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Share the View Photo Contest

October 15 - November 30, 2011

How often can you turn \$10 into \$1000 with just one beautiful image? Anyone who enters Audubon Society of Greater Denver's first-ever International Nature Photography Contest has an equal chance of doing so. \$1000 is the top cash prize among ten that will be awarded in addition to recognition for the top 250 images selected by our prestigious team of judges,

George Lepp, Helen Gilks and Jeff Foott.

Who says nature doesn't pay? Nature buffs should sort through the pictures they have taken and pick out the best, the beautiful, the unusual, the favorites. Any image of the natural world will do – that includes landscapes, flowers, wildlife, macro shots, aerials, behaviors, portraits, underwater, abstracts, black & whites – even urban wildlife – as long as nature is the prime feature.

People may enter as many images as they'd like in the Share the View contest for an entry fee of \$10 per image. Not only will they have the chance to win some big bucks, but if they place in the top 250, they will receive a Certificate of Merit and their image will appear on the contest website throughout 2012. One of the top 250 will be featured per day and all will be accompanied by the photographer's name, contact information and website link (if requested).

The contest takes place from October 15 through November 30, 2011. People who register on the contest website now (<http://denveraudubon.contestvenue.com/>) will receive an email to be notified about updates.

Photographers should be sure that the

image is in keeping with the theme of nature and wildlife. All entries should accurately reflect the subject matter and scene as it actually appeared when captured with the camera. Photos may NOT be digitally altered beyond standard processing and optimization. Domestic animals and plants, people, and the "hand of man" may be included, but wildlife, landscape

or nature must be the featured element.

What images cannot be entered into the competition? The contest will accept images of animals from wildlife sanctuaries, zoos and rehabilitation facilities, but



Photo by Patrick Smith

judges will be instructed to favor photographs of animals in the wild over those in controlled conditions. They will not accept any images that obviously involved a photographer overstressing an animal. Game farm animals are not allowed – game farms are defined as private for-profit operations whose primary income is generated from hiring out captive animals for photography, videography and film-making.

All images will be entered digitally on the contest website, whether photographed on film or with digital capture.

Proceeds from the contest will benefit ASGD education, conservation and research programs – a great way to support a premier nature organization, show the beauty of your surroundings, and strive for recognition of your photographic efforts.

For more information, contact kbrummert@denveraudubon.org or Wendy Shattil at wendy@dancingpelican.com.

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Find us on: facebook.

Celebrating 42 Years of service to the Greater Denver Community

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK ~

As 2011 comes to a close, we glance back at another successful year. Thank you to everyone who contributed and thank you to all who volunteered their time and expertise to ASGD and our programs. Without your support, we would not be able to accomplish the important work of educating children and adults about nature, protecting the birds, wildlife, and habitats we cherish, and supporting non-game wildlife research.

I used the word "glance" because we need to look forward and focus ahead. We will certainly build on the successes of 2011, including expanding the number of schools we work with (particularly in low income areas), enhancing our monthly events at the Audubon Center, partnering with more businesses and groups to help maintain and improve our native plant gardens, offering a wide range of field trips and travel opportunities, and holding our second annual Share the View international digital photo contest in 2012.

As we select new projects, we want to be careful not to overextend ourselves, yet still meet some important needs for our current programs. We are excited to announce two projects and partnerships that will accomplish our goal to improve what we already offer.

If you have been to our bird banding station in May, you know that it is an amazing experience, but the site is a bit "rugged", particularly when the weather is not quite optimal. Rick Sommerfeld, the Associate Chair and Senior Instructor with the Department of Architecture at CU Denver, will have students from the Design Build program create a new pavilion for the bird banding station. The students will design and build a unique structure that fits in with the landscape. The Wildlife Habitat Council is assisting to find a business or corporation to fund a portion or all of the project. The new pavilion will be completed before the banding station opens in April 2012.

We will also be working with Dr. Christy Carello, Associate Professor of Biology at The Metropolitan State College of Denver. Dr. Carello's Ornithology students will be working on a project in the spring to create interpretive signage about the birds we band at the Audubon Center. The students will research the information and design the displays. We will have a special reception to unveil their work, with judges from the field of interpretation, our Audubon Master Birder program, and other experts to select the best display. This new interpretive signage will also be ready before the banding station opens.

