from 7-9pm

We had two successful nature trivia nights this year. A fun time was had by all, so we're making it a quarterly event. Gather together a team of six, or join a team when you arrive. Questions cover a range of nature topics, not just birds. Enjoy great food and socialize with other outdoor enthusiasts. Breckenridge Brewery Ballpark Pub (downtown)
2220 Blake Street, Denver, 80205
303-297-3644, www.breckbrew.com
Accessible by light rail.

\$5 entry fee per person -
proceeds support ASGD



9308 S. Wadsworth Boulevard
Littleton, Colorado 80128
303-973-9530 • Fax 303-973-1038
www.denveraudubon.org

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MISSION

ASGD is a nonprofit group dedicated to maintaining the health of natural ecosystems through education, advocacy and research, with primary focus on birds and 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 3 complimentary copies of the *The Warbler* annually.

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

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Pawnee Montane Skipper Butterfly Study

by Dr. Boyce A. Drummond, *Visiting Associate Professor of Biology, Colorado College*

Editors Note: The following abstract is just a snapshot of the type of research supported by the ASGD Lois Webster Fund. ASGD is currently working to create a web-based "knowledge center" which would contain longer summaries and final reports on the LWF-supported research projects.

The Pawnee Montane Skipper (*Hesperia leonardus montana*) is a small brown butterfly found only in the lower South Platte River Drainage (SPRD) of central Colorado. It has a limited geographical range (total known habitat covers just under 38 square miles), a small population estimated to be around 100,000 individuals in 1998, and narrow habitat requirements restricted to ponderosa pine/blue grama/prairie gayfeather on steep slopes of Pikes Peak granite within an elevation range of 6000-7500 feet.

In the past fourteen years, roughly half of the skipper's habitat has been burned by a combination of three fires: the Buffalo Creek and High Meadow fires of 1996, and the Hayman/Schoonover fire of 2002. In 1998, the Upper South Platte Watershed Protection and Restoration Project was initiated by the US Forest Service to restore ponderosa pine woodland forest in the SPRD, including the area inhabited by the Pawnee Montane Skipper. The project includes timber harvesting, understory thinning, prescribed burning, revegetation of burned areas, obliteration and reclamation of unnecessary roads, and trail improvements.

Since 2000, a monitoring study has been conducted to assess the effects of fire and thinning operations on the population density and dispersion of the adult butterfly. The primary goals of the research have been to measure the effects of fuels reduction (ponderosa pine forest thinning) in the Trumbull region of the South Platte watershed and to measure the effects of fire intensity on skipper population

density, behavior, and habitat quality in areas burned by forest fires.

Results to date show a slow but uneven recovery of the butterfly and its foodplants in areas thinned by the Forest Service and in areas that experienced low and moderate severity burns.

Although the monitoring study is in its tenth year and has produced useful baseline data on adult skipper abundance and adult food resources, almost nothing is known of how this species uses blue grama as its larval foodplant or of the distribution and abundance of the butterfly's immature



Hesperia leonardus montana – the Pawnee montane skipper.

stages (eggs, larvae, and pupae) within the plant community to which this species is restricted. To make informed decisions about thinning operations and fire protection in the SPRD that will insure long-term survival of the skipper and its habitat, we need such information. To support this work, we applied for and received a Lois Webster Fund research grant from ASGD for travel to and from the field site for a research assistant, Kristin Oller, an undergraduate at Colorado College.

We greatly increased our understanding of the distribution of both larval and adult resources on transects that consistently have had high numbers of adult skippers during the flight season. And finally, the foodplant density data collected last summer helps calibrate and

quantify the relative measures of plant density recorded for each of the ten years of the study.

