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GIVES DAY**  
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Support us on  
Colorado Gives Day!  
Wednesday, December 8  
online at GivingFirst.org

A special incentive fund  
will increase the value of  
your donation!

Go to [www.givingfirst.org](http://www.givingfirst.org)  
Click on "Donate Now"  
Enter "Audubon Society  
of Greater Denver"  
Enter amount and proceed to checkout.

## Don't Miss Out!

Beginning with the January/  
February 2011 issue we will no  
longer send a hard copy of *The  
Warbler*, unless requested. We are  
making the switch to an electronic  
newsletter to cut down on costs  
and put your membership dollars  
to better use.

If you would still like to receive a  
hardcopy of the newsletter, please  
call us at 303-973-9530.

If we do not have your current  
email address, please call us at  
303-973-9530. Once we have it  
you will then receive notices when  
each issue is available online.

Thank you for supporting this  
conservation effort!

## The Measure of a Year

by Carl Norbeck, Executive Director

How do you measure the success of a year  
at the Audubon Society of Greater Denver and  
are your contributions being invested wisely? For  
all our readers, members, and supporters, the  
answers are certainly important!

- **Education:** Kid's Nature Club, Little Fledglings  
Preschool program, and the Certificate in  
Outdoor Adventure series.
- **Conservation:** Legislative Summary (2010  
Session) and Legislative Preview (2011 Session);



Audubon Nature Center at Chatfield State Park.

As you know, ASGD has three major  
programmatic areas: Natural Science Education  
for all ages, Environmental Stewardship led  
by the Conservation Committee, and Wildlife  
Research through the Lois Webster Fund.

It's easy to track the activities of these  
programs—just go to *The Warbler*! Start with the  
Program Pages. Every issue provides a diverse  
menu of exciting classes and field trips for the  
next two months. And to provide a friendly  
reminder of the upcoming week's activities, we  
send out a weekly e-newsletter (if you are not  
signed up to receive this weekly e-mail, please  
visit our website and click on "Join Our E-Mail  
List" on the right hand side of the homepage).

And then there are many articles about our  
programs—a sampling from 2010:

and the Safe Skies initiative designed to  
minimize bird-glass deaths.

- **Wildlife Research:** Pallid Bat and Pawnee  
Montane Skipper Butterfly.

What does it all add up to? Last year, ASGD  
offered 336 programs for youth, adults and families  
at the Audubon Center at Chatfield and throughout  
the Metro Denver area. These were attended by  
14,450 people—3,500 being students at school and  
1,500 being kids at the Nature Center. In addition,  
conservation efforts positively impacted key  
environmental legislation and research support  
helped advance crucial wildlife research.

That's where your generous investment and  
support goes and that is how you personally help  
protect Metro Denver's special places now and into  
the future. **Thank you for making it all possible!**

**Season's Greetings!** ASGD wishes all our members a happy and safe  
holiday. Think green at gift-giving time: memberships in organizations  
whose work you support, donations to your favorite charities in a friend's  
name, a package of reusable grocery bags (there are some very handsome  
ones out there), suet and birdseed for a friend's feeders, decals to put on  
your windows to keep birds from colliding with the glass. Be part of the  
movement towards a sustainable future! **And all the best for 2011!**

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE~

This issue, rather than thank everyone or request anything from you, I wanted to make an offer. The Audubon Society of Greater Denver offers opportunities to relax, laugh, learn, and enjoy our world. Recently, we hosted a wonderful slide show about woodpeckers and owls, held several Bird and Brew Trivia nights with a lively mix of teams, and hosted a Rockies game. Our field trip committee has many offerings throughout the year: day trips, weekend trips, even international trips (check the Program Pages in the Warbler). Our spring silent auction was a bright, laughter filled evening with wonderful people.

One of the few thoughts I remember from high school English was from William Wordsworth: "The world is too much with us." That thought has come to mind often over the years. It usually came with words like weary, tired or sad. It dropped away from me a couple of weeks ago at a jazz performance in the Audubon Center amphitheater – the peacefulness of the music and the quiet evening outdoors. That was just one more of ASGD's offerings for you and the public.

We encourage you to take advantage of ASGD. Come see what we have for you —check our website, read The Warbler, grab a copy of the weekly Programs update (available at the Audubon Center), review our weekly e-newsletter, visit our Facebook page, follow us on Twitter, or drop by the Audubon Center on Saturdays. We are proud to say ASGD has a lot to offer. (If you don't currently receive our weekly e-newsletter of upcoming activities, please call and we'll add you to the list.)



Tom Parchman, President

## ASGD welcomes New Board Members

**MICHAEL KIESSIG** is passionate about nature, conservation, and being "out of doors". His interests in the environment and things natural have been a lifelong theme. Working with ASGD will be a natural extension of his interests and abilities. Michael is a recent graduate of the ASGD Master Birder Program and an aspiring naturalist. His professional background includes 35 years of experience and leadership in the construction industry.