We are excited about the year ahead, and we hope you will join us on one of our programs or projects, and please consider volunteering. We have so many opportunities for you to help us advocate for the environment and connect people to nature.



Karl Brummert
Executive Director



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MISSION

**Audubon Society of Greater Denver
advocates for the environment,
connecting people with nature
through education, conservation and
research.**

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Conservation Report

by Polly Reetz, ASGD Conservation Committee Chair

By the time you read this, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) evaluating the increased storage of water behind Chatfield Dam may be on the streets and available for your scrutiny and comment. Here are some questions about the project, with answers from Audubon volunteers.

1. **Why is it called the “Chatfield Reallocation” project?** Answer: Think of the SPACE behind Chatfield Dam. That space is now used to store water for flood control and recreation. The 14 water providers including Aurora, Castle Rock, Castle Pines, and Highlands Ranch (Centennial Water) want to store water there for municipal and industrial use. So some SPACE will be “reallocated” from flood control and recreation to those uses. Proponents want to store an additional 20,700 acre-feet, which will raise the level of the reservoir 12 vertical feet.
2. **Why is ASGD so concerned about this project?** Answer: Contrary to what everyone originally thought, the environmental damage caused by the Reallocation will be substantial: loss of mature cottonwood forest and riparian habitat, loss of wetlands and free-flowing segments of the S. Platte River, Plum Creek and Deer Creek, and loss of the many features that make it so attractive for recreation.
Chatfield State Park sits at a conjunction of several ecosystems: high plains, riparian, and foothills. These ecosystems contribute to its great diversity of bird species--350 have been recorded which breed, migrate and over-winter in the area. For this reason Chatfield has been designated an Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society.
3. **Why does ASGD keep stressing mitigation?** First answer: The classic pattern in the development

of western water has been that the projects get approved and funded, the project is built, and then the proponents find they are out of money for the mitigation, or local boosters have lost interest, and so on. So the environmental damage is done but the measures needed to alleviate it are never completed.

Second answer: Since the damage to the State Park will be substantial, we want to ensure that environmental and recreational losses are compensated for. However, how do you replace mature (90+ years) cottonwood forest or free-flowing streams? Is there another site as good for balloon launches as the current one? The DEIS has to answer such questions.

4. **Why does ASGD keep asking for “Full Disclosure of Impacts?”** Answer: One of the most damaging aspects of the project is the “bathtub ring” that will surround the reservoir and impair the attractiveness of the State Park to visitors. Due to the very junior water rights involved, the additional water will only be present in the reservoir three years out of 10. In other years the water levels will be where they are now, but the cottonwood forest and other vegetation will have been removed to accommodate the additional water, leaving large mud flats. This “bathtub ring” will be muddy, dusty, and liable to invasion by noxious weeds. Though the proponents promise new and improved recreational facilities, they will be ¼ to ½ mile from the water most years. The DEIS has to clearly describe these impacts.
5. **Are there alternatives to this project?** Answer: The DEIS is supposed to evaluate a range of alternatives. This is the heart of the National Environmental Policy Act process, and ASGD will be looking

hard to see if genuinely viable alternatives have been considered.

6. **How long will we have to review the DEIS?** Answer: The Corps of Engineers is proposing a 60-day review period. ASGD doesn't think this is long enough to thoroughly review a document that will probably stretch to 2,500 pages, including numerous appendices and we are planning to ask for an extension to 120 days. Even though we have several volunteers who will review different parts of the DEIS, we will need that time to do a thorough job on such a massive document.
7. **How can I help?** Letter and comments are needed! Attend the public meetings and ask hard questions. ASGD will be holding our own meeting and hopefully a tour of the site. Several aids to analyze the DEIS are supposed to be provided, and we can direct our members to those. Call ASGD at 303-973-9530 or email at info@denveraudubon.org to get in contact with our Conservation Committee and get more information.

Additional Conservation items:
2012 Legislative Forum and Action Alert: Denver Parks
on page 12

Post your latest bird sightings & questions on our Facebook Page



Will we lose two native fish to hybridization?