By continuing this research in future years, we hope to establish for the public a clearly understandable connection between endangered nongame wildlife species and the plant communities which they depend by focusing on the essential role this unique Colorado plant community (ponderosa pine/blue grama/prairie gayfeather) plays in supporting and maintaining this federally listed butterfly species. Healthy populations of the

Pawnee Montane Skipper indicate an intact functioning habitat. Thus, when the skipper is thriving, it means the plant community which it depends is also healthy. In this context, a healthy ponderosa pine savanna is one with a tree density and age structure in harmony with natural fire frequency and has the proper mix of vegetative components to support the skipper and other threatened species occurring in this habitat (e.g., Mexican Spotted Owl, Bald Eagle, Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse, and Ute Ladies Tresses Orchid), and that maintains important ecosystem services such as nutrient recycling (without excess erosion) and stream health.

Adult butterflies are highly fragile; their population estimates in an area can be strongly influenced by prevailing weather conditions. By contrast, immature stages of butterflies are sedentary; documentation of their population densities and dispersion can reveal a great deal about the ecological importance of structure and species composition of native plant communities to the butterfly's health and survival. Such nuanced information about habitat use by all stages of this fragile butterfly species should make possible more informed and effective management decisions designed to conserve native habitat in the South Platte watershed.

Legislative Preview

by Polly Reetz, ASGD Conservation Committee Chair

Elections are coming in November—don't we all wish they would hurry up and happen!—and although Audubon, as a non-profit organization, cannot endorse candidates, we can express opinions on issues.

Ballot Items. This year, three (3) especially egregious ballot items are being presented for your consideration, and they all represent trouble - and possible disaster - for State and local parks, open space, natural resource management, public health and the environment in general. How is this? None of these three addresses wildlife, water, forests, grasslands, or any other natural phenomena directly. But they would all negatively affect the ability of local and state governments to finance their infrastructure and manage their assets, including open space, parks, trails and wildlife. These measures would also result in thousands of lost jobs, 73,000 by one count, and cost the state over a billion dollars. (The following discussion uses information from Coloradoans for Responsible Reform's website).

Amendment 60 requires school districts to cut property taxes by 50 percent. That means their revenues would be cut IN HALF. Some studies estimate this would cost 8,000 teachers their jobs - certainly more schools would close and those that remain open would be unable to provide students the resources they need. The language in the amendment claims that the state would make up the difference - but the state is already hard-hit and has cut millions from the budget.

Amendment 60 would also overturn the decisions of hundreds of local districts and governments to free themselves from the restrictions of the Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) of 1992. This very complicated ballot issue masqueraded as a way for taxpayers to control tax increases - with the result that now we pay higher fees (which are unaffected by TABOR) for everything. TABOR also dictates how much government spending can increase year by year, and if revenues drop like they did in 2008 and 2009, funding for government programs drops proportionally, for many years. Many cities and school districts opted out of TABOR; Amendment 60 would put them back in its viselike grasp. School districts would be hit particularly hard. The overall result: farewell to any kind of environmental education.

Amendment 61 would drastically limit—even prohibit—state and local governments from issuing bonds to finance needed infrastructure. To quote the website of Coloradoans for Responsible Reform: "Bonding is a prudent form of financing that governments

have relied on for decades. Bonding makes it possible to build schools... fire stations, water projects, airports, health facilities, highways, transit, colleges..." Amendment 61 would require local districts to repay bonds within 10 years, rather than over 20 or 30. This is like requiring a home buyer to take out a 10-year mortgage - you can guess what interest rates would be - and ends up hiking repayment costs sky-high. Together with other provisions, this amendment will guarantee that Colorado's infrastructure will deteriorate, which will undoubtedly motivate businesses to locate elsewhere, thus continuing the current recession.

Proposition 101 cuts annual vehicle registration fees to 1919 levels, an arbitrary \$10 per vehicle regardless of vehicle size or weight. Think about what Colorado's road system was like in 1919 - not much pavement, horses and buggies still in use, and a lot fewer people. The money raised by registration fees finances road and

bridge construction all across the state, not only on state highways but also on city and county roadways, since cities and counties receive a major portion of their road funding from this fee. You think the potholes are bad now? Just wait.