**LOIS LEVINSON** is a retired attorney who started birding six years ago, beginning her involvement with ASGD with the Kingerys' Beginning Birdwatching Class. A 2010 graduate of the ASGD Master Birder Program, she aims to continue to improve her birding skills while volunteering time for Audubon. She is a member of the Field Trip Committee and has led several field trips for ASGD.



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303-973-9530 • Fax 303-973-1038  
www.denveraudubon.org

#### ASGD OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

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**Arlene Raskin**

**2nd Vice President Ann Bonnell**

**Treasurer Carol DeStefanis**

**Secretary Harriet Stratton**

**Joe Bartell**

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**Mackenzie Goldthwait**

**Doug Kibbe**

**Michael Kiessig**

**Lois Levinson**

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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.

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

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# Conservation Report - Chatfield Reallocation reaches critical phase

by Polly Reetz, ASGD Conservation Committee Chair

Many ASGD members know and love **Chatfield State Park** for its great birdwatching opportunities, the cottonwood gallery forest along the Platte, the chance to see and photograph wildlife, or the beauty of its more remote areas. Chatfield is a heavily used state park, with 1.5 million visitors per year in 2009 who visited the park for diverse reasons. The National Audubon Society has designated it as an Important Bird Area (IBA) because of the variety of bird species found there. We know Chatfield is an important stopover for migratory birds from records compiled at the bird banding station that operates each spring near the Audubon Center.

**But Chatfield may undergo a massive, possibly destructive change.** A group of water providers, coordinated by the Colorado Water Conservation Board, is proposing to store an additional 20,600 acre-feet of water in the reservoir, which will raise the level of the lake by 12 feet in good precipitation years. Hundreds of acres of the park will be inundated, recreational facilities – including parts of the park road – will have to be demolished and rebuilt, some 80 acres of wetlands and 200 acres of riparian cottonwood forest will be lost, several miles of free-flowing streams – the South Platte River, Deer Creek and Plum Creek – will be flooded, critical habitat for the threatened Preble’s meadow jumping mouse will be under water, and many of the large cottonwoods would be cut down. For several years Chatfield would be the site an intensive construction project. These are just a few of the impacts ASGD members foresee. Although it’s generally better to store more water in existing reservoirs than to build new ones, in this case the recreation and wildlife impacts

may be too great.

The Corps of Engineers, which actually owns the land in Chatfield State Park and leases it to the State of Colorado, has spearheaded the evaluation of this project. Since the Corps is a federal agency, they must follow the National Environmental Policy Act and write/publish



an Environmental Impact Statement (written and researched by teams of consultants). **As ASGD’s volunteer team reviews the Draft and then Final EIS, some of our major concerns will be:**

Were other alternatives besides additional water storage in Chatfield examined and their costs and impacts realistically evaluated? What about water conservation, underground water storage, swapping rights to water already stored in the reservoir?

- Were the environmental impacts of the project realistically enumerated and in a manner that makes these impacts comprehensible to the public?
- Will there be full mitigation of environmental impacts if the project goes forward?
- Mitigation should be on-site and carried out on time, i.e. before any additional water is stored in Chatfield. Does the mitigation plan provide this?

We are particularly concerned because, in many water projects, mitigation gets left until last, by which time the money has run out or the will to do it is gone. Sometimes the actual success of mitigation is minimal – as happened along Deer Creek by the Botanic Gardens, where the Colorado Department of Transportation created two “wetlands” as mitigation for construction of C-470. Or the mitigation is “constructed” and its actual success isn’t monitored. In the case of Chatfield, we have been told that full mitigation will be required. However it will be critical to examine the details of the mitigation plan very carefully.

ASGD Board Member  
Ann Bonnell and former Board Member – and former Chatfield

State Park Manager - Kent Wiley have been “dogging” this project since its inception. They have attended innumerable meetings, brought up our issues, and driven home our concerns. **But YOU, our members, also need to take a look at this project. You can start by going to the Chatfield Reallocation website: [www.chatfieldstudy.org](http://www.chatfieldstudy.org). This site will give you an overview – albeit a rather rosy one – of this complex project.**

Although we don’t know exactly when the Draft EIS will be available for public review, we expect it will be out sometime later this year, possibly around Christmas. Check the newspapers, the website above, and communications from ASGD for timely notice. We have pushed for a review period of at least 90 days, since the document will be voluminous. **We can’t stress enough that this is an important issue for ASGD and we need our members to participate in any way they can.**

### DID YOU SPOT THIS ON PAGE 1?

### Give Online to ASGD on December 8

And Community First will Contribute to ASGD As Well  
Every Dollar Counts, So Let's Take Advantage of Colorado Gives Day!



Support us on  
Colorado Gives Day!  
**Wednesday, December 8**  
online at GivingFirst.org  
*A special incentive fund  
will increase the value of  
your donation!*

Go to [www.givingfirst.org](http://www.givingfirst.org)  
Click on "Donate Now"  
Enter "Audubon Society  
of Greater Denver"  
Enter amount and proceed to checkout.