Prop. 101 also reduces the Specific Ownership Tax on cars to \$2 on new cars and \$1 on used ones, thus reducing revenue to school districts and local governments by some \$500 million annually. It would incrementally cut state income tax to 3.5% (from 4.5%) and eliminate a quarter of the state's revenue from income taxes. More cuts in state services would result.

We often complain about taxes, but they are necessary to maintain our parks, trails, open spaces, roads to get there, and many, many other services that we take for granted. These three ballot issues deserve to die.

Remember: Decisions are made by those who show up! Don't neglect to vote!

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PROGRAMS AT THE AUDUBON NATURE CENTER

The Audubon Center is located on Waterton Road off S. Wadsworth Blvd. 4.4 miles south of C-470. For programs that require registration: 303-973-9530 or info@denveraudubon.org

Walk the Wetlands

Sunday, September 5, 8am

Sunday, October 3, 9am

(note new fall time)

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. BFGWS. We can lend you binoculars and field guides if you don't have them. Leaders: Audubon Master Birders
Pre-registration not required
Donations to ASGD are appreciated

Bird Lullaby: Jazz at Dusk

Saturday, September 11 from 5-7pm

Join us in the beautiful Audubon Nature Center amphitheater for an evening of live music and nature hikes. We'll begin with a guided hike at 4pm to see nature's wonders. Then while you enjoy your picnic dinner, listen to a jazz band at dusk (approximately 5-6:30pm). Swing and bebop to upbeat, up-tempo, uplifting, groove-oriented jazz. You'll hear the originals, classic jazz fusion, Latin jazz and renovated standards. "Get down" with Uptown! It's fun for all ages. Don't miss this free event. Pack a picnic dinner.

Bird Feeding Class

Saturday, September 18 from 10-12pm

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.

ASGD Certificate in Outdoor Adventure

Are you hesitant to wander beyond the city because you are not sure what to do or "what's out there"? This series introduces you to outdoor adventure basics in a fun, relaxed way. Great for children, parents and other adults to explore together. Go at your own pace—sessions are offered throughout the year at the Audubon Nature Center. Complete all ten sessions and receive an **official ASGD Certificate in Outdoor Adventure!**

Your adventure includes:

- ✓ Be Prepared for Your Adventures
- ✓ Map & Compass Basics
- ✓ Mucking in the Pond
- ✓ Habitats of Denver
- ✓ Insects & Other Spineless Critters
- ✓ GPS for Beginners
- ✓ Birding 101
- ✓ Plants of the Platte
- ✓ Mammals
- ✓ Reptiles & Amphibians

Upcoming Sessions

- Saturday, September 4, 10am-12pm—Insects & Other Spineless Critters**
- Saturday, September 18, 10am-12pm—Map & Compass Basics**
- Saturday, September 25, 10am-12pm—Reptiles & Amphibians**
- Saturday, October 2, 10am-12pm—GPS for Beginners**
- Saturday, October 9, 10am-12pm—Habitats of Denver**
- Saturday, October 16, 10am-12pm—Mucking in the Pond**
- Saturday, October 30, 10am-12pm—Birding 101**

**You must be an ASGD Friends member to participate.
To register, call 303-973-9530.**

**ASGD Certificate in Outdoor Adventure sponsored by *TogetherGreen*,
an alliance between Audubon and Toyota.**



Audubon Master Birder Graduation Ceremony

Monday, September 20

6pm potluck dinner provided by the mentor committee

7pm graduation ceremony

7:30pm Bill Eden presents his Fantastic Birding Journey in Brazil

Please join us as we celebrate the amazing achievements of these eleven individuals as they officially become Audubon Master Birders. Nature photographer Bill Eden brings us to the wilds of the Amazon Basin through stunning photos.

303-973-9530 or info@denveraudubon.org *** BFGWS = Bring binoculars, field guides, water, and a snack. ***

Programs

Little Fledglings

For children ages 3-6
(and parents/guardians, too!)