## Please Join Us for the Audubon/Sierra Club 2011 Legislative Forum!

Decisions are made by those who show up!

Date: Saturday, February 12, 2011, Time: 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Place: First Plymouth Church, 3501 S. Colorado Boulevard, Denver 80113

The Audubon Society of Greater Denver and the Enos Mills Group of the Sierra Club invite you to attend the 2011 Legislative Forum and find out about the hot environmental topics of the 2011 legislative session. This is always an entertaining and educational event! After the continental breakfast at 8:30 a.m., Audubon Colorado Lobbyist Jen Boulton and Sierra Club Legislative Committee Chair Gary Lindstrom review the session's environmental bills and we'll hold discussions on several of the key issues. We'll talk with several Colorado legislators about the effect of budget cuts on our State's environmental programs, impacts on wildlife and habitats, and possible threats to GOCO. Lunch will be provided. A final agenda will be available in early February.

The cost of the Forum is \$12 per person in advance, \$15 at the door. To register in advance, call Rhonda in the ASGD office at 303-973-9530. If you are interested in volunteering at the Forum, call that number or send an email to: [rshank@denveraudubon.org](mailto:rshank@denveraudubon.org).

## Lois Webster Fund Update

by John Wright, LWF Committee

**2010 Research Project Status.** The Lois Webster Fund is presently awaiting final reports for the three 2010 funded research projects:

- "Understanding Changes in Avian Communities within a Riparian Habitat" (\$2,500).
- "The threats of hybridization on two native Catostomids (fish) of Colorado" (\$1,000).

- "Merging Biological and Social Science Data--to understand the ecological role of free ranging domestic cats in Colorado" (\$1,500).

As is the case every year, next spring there will be a presentation of 2010 project's results. The presentation's date and time will be announced after the first of the year.

**2011 Research Project Funding.** In the meantime, the LWF committee will be

meeting to start the process for funding 2011 projects for which a maximum of \$5,827 is available. During its existence and through the 2010 project year, the LWF has provided \$40,771 of funding for some 24 projects. For those who are interested, the solicitation for 2011 projects will start around the beginning of December. The specifics will be available via the ASGD website. 2011 project year winners will be announced in the Warbler early next Spring.

## 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](mailto:info@denveraudubon.org)

### Walk the Wetlands

**Sunday, November 7, 2010, 9am**

**Sunday, December 5, 2010, 9am**

Walk along the South Platte River exploring ponds and habitats for late fall migrants, residents, and winter arrivals. Dress for the weather. BBFGWS (and a scope if you have one); some loaner equipment is available.

Leaders: Audubon Master Birders

Pre-registration not required

Donations to ASGD appreciated

### Little Fledglings

**For children ages 3-6**

**(and parents/guardians, too!)**

**Wednesdays, November 3rd & 17th**

**December 1st & 15th**

**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

## PROGRAMS AT OTHER LOCATIONS

### Jim Baker Reservoir and other North Denver Parks

**Saturday, November 6, 1-4pm**

Join Audubon Master Birders Marilyn Rhodes and Bob Santangelo for an afternoon exploring Jim Baker Reservoir and surrounding area lakes. We'll be observing several species of migrating waterfowl that arrive at this time of the year. BBFGWS (and spotting scopes, if you have one).

Leaders: Audubon Master Birders Marilyn Rhodes and

# ASGD Certificate in Outdoor Adventure

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, November 13, 10am-12pm—Mammals**

**Saturday, November 20 10am-12pm—Plants of the Platte**

**Saturday, December 11 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.**



Bob Santangelo. Call or email trip leaders Marilyn (720-333-2551, [cloverlane@aol.com](mailto:cloverlane@aol.com)) or

Bob (720-641-3899, [rjdrsantang@comcast.net](mailto:rjdrsantang@comcast.net))

if you have questions.

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

Preregistration required

Meeting Place: Meet at the Jim Baker Reservoir parking lot located on Tennyson Street at 63rd Avenue, then carpool to Lowell Ponds, Clear Creek Trail, Rocky Mountain and Berkley Lakes. These places are accessible to the handicapped. Easy to moderate walking.

### Belmar Park- Ducks in Winter

**Sunday, November 14, 9am - 12pm**

Hike around Belmar Park looking for late fall migrants and wintering ducks. Ducks and other waterfowl found in this beautiful riparian habitat include: pied-billed grebes, gadwalls, redheads, northern shovelers, teal, lesser scaup, and ring-necked ducks. Often we get close up views in this location. Dress for cold weather and BBFGWS (plus a spotting scope, if you have one).

Leaders: Audubon Master Birders Barbara Shissler and Cindy Valentine

\$10/Friend member, \$12/nonmember

Pre-registration required

Meeting Place: Belmar Park parking lot, 801 S.

Wadsworth Blvd. at Wadsworth and Ohio (West Side), Lakewood, CO.

**303-973-9530 or [info@denveraudubon.org](mailto:info@denveraudubon.org) \*\*\* BBFGWS = Bring binoculars, field guides, water, and a snack. \*\*\***

# Programs & Recognition

## Castlewood Canyon/Douglas County Open Space

**Saturday, November 20, 8am**

Join experts birding winter ponds and/or canyon habitat. BFGWS for a 4 hour trip. Bring lunch to eat around the bird friendly Kingery feeders.

Leaders: Hugh and Urling Kingery

\$10/Friends member, \$12/nonmember

Pre-registration required

Meeting Place: Colorado 86 and Castlewood Canyon Rd. (Douglas County Road 51). Intersection is: (a) ½ mile west of traffic light in Franktown; and (b) 8-9 miles from I-25, Exit 184. Park on the shoulder just after turning onto DCR 51.

## PROGRAMS OFFERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CITY OF AURORA PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

### Waterfowl Walk at Quincy Reservoir

**Saturday, November 13, 8:30am**

Bring your binoculars, bird book (and spotting scope, if you have one) and join us as we scan the reservoir for mergansers, scaups, redheads, gadwalls, teals and more.

Leader: Mary Ann Bonnell

No fee but preregistration required; information and registration: 303-739-2428

### Bird Walk at Ponderosa Preserve

**Saturday, December 11, 9am**

Bring your binoculars and your bird book and explore a ponderosa pine forest in a prairie setting.

Leader: Mary Ann Bonnell

No fee but preregistration required; information and registration: 303-739-2428

## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

All Audubon members (and non-members), whether beginner, intermediate, or advanced, are invited to join us on one or more Christmas Bird Counts. Taking place across the nation since 1900, data collected by observers allows researchers and conservation biologists to study the long-term health and status of bird populations. A 15 mile radius circle is divided into sections, with different parties assigned to each

section. Contact Count Coordinator (for Denver SW and Douglas County CBC) for section leaders, meeting times, locations and to join a team. For the Denver Urban count, the section leaders are listed and may be directly contacted to register for a location. Each count participant is asked to make a \$5 donation to Audubon for each count they join.

### Denver Southwest (SW) Christmas Bird Count Offered in partnership with Denver Field Ornithologists Saturday, December 18

The circle for this count covers the Southwest sector of the Metro area, from Red Rocks to the Audubon Nature Center, and from Littleton to Tiny Town and Doubleheader Mountain. Includes Chatfield State Park, Bear Creek Lake Park, 7 miles of the South Platte, and several foothills sections.

Contact Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748, or go online to [www.denveraudubon.org](http://www.denveraudubon.org) or [www.dfobirder.org](http://www.dfobirder.org) for more information (available by late November).

### Urban Denver Christmas Bird Count (Northwest)

Offered in Partnership with Denver Field Ornithologists Saturday, January 1, 2011 (see Table on page 7)

### Douglas County Christmas Bird Count Offered in Partnership with Roxborough State Park Sunday, January 2, 2011

The day begins at 7:30am. Call the Park to sign up and get on a team by Thursday, December 30, 2010. Information available through Roxborough State Park, 303-973-3959. A chili supper will be held at the Park Visitor Center after the count.

# Donors

## Contributor Circle

John Brooke & Cheryl Teuton, Mary Davis, Jan Dees, Carol DeStefanis, Kathy Dressel, Barbara Holme, Jack & Sue Kadlecek, Kathy Kelley, Peggy Lehmann, Nick Nicholson, Marianne Rose, Jeff Stroup, Lydia B. Toll, Jim & Vickey Trammell, Scott & Linda Trauth

## In-Kind

George Sutton Artwork donated by Pat Furman  
Weed Wacker donated by Jean Stevenson

# Welcome New Friends Members

Andrew Canastar, Bryan & Kristin Arnold, Candace Ruiz, Doris L. Tucker, Jane Summers, Jean Ross, Lannie Pihajlic, Lisa Herbel, Lynn Musgraves, Robert Kaylor, Sandra Newkirk, Sharon Pfeifer & Cheryl Chessick, Steve Butler, Tracey Robinson

# Thank You Volunteers

**Field Trip Leaders:** Doris Cruze, Mackenzie Goldthwait, Doug Kibbe, Hugh & Urling Kingery

**School & Public Volunteers:** Amber Ballman, Angela Grun, Barb Masoner, Doris Cruze, Dotty Biggs, Kate Frost, Polly Reetz, Sheridan Samano, Suzy Hiskey, Urling Kingery

**Gardening & Audubon Center Maintenance:** Carol DeStefanis, Fred Griest, Doug Hodous, Michael Kiessig, Deb Mallory, Ariel Bridgeman, Laura Briggs, Kathy Kappius, Polly Reetz, John Stickle

**Birdseed Pickup:** Dave Driscoll, Suzy Hiskey, Michael Kiessig, Marilyn Rhodes, Bob Santangelo, Harriet Stratton

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

303-973-9530 or [info@denveraudubon.org](mailto:info@denveraudubon.org) \*\*\* BFGWS = Bring binoculars, field guides, water, and a snack. \*\*\*

# Denver Urban Christmas Count Schedule

Saturday, January 1, 2011

A holiday tradition – everyone welcome: beginners, intermediate, and advanced. The more eyes we have, the more birds we see. And we like to encourage people to get involved. Start the New Year with a half day or whole day effort – a good way to start your New Year’s List!