Wednesdays in Sept. & Oct., 10-11am

Explore nature with your little ones and enjoy story time, songs, crafts, and outdoor activities exploring wildlife and the natural world around you. This program encourages active outdoor play along with social and academic skills.

Friends members: \$5 per child and their adult; \$2 each additional child

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

Pre-registration required

PROGRAMS AT OTHER LOCATIONS

Roxborough State Park

Sunday, September 19, 8am - 11:30am

Hike for two miles along spectacular trails through the red rocks formation. Look for golden eagles and local foothills and scrub oak birds such as scrub-jays, towhees, and chickadees. If you like, bring lunch to eat on the patio. BBFOWS

Leader: Doris Cruze, 303-798-8072

Pre-registration required

\$10/Friends member, \$12/non-member

State parks pass required

Meeting Place: Visitor's Center, Roxborough State Park

Bird & Brew Trivia III

Wednesday, September 22 from 7-9p



We had two successful nature trivia nights this year. A fun time was had by all, so we're making it a quarterly event. Gather together a team of six, or join a team when you arrive. Questions cover a range of nature topics, not just bird. Enjoy great food and socialize with other outdoor enthusiasts.

Breckenridge Brewery Ballpark Pub (downtown)

2220 Blake Street, Denver, 80205

303-297-3644, www.breckbrew.com

\$5 entry fee per person - proceeds support ASGD

Fall Migrating Shorebirds

Saturday, September 25, 7am-5pm

Mackenzie "Kez" Goldthwait and Doug Kibbe offer an all day car trip to appropriate NE Colorado lakes to search for fall migrating shorebirds. As water levels and shorelines are assessed, a specific itinerary will form and be communicated to registrants within a week of the trip. Meeting place and carpooling arrangements will also be determined. BBFOWS
Leader: ASGD Directors Doug Kibbe and Dr. Mackenzie Goldthwait
\$15/Friends member, \$17 non-member
Pre-registration required
Meeting Place: CO Division of Wildlife offices at 6060 Broadway (58th exit off I-25). Carpooling advised.

South Platte Park

Sunday, October 10, 8am-noon

Explore this amazingly rich habitat along the South Platte River. This will be an easy hike and is wheel chair accessible. You'll see water birds as well as a variety of land birds in the cottonwood groves. BBFOWS

Leader: Doris Cruze, 303-798-8072

Pre-registration required

\$10/Friends member; \$12/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 2-story log building.

Cherry Creek State Park

Sunday, October 17, 8am - noon

This is a good time to see migrating shore birds: Horned Grebes, Common Loons, Franklin and other gulls. After scoping the reservoir, we will carpool to other areas in the park to check for migrating song birds. Beginners welcome. BBFOWS. The trip leader will carry a scope.

Leader: Karen von Saltza

Pre-registration required

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

State parks pass per car required

Meeting Place: Marina, Cherry Creek State Park. The trip ends back at the marina.

PROGRAMS OFFERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS

The Big Sit! at Chatfield State Park Sunday, October 10, dawn to dusk (come any time)

The international Bit Sit! has exacting, loose, frivolous standards. From a 17-foot diameter circle, Sitters count any bird seen or heard, or that scouts and beaters identify, providing a Sitter sees/hears it from the circle. Come for an hour, the morning, or whatever. BBFOWS, chairs, breakfast, lunch, dinner.

Leader: Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748

Pre-registration not required

No fee

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, turn hard left into the large parking lot. At the far right, a trail leads to the Heron Overlook (about 100 yards).

LOOKING AHEAD

San Diego Bird Festival March 3-6, 2011

Join other ASGD members next March for the 15th annual San Diego Bird Festival at the Marina Village Conference Center, located on scenic Mission Bay in San Diego, CA. Activities include numerous guided field trips to some of the most popular birding hotspots in and around the San Diego area. Trips - over 30 scheduled - include tours to the Anza-Borrego desert, Palomar Mountain/Lake Henshaw and possibly a trip down to Baja California! Birders have the opportunity to spot a variety of different bird species including Long-eared Owl, Greater Roadrunner, Costa's Hummingbird, quails, gulls, ducks, pelicans, and many more. During the 2009 San Diego Bird Festival, a new record was set for the number of species counted - more than 250! For those who stay back at the Marina Village Conference Center, there will be plenty to learn, see, and do. A variety of birding workshops take place during the first three days covering many facets of birding. Pricing and festival schedule are not yet available. If interested, please contact Pam Rathke, tour coordinator, at 720-746-0748 or pam.rathke@gmail.com to get your name on the participant list.

303-973-9530 or info@denveraudubon.org *** BBFOWS = Bring binoculars, field guides, water, and a snack. ***

Fall Bird Count Schedule

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 guide, and lunch. Everyone welcome to help – more eyes see more birds!

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

Cherry Creek Reservoir

Leader: Bob Brown, 303-791-6204

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

State Parks Pass required.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

Waterton Downstream

Leader: Hugh Kingery, 303-641-8823

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

Meeting Place: 6:30am, Audubon Center at Chatfield

Chatfield State Park

Leader: Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748

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

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: 6:30am 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: Bob Andrews, 303-249-5220,

raconamaz@yahoo.com

Meeting Place: 6:30am at parking lot adjacent to the Conoco Station at the NE corner of Morrison Road and C470. We will bird Bear Creek Lake Park and the Bear Creek Greenbelt in the morning and Marston Reservoir in the afternoon.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

Castlewood Canyon State Park

Leader: Kirk Huffstater, 303-660-9298

Meeting Place: 6:30am 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, 303-641-8823

Call leader to sign up ASAP; spaces available on waiting list.

Barr Lake Periphery

This trip, mostly driving, does not involve much walking and will be good for people with limited mobility or stamina.

Leader: Dick Anderson, 303-757-4582

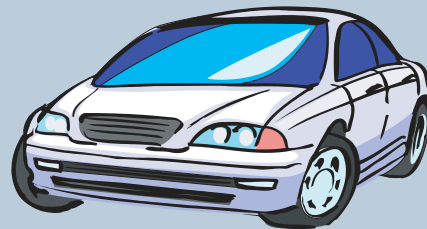
Phone leader after September 8, or send email to rholmesanderson@earthlink.net

Meeting Place: 7:00am at Barr Lake Entrance Station

TRAVEL

TRIPS FOR 2011-2014

The ASGD trip committee is discussing many exciting tours for our members. Some possible destinations include, but are not limited to: Belize, Panama, Brazil, Botswana/Zambia, New Zealand, Nova Scotia and Kenya. Places closer to home are Pagosa Springs, Big Bend Texas, Oregon Coast, Monterey CA, SE Arizona, and Wray Colorado. We are also considering the bird festivals in Karval and Bent Colorado as well as birding-by-canoe trips. If you are interested in any of these tours, please contact Pam Rathke, tour coordinator at 720-746-0748 or pam.rathke@gmail.com to receive more information.



Donate a Vehicle

Help Birds! Help Kids!

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

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

Recognition

Donors

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Fred Griest
Karen von Saltza

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Deborah A. Carstensen
Bonnie Crawford
Laura Derrington
Carol DeStefanis
David & Mary Driscoll
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Deborah Hayes
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Barbara Masoner
Patricia McClearn
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R.C. & Karen Myles
Carolyn Roark
Betty L. Robertson
David Rosenson
Lorenz Rychner
Sue Schulman
Christine Sibona
Dorothy Sutherlin
Bill & Mary Turner

A donation has been made in Celebration of the 50th Wedding Anniversary of Ron and Carol Sue Waits by Jan Eckhardt

Welcome New Friends Members

Bob Sneed
Christine Sibona
Clinton & Rosita Shoemaker
Deborah Hayes
Jan Blankenship
John Wells
Lisa Herbel
Mike & Olivia Albright
Ruth Artes
Stefanie Mosteller
Tish & Pete Varney
Yvonne Parrott

Correction

We inadvertently missed thanking Harold Oliver for his contribution to the Spring Event. Thank you Harold, for the beautiful hand-turned wood vases.