The count covers a circle with a 15-mile diameter that includes the Platte River from North City limits to Mississippi, east to Buckley Field and Rocky Mountain Arsenal.

\$5.00 fee, payable to National Audubon Society, to defray count costs (give to Count Leader).

5:00 p.m. After the count, Pot Luck, at Casey Davenhill’s, 415 South High (5 blocks west of University, about 2 blocks south of Alameda); please call Urling (303-814-2723) so we can count you in on the chili pot, Urling’s brownies, Casey’s hospitality, and your salad, dessert, veggie, or finger foods.

Count Leader, Hugh Kingery      303-814-2723

| Area Location   | Leader                           | Leader/Telephone/Email   | Level of Effort   |
|---|----------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| South Platte (south) to Confluence Park                       | Doris Cruze                      | 303-798-8072   | Some walking      |
| S. Platte (central):<br>Confluence Park to Riverside Cemetery | Casey Davenhill                  | 303-744-0613   | Some walking      |
| S. Platte (north)   | Dick Schottler                   | 303-278-8035   | Walking           |
| Rocky Mountain. Arsenal                                       | Urling Kingery                   | 303-814-2723   | Walking           |
| Commerce City/ Montbello                                      | Jackie King                      | 303-287-1644   | Car               |
| Sand Creek/Tollgate Creek, Bluff Lake & Aurora                | Buzz Schaumberg<br>Randy Lentz   | Buzz: 303-699-1721 <a href="mailto:egseagle171@aol.com">egseagle171@aol.com</a><br>Randy: 303-680-3381 | Walking           |
| Cherry Creek Reservoir  | Bob Brown                        | 303-791-6204<br><a href="mailto:PicaPica@worldnet.att.net">PicaPica@worldnet.att.net</a>               | Some walking      |
| Kent School, S of Hampden                                     | Lynn Willcockson                 | 303-757-7000   | Some walking      |
| SE Denver, N of Hampden                                       | Karen Bickett                    | 303-935-5808<br><a href="mailto:kbick@netscape.net">kbick@netscape.net</a>                             | Walking           |
| Cherry Creek: Dam to University Blvd.                         | Paul Slingsby                    | 303-422-3728<br><a href="mailto:paslingsby@comcast.net">paslingsby@comcast.net</a>                     | 7-mile walk       |
| Fairmont, Lowry Field   | Tuesday Birders                  | 303-979-6211   | Car, some walking |
| City Park/Park Hill   | Kevin Corwin                     | 720-482-8454   | Car, some walking |
| Botanic Gardens, Wash Park, Denver Country Club               | Marilyn Rhodes<br>Bob Santangelo | Marilyn: 303-674-6580<br>Bob: 303-771-1367   | Car, some walking |

303-973-9530 or [info@denveraudubon.org](mailto:info@denveraudubon.org) \*\*\* BFGWS = Bring binoculars, field guides, water, and a snack. \*\*\*

# Salt Air, Ocean Birds, Pacific Northwest

**February 5-10, 2011**

Mild winter weather brings Arctic-breeding birds to the bays and beaches of Oregon and Washington. Harry Fuller, long time trip leader for Golden Gate Audubon, leads the trip organized by Colorado-based Partnership for International Birding from the Portland airport we'll bird Sauvie's Island (Tundra Swans, Pacific and Red-throated Loon); Astoria and the mouth of the Columbia River (various gulls, Snow Buntings, Lapland Longspurs, Brandt's and Pelagic Cormorant, Northern Fulmars, Cassin's Auklet) and the Olympic Peninsula (Harlequin Duck, Trumpeter Swans, Ancient and Marbled Murrelet). We'll visit Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge (Varied Thrush, Chestnut-backed Chickadee) and ferry across Puget Sound which provides a relatively calm pelagic trip with great looks at sea species. \$1,149 double occupancy; singles add \$300. Includes 5 nights lodging with continental breakfasts, 5 days birding, group transportation. Participant's responsibility: lunch and dinner, airfare to Portland.

Trip details: <http://pibird.com/PacNorthwest-2011-1.html>.

Register: Charles or Alison, 888-203-7464; Charles, 720-320-1974, [info@PIBird.com](mailto:info@PIBird.com).