Bird-a-thon Donors

Ann Bonnell
Annie's Animal Clinic
Catherine Anderson
Karl Anuta
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Karen Baud
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Thank You Volunteers

Office Help: Bridget Milnes, Phil Reynolds, Carolyn Roark, Grace Weber

Audubon Center Garden Volunteers: Bob Beck, Laura Derrington, Carol DeStefanis, Laurie Duke, Chris Marquez, Lucinda & John Miller, Ashley Mock, Blake Naito

Audubon Center Naturalists: Amber Ballman, Kathy Bollhoefer, Carol DeStefanis, Laurie Duke, Mary Keithler, Jeanne McCune, Barbara Masoner, Polly Reetz

Field Trip Leaders: Ann Bonnell, Hugh & Urling Kingery & Audubon Master Birders, Lynn Willcockson



by Hugh Kingery

LYNN WILLCOCKSON, “doing volunteer work May 6 at Trinity Methodist Church at 18th & Broadway, watched a Hermit Thrush exploring the flower boxes along the north side of the historic 1888 church building right in the center of downtown Denver. I have seen Rock Wrens there and a Poorwill two years ago.”

AT WORK (DOW, 6060 Broadway) Celia Greenman maintains a “feeding station where I throw out millet mix in front of my car in the parking lot. A male Lark Bunting appeared several times May 6. A migrant maybe thrown off course by strong winds or a weather front. It caused me to learn to use my cell-phone camera (now if I could just retrieve the pictures!).”

“ALWAYS SOMETHING NEW,” Karen Metz wrote July 21. “A Spotted Towhee has come to me for mealworms for several weeks. I have a wooden mealworm feeder with plexiglas entrance, and bluebirds, nuthatches, chickadees, and juncos go inside for the larvae; the Spotted Towhee tried. He’s a little large for the entrance holes, so I started tossing him a few. One day I simply extended my hand and, sure enough, he wasn’t shy about taking mealworms from my hand.”



Spotted Towhee
Photo courtesy of Wikipedia

“YOU CAN IMAGINE my disappointment when I learned that he was feeding a single nestling – a cowbird. He’s nesting again and I hope that now he is feeding nestlings of his own species; certainly he comes often enough to have more than one nestling.

“TODAY, A NEW DEVELOPMENT. I came in from doing something outside and he approached; nothing unusual about that. I headed for the frig and the mealworms. I got two and turned to go out and there he was --- in my living room, three feet inside my back door. I wonder if today is the first time he’s felt carpet under his long towhee toes.”

BIRD-ATTACK PROBLEMS generated two calls July 7. Kennetha Miller (Roxborough Village) had (I thought) grackles – several pairs, going after people who walked by and pulling hair off labradors. The grackles are probably trying “to protect” nestlings. Neighbor E. B. Ellis contacted her; he suspected Brewer’s Blackbirds rather than grackles.

LORI GHISLETTI CALLED about a bird nesting in her yard that attacks people coming to her front door and kids

stopping on the sidewalk in front. She described it well, a Western Kingbird. As we talked she looked it up on-line and confirmed my ID. Kingbirds get aggressive while breeding; the nesting cycle lasts a month. They probably had nestlings that they wanted to protect from the kids, the FedEx delivery guy, and Lori picking up her newspaper. Because of this adventure, she wants to learn more about birds and is interested in joining Audubon.



Western Kingbird and chicks
Photo by Dick Vogel

WHILE FRAN SHEPPERDSON “watched golf July 9, a bird sitting close to the microphones started to sing. Suddenly the House Finch sitting outside my window answered with the same song. The finch answered twice until the microphones cut away; it tried twice more until it went back to its own song.”

JOANN PETTINICCHIO watched “two Mallards at Berkley Lake May 18.

Waddling between them was a short, squat little duck that looked most uncomfortable on land.



Hooded Merganser
Photo courtesy of Wikipedia

Darned if it wasn’t a male Hooded Merganser – incredibly beautiful, if somewhat ungainly in locomotion.

“Joggers came by and the trio moved into the water. To my surprise, the merganser stretched out his neck, lowered his head, and went after the male Mallard. I walked around the lake once and they were still there, the male Mallard still being warned off. The female swam into the reeds, followed closely by the merganser, the male Mallard maybe 10-15 feet away from the couple.”

DAVE RIGGS, near Washington Park, since May has “regular Broad-tailed Hummingbirds. Our neighbor and ourselves have many gardens and plants to attract birds. I have had a feeder out for two years, keep the nectar fresh and supplied from May to October. Consequently, we have hummers. They sit in the neighbors’ trees and watch the territory. I suspect a nest somewhere. Two years ago we had a bevy of hummers from July to October with no feeder in sight. Just attracted to our plants. Well, we are on the map now, and have been for three years.”

JO ANN BUSHNELL May 1-2 hosted a “beautiful Bullock’s Oriole on the large red flower of the hummingbird feeder in my backyard (Lakewood). He bent his head down and drank from one of the flowers in which the ant guard had been flipped out.”



Bullock's Oriole
Photo by Dick Vogel

Backyard Birds contd. on page 10

Backyard Birds

Backyard Birds contd. from page 9

JOY SCHIEVING in south Denver reported her first broadtail of the year July 20.

KENT AND PHYLLIS OLSEN SAY, "For several years our flicker box has been used, sometimes successfully, by flickers. Last year, they abandoned the box early, and to keep out other large birds we mostly blocked the opening; however a House Wren found enough space and nested in the box. This year we built a wren box and the flickers are again



Northern Flicker
Photo courtesy
of Cornell Lab of
Ornithology

in their box. The flickers seem distressed though. I've found an egg or two in the yard – the discarded egg found May 27 had a small hole, which made us wonder if the wren somehow is harassing the flickers." I'd say yes. Wrens try to evict any hole-nesting bird in their territory, to reserve the holes for themselves.

WE HAVE ten bluebird boxes in our extended yard. Western Bluebirds occupied two, House Wrens five (one knocked down by bear or raccoon, edible contents cleaned out). In two, House Wrens built nests on top of Violet-green and Tree Swallow nests.



Western Bluebird
Photo courtesy of
Wikipedia

The last box: Tree Swallows (probably those the wrens evicted) moved in, on top of a just-started wren nest. When we opened the box July 27, the swallows flew around frantically; we looked in and saw, peering out at us, a contented Bullsnake. July 28, nest empty, no swallows.

URLING AND I enjoyed a Breeding Bird Atlas highlight July 9, along the Swan River near Breckenridge. At sunset we heard a loud keening and found two baby Dippers bouncing up and down between two under-the-road culvert pipes. When the adult came to feed them, the noise level increased noticeably. Then the adult came and perched on a slender log a couple of inches from one fledgling. The fledgling fluttered its wings, spread its mouth wide, keened for food; the adult looked at it and, instead of feeding the youngster, sang at it. And sang – for a minute or longer. The fledgling spent the whole time fluttering and gaping at the (probably, from the length of the song) male as it sang at the fledgling's face.

I KNEW ABOUT this behavior but had never witnessed it. When dippers fledge, the parents divide up the kids, each adult taking half the brood, to feed them and to teach them to sing. (Apparently, only at a certain period in their development can fledglings learn the proper song.) To their half of the brood, Males sing their typical, long, complicated song; to their half, females sing a shorter version, but twice as often.

IN AURORA, Dodie Hampton watched a Cooper's Hawk bathing: a fox loped across the yard and the hawk swooped down and pecked it on the head. The fox hid in the shrubs for an hour until the hawk gave up. June 14, Dean Shoup watched two Red-tailed Hawks soar over his condo in Golden. Flo Decesare in Greenwood Village, "outside looking at my flower pots, heard this strange noise and saw a Saw-whet Owl sitting on a tree branch. When he moved to change position I saw he had a vole in his claws."