**Post your latest bird sightings and questions on our FaceBook Page**



# Monarch Butterflies of Michoacan, Mexico with Denver Botanic Gardens

**February 5 – 12, 2011**

Every winter, the cloud forests in the mountains of central Mexico play host to millions of over-wintering monarch butterflies. The annual migration of these monarchs from the Great Lakes region is one of nature's greatest mysteries. Sarada Krishnan, Director of Horticulture at Denver Botanic Gardens, will accompany the group. \$2495/ person based on double occupancy. Single supplement: \$650. For detailed itinerary, visit [www.ReefsToRockies.com](http://www.ReefsToRockies.com). 303.860.6045; email [admin@reefstorockies.com](mailto:admin@reefstorockies.com).

# San Diego Bird Festival

**March 2-7, 2011**

Harriet Stratton pilots a group to the San Diego Bird Festival, March 2-7, 2011, Marina Village Conference Center, Mission Bay, San Diego, CA. Fly in Wednesday March 2, airport shuttle to the Dana on Mission Bay. [www.thedana.com](http://www.thedana.com) Guided festival trips include: Thursday-pelagic trip with Debi Shearwater; Friday- Scripps' Aquarium and La Jolla rocky coast (Harbor seals); Saturday-the Anza-Borrego desert (Chrissal's Thrasher); Sunday-Coastal Wildlife Refuges (Black Rail) [www.sandiegoaudubon.org/birdfest.htm](http://www.sandiegoaudubon.org/birdfest.htm), Fly back Monday after free day in San Diego.

\$935 double, \$1175 single. Includes 5 nights at The Dana, festival registration and tour fees, breakfasts, and dinners. Participant's responsibility: lunches (available through the festival), airfare (approx. \$230 rt) and airport shuttle to Dana (\$9 each way).

Questions: Harriet Stratton, [hs10@comcast.net](mailto:hs10@comcast.net).

Register through ASGD : 303-973-9530, [info@denveraudubon.org](mailto:info@denveraudubon.org) with a \$200 deposit, final payment and registration deadline: January 15, 2011.

# Bird Southeast Arizona

**May 3-9, 2011**

Bill Turner will pilot a group to legendary hotspots of Madera Canyon, the Nature Conservancy's Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Sanctuary, Patagonia Lake State Park, Ramsey, Miller, and Carr Canyons and the San Pedro Riparian National Recreation Area. A variety of rich habitats, from the cottonwood-lined streams and rivers of the desert to the cool, pine-oak woodlands of the Santa Rita and Huachuca Mountains yield sought after birds: Elegant Trogon, White-eared Hummingbird, Elf Owl, Thick-billed Kingbird, Red-faced and Lucy's Warblers, Painted Redstart, Arizona Woodpecker, Buff-breasted Flycatcher, Botteri's Sparrow and Zone-tailed Hawk. Guide, Mark Pretti, excellent at locating and identifying birds, fauna and flora offers a deep understanding of the natural interrelatedness of this fascinating region. The trip reprises our 2009 trip where happy participants recorded 154 bird species. Maximum group size 9. \$1695 per person double occupancy includes all meals, accommodations, transportation from Tucson, guiding, and preserve entrance fees. Airfare to Tucson where the tour begins and ends not included. For information and registration, please contact Bill at (303) 795-5128.



by Hugh Kingery

**CITIZEN SCIENCE** – a big concept in today's birding community, takes many different forms. In September we conducted the 27th annual Fall Bird Count, and we'll have a spring bird count in May. The upcoming Christmas Bird Count schedule is in the Programs section. The Breeding Bird Atlas documents, statewide, our breeding avifauna. Participating in these projects does not require expert bird skills – anybody can participate, and leaders welcome beginners and intermediates to come along.

**GINA GERKEN CONTRIBUTES** through another project. She initiated a bluebird trail in her Castle Pines community, and now has over 90 boxes installed. Over 40 people help monitor the boxes, a splendid way to get people involved in bird watching. She put one up in the maintenance yard so as to involve those workers and they responded enthusiastically: a different crew member checks the box each week.

**“OUR TRAIL WAS GREAT THIS YEAR,”**

says Gina, “because last year we had no Mountain Bluebird nests and this year we had several as well as one brave Pygmy Nuthatch family and three White-breasted Nuthatch nests (one of which [Arlene Raskin's box] was taken over by bluebirds). At my



*White-breasted Nuthatch  
Photo courtesy of  
Dick Vogel*

house I had my Saw-whet Owls again as well as Western Bluebirds, Tree Swallows, White-breasted Nuthatches, House Wrens, and of course, my favorite, Pygmies. And last but not least, I finally got Mountain Chickadees to nest in one of my PVC pipe nest boxes that Cornell recommended.”

**THIS SUMMER**, Urling and I spent many days Atlasing, particularly on the plains between Limon and Burlington. Probably the prize observation: on a windy grassland hilltop, half a dozen McCown's Longspurs larking (flying 50-100 feet up, then singing as they dropped to the prairie), with the sun shining through their white tails. Breeding observations continued into September, when in our yard I saw a Lazuli Bunting female feeding a fledgling.

**HUMMINGBIRDS DREW OUR ATTENTION**; out in Limon, Mary Calkum had a nest that fledged at least one young

– farther east than any previous Colorado breeding record. In her hummingbird yard in Littleton,



*Black-chinned Hummingbird  
Photo courtesy of  
Dick Vogel*

Tina Jones says that “this summer in general has been slower for hummingbird numbers, I'm guessing because wildflowers and food were so spectacular in the high country (though I had more Black-chinned Hummingbirds than ever before).” By Sept. 3 she counted 3 Rufous, 1 Broad-tailed, 1 Calliope, and 1 Black-chinned. In July, Dave Riggs, in west Washington Park, Denver, enjoyed daily visits by a Broad-tailed to feeder and flowers. In our yard in Franktown, we enjoyed all four species through the summer; our house sitter Bob Andrews counted 10 Broad-tails daily in early August. We even had one (probably a migrant) September 20-21.

**LYNN WILLCOCKSON SAW** two “mountain” species this summer – a Mountain Chickadee Aug 14-27 and Bushtits off and on all summer. Pete Plage reported 24 Bushtits at Welchester Tree Park in Lakewood Aug. 12, and many others see them in town somewhat regularly. Dave Riggs sees both White- and Red-breasted Nuthatches “regularly” and a Golden-crowned Kinglet in early September.

**GINA, “IN EARLY SPRING**, had absolutely tons of Evening Grosbeaks, here for weeks

but they disappeared all at once.” They came back in early September, all juveniles.

“Also almost all of my bird boxes must have fledged at the same time, because one day I had the funniest sight



*Evening Grosbeak  
Photo courtesy of  
Dick Vogel*

– baby Hairy Woodpeckers, baby Mountain Chickadees, baby Pygmies, and baby White-breasted Nuthatches, all screaming at their parents at my feeders.”

**MARY AND DAVE DRISCOLL** had two new yard birds August 27: a small flock of Chipping Sparrows (which left when the resident Sharpie came in) and two Brewer's Blackbirds. Nearby Welch park “has some native plants: rabbitbrush, some grasses, besides blue grass, and trees. Occasionally we see our Western Scrub-Jay over there. That area and our peanut feeders could explain its visits”.

**COMMON NIGHTHAWKS PROBABLY**

**NEST** in the city, but we see them (or hear them) infrequently. Dave Riggs noticed many as of September: “Every evening they are out in force and literally more than we can count at times. Of course, with their erratic flight it might be some



*Common Nighthawk  
Photo courtesy of  
Hugh Kingery*

of the same birds but they seem to come out of nowhere and be everywhere. Elena Klaver saw one in Aurora September 17, the same day that Urling and I saw 2-3 in Hilltop.

**THEN, KIRK HUFFSTATER IN CASTLE ROCK**, also September 17, heard “a Common Poorwill vocalizing in front of my house at about 8:15 p.m. I've been hearing

*Backyard Birds contd. on page 10*

# Backyard Birds

Backyard Birds contd. from page 9

1-2 regularly both mornings and evenings for weeks. After substantial practice the past few years, I can whistle mimicry of their flight calls closely enough that I often can entice them to fly quite close to me while standing on my deck. Last week one flew within 15-20 feet of me on three separate times within 2 minutes!"

## COMING HOME FROM THE POST OFFICE,

Urling spotted an odd nighthawk along the road. It struck her as different. After watching it for 10-15 minutes she came home and we both went back. We decided that several things made it a Lesser Nighthawk: buffy highlights to the plumage, flight low to the ground (less than 25 feet up most of the time), a different flight pattern, and a somewhat different wing shape.



Lesser Nighthawk  
Photo courtesy of  
Wikipedia

**HAWKS ALWAYS INTRIGUE.** Elena Klaver saw an American Kestrel fly against a window and land on a ledge on the 38th floor of the Hyatt Hotel downtown. Steve Kascht saw a Merlin, identified with the aid of a fellow teacher, at Cherry Creek High School.

## DOUG ZIEGLER, IN WASH PARK,

while reading the Sunday paper, "heard a tremendous thump on one of our windows. He looked out to see a Mourning Dove dying on our back patio. Sitting on the neighbor's fence 50 feet away was a Cooper's Hawk. It was obviously trying to decide if it could come to get the dove. We watched, off and on, for a half hour, but the hawk must have been biding its time, because in between glances out the window, the dove disappeared. We didn't see a shadow, the dogs didn't give any alert. But in the space of five minutes it was gone."