Juvenile Great Horned Owls
Photo courtesy of Wikipedia

Pat Derr, Columbine Valley, saw two baby Great Horned Owls on June 14, fledged from a nest in her neighbor's yard.

MIGRANTS: Meredith Anderson, on May 8, spotted a "dazzling male Magnolia Warbler as it zipped into the tender new growth of a hawthorn tree" (Westminster). Flo saw three male Western Tanagers May 25, one of which took a bath in her waterfall. Bill Wuerthele, at 5:10 a.m. July 6, "heard a Northern Cardinal singing in a neighbor's backyard. We searched for it (still pretty dark) but never saw or heard it again."



Western Tanager
Photo by Hugh Kingery

MONNA KREBS saw her "turkey several times in my Wheat Ridge back yard, and enjoyed an extra bonus - a Peacock. It was with the turkey and they were eating some of the birdseed I put out at the back fence." Kirk Huffstater and Harriet Stratton both saw flocks of magpies in July: Kirk's over 50, mostly juveniles, near Castle Rock. Harriet saw over 20 in Ketring Park in Littleton. Magpies (and crows) join into flocks after nesting and roam around, though why I can't say. Char Gottlieb watched "a pair of Say's Phoebes who have built a nest under the ceiling of our neighbor's patio" in Arvada.



Say's Phoebe
Photo courtesy of Wikipedia

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.

ASGD Kids Nature Club Member Encourages You to Make A Fast Food Free Pledge

by Koa Halpern, Founder of Fast Food Free

Fast Food Free is a nonprofit, kid-operated organization with the goal of raising awareness of the fast food industry and its often negative impact on health and the environment.

On a seasonal basis, Fast Food Free conducts "pledge" drives challenging kids (and parents) to give up eating fast food for just two weeks anytime during the pledge period, resulting in:

- Preventing 3,222 gallons of water from being used for livestock production.
- Saving 9.4 pounds of grain from being used to feed livestock.
- Protecting 285.4 square feet of rainforest from being cut down for cattle grazing.
- Avoiding 15.4 pounds of animal waste from being created.

Giving up fast food can have a positive impact on wild bird populations. Trash from fast food packaging poses a hazard as discarded food lures birds onto highways or other areas (like poorly secured trash cans) where they can be harmed or killed. Additionally, to make fast food wrappers and containers, forest is cut down for pulp



Koa Halpern, Founder of Fast Food Free

production, which destroys bird habitat and can result in a severe reduction of the affected population or even extinction of the species.

Fast Food Free would like the theme of this fall's pledge to be "The Autumn Audubon Challenge." As an incentive to get new people to take the pledge, Fast Food Free announces a donation of \$1 to the Audubon Society of Greater Denver for the first 200 new pledges made (or a possible total donation of \$200).

Pledges can be made at www.fastfoodfree.org. This challenge begins September 1, 2010 and runs through November 30, 2010.

Koa Halpern is a 12 year old who began Fast Food Free when he was ten. He is a life-long environmentalist and supporter of Audubon. Fast Food Free has been featured in 5280 Magazine, Denver Channel 4 News and The Huffington Post. Koa also helped raise money for the Galapagos Conservancy, Birds of Prey, CO, and the Hawaii Nature Center.

Post your latest bird sightings and questions on our Facebook Page



Correction

How observant are you? Some birders noticed that the Yellow Billed Cuckoo was incorrectly identified as a Yellow Tailed Cuckoo on the front page of the last Warbler. Good eye!

Leave A Legacy

Protect Birds! Protect Habitat!

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

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



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YES! I am a FRIEND of the Audubon Society of Greater Denver.

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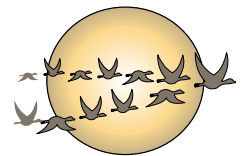
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