Mourning Dove  
Photo courtesy of  
Wikipedia

## COLORADO HAS SEVERAL EMAIL CHAT GROUPS

that you readers might enjoy. Foremost, Cobirds reports bird sightings statewide. It runs 10-20 messages per day, including the Rare Bird Report. ASGD sponsors Douglbirds, on which members report birds seen in Douglas and Elbert counties. And a new group started in September, to enable folks to discuss backyard bird feeding: bird feeding, feeding techniques, feeders, seed types, birds at your feeders – anything related to backyard bird feeding in Colorado. Addresses for these groups:

Cobirds: [www.cfo-link.org/birding/COBirds](http://www.cfo-link.org/birding/COBirds)

Douglbirds: [www.denveraudubon.org](http://www.denveraudubon.org)

At the upper right, click on

Colo. Bird feeders: <http://groups.google.com/group/cobirdfeeders>

Cobirds and the bird feeder group both use Google groups, so you use the same password for both.

**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](mailto:ouzels8@aol.com).

# The 2010 Birdathon...And the Winner is Audubon Society of Greater Denver

by Mackenzie Goldthwait and Doug Kibbe, ASGD Board Members

Three teams participated in the May 2010 Birdathon, in which participants solicit pledges for the birds they locate in a 24 hour period in May in Colorado. 120 donors contributed an impressive sum of \$7,179, attesting to the fund raising and bird finding capabilities of the participants. The "3 Vets in Search of a Bird" team dominated in both capacities for the second year in a row.

Despite scheduling conflicts which forced them to run their route 'a week before the migrants arrived,' they bested their previous total by more than 20 species while driving well over 200 miles in the endeavor. The "Kingbirds" took a more leisurely, stay at home approach amassing their 127 species at Rocky Mountain Arsenal, Cherry Creek and Castlewood Canyon. The "Great Railed

Tackles" got off to a great start with Greater Prairie Chickens on a lek, but spent so much time ogling a Bobolink in the afternoon that they ran out of daylight.

All teams plan to improve on their performance next year, and we hope that they will be joined by many other ASGD members forming teams of their own.

| Team                       | Species | Donors | Total Raised | Best Species   |
|----------------------------|---------|--------|--------------|--|
| 3 Vets in Search of a Bird | 162     | 56     | \$4669       | Broad-winged Hawk, Piping plover, Long-billed Curlew, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, Philadelphia Vireo |
| Great Railed Tackles       | 99      | 35     | \$1336       | Greater Prairie Chicken, Bobolink  |
| Kingbirds                  | 127     | 29     | \$1174       | 200 Wilson's Phalaropes each spinning in circles to suck in insects on which to feed.                            |
| Totals                     |         | 120    | \$7179       |  |

# Estella Leopold Recognized for Lifetime Achievements in Conservation

It's nice to see a person's good work recognized, especially someone with a connection to ASGD. And so it is with Dr. Estella B. Leopold, a former ASGD member, who recently won the 2010 International Cosmos Award for her lifetime conservation efforts. We here in Colorado have directly benefitted from Estella's work. She was instrumental in having Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument preserved from a developer's destructive plans.

Now in its 18th year, the International Cosmos Prize carries a cash award of 40 million yen (nearly \$500,000) and was previously awarded to renowned conservationists such as David Attenborough, Jared Diamond, and directors of some of the world's largest botanic gardens. The



objective of the International Cosmos Prize is to honor worldwide those who further the "harmonious coexistence between nature and mankind."

"Dr. Estella Leopold has made tremendous achievements by continuing and further developing the Land Ethic, which was initiated by her father, Aldo Leopold, as well as by disseminating the idea to many places in the United States." For the purpose of carrying on the family's work, Leopold contributed to the establishment of the Aldo Leopold Foundation, in Baraboo, Wisconsin, in 1982. She is still pursuing activities that weave the Land Ethic into the fabric of people's lives.

Estella, 83, was born in Madison, graduated from the University of Wisconsin and now lives in Seattle. She is a University of Washington professor emeritus of botany, forest resources and quaternary research, and has been teaching and conducting research for more than 60 years. She pioneered the use of fossilized pollen and spores in North America to understand how plants and ecosystems respond over eons to such things as climate change.

As noted above, by providing the scientific basis, through pollen analysis, for the necessity of their preservation and protection, Estella helped save the Florissant Fossil Beds which include internationally valued fossilized trees, fish, birds, and insects from development.

Furthermore, although Mount St. Helens, Washington, lost as much as 600 km of its neighboring forest due to an eruption, it was Dr. Leopold's distinguished leadership that galvanized a subsequent movement toward the creation of a national monument.

It is safe to say that her contribution to the creation and preservation of these national parks and monuments is significant in leaving natural treasures within human society that can be handed down forever.

As for the future of conservation, Leopold observes the need for global outreach. The Aldo Leopold Foundation's programming is increasingly engaging audiences around the globe. Estella also acknowledges the importance of reaching children. "There's a subculture of birders, of people who love nature," she says, "and many of them probably grew up like myself. I was raised outdoors. You'd go out to play, get on your bike and just go everywhere - out all day. But kids now are more restricted. How are they going to learn to love nature and to protect it?"

It's nice to see one of our own be so deservedly recognized. Congratulations Estella from ASGD!

Take a closer Look... 

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