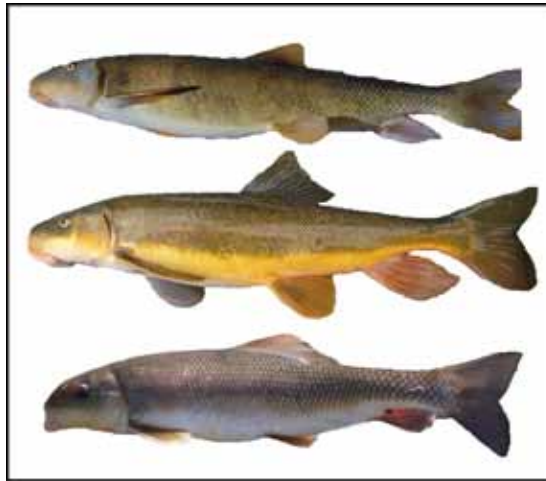
by Se Jin Song

Within the last century, native fish populations of North America have experienced rapid declines; one study estimates that 40 taxa have been lost. Although several factors contribute to declines, non-native fish species have been implicated in nearly 50% of endangered species listings, second only to habitat loss. Non-native species can negatively effect native populations in several ways, such as through competition and predation. However, hybridization (mating between different species) poses perhaps the most significant threat to their long-term survival. Over time, gradual replacement of indigenous genes with non-native ones can result in the endemic species effectively becoming extinct.

My dissertation project focuses on the effects of hybridization between the introduced white sucker (*Catostomus commersoni*) with two native suckers of the Colorado River Basin, the flannelmouth sucker (*Catostomus latipinnis*) and bluehead sucker (*Catostomus discobolus*). Earlier studies indicated that these two native species may be particularly vulnerable to continued decline due to several causes, including hybridization with the white sucker. Consequently, in 2006, a conservation agreement was collectively developed among several natural resource management agencies, with the main goal

of ensuring their persistence throughout their ranges.

A recent study of a Wyoming watershed reported that the introduced



white sucker can not only hybridize with both native catostomid species, but may also indirectly facilitate the exchange of genes between the two native species by acting as a genetic bridge. The researchers identified several fish with genetic contributions from all three species and inferred that these hybrids resulted from three-way hybridization (for example, from a bluehead-white hybrid mating with a flannelmouth). This finding was intriguing because the two native suckers are likely unable to exchange genes directly.

In 2008, I began studies to describe whether these patterns of hybridization between and among the three species could be generalized across the Upper Colorado River Basin (UCRB). Through collaboration with state and federal agencies, tissue samples were obtained from fish in western Colorado and eastern Utah streams. Genetic analysis of the samples showed that there are in fact a variety of two-species hybrid types in the UCRB. However, curiously, there were no three-way hybrids present in any of the streams I sampled, in stark contrast to the findings of the Wyoming study. This presents a couple of interesting questions: 1) Why, if there are all types of two-way hybrids, are there no three-way hybrids and 2) Why are three-way hybrids in the one Wyoming watershed, and not in the other UCRB watersheds?

This summer, I will be conducting a study to help answer these questions. More specifically, I will be comparing fertilization and hatching success rates of all classes of hybrid crosses from two streams where differences in hybrid survival were observed. Currently, it is not known whether fertilization and/or hatching rates are affected by hybridization. However, hopefully, we'll soon have a clearer and more complete story to tell for these two native species.

Welcome Emily B. Hertz new Audubon Center Coordinator



Emily recently moved here from Seattle where she graduated from the University of Washington with a Master's of Education. In addition, she received a certification in Environment, Education and Community from IslandWood, a graduate environmental education program on Bainbridge Island, WA. Over the past few years, she worked as a resource management and conservation project coordinator for the Tucson BLM

(Bureau of Land Management)/SCA (Student Conservation Association). She was also involved with the Tucson Audubon Society, where she took naturalist classes and created interactive education booths for their annual Ironwood Festival. Emily enjoys rock climbing, photography, trail running, camping, gardening, eating chips & salsa and hiking with her fluffy tuxedo cat Murphy and her husband Steven.

LWF to accept Grant Proposals through January 27, 2012

The Audubon Society of Greater Denver's Lois Webster Fund will again offer grants for research and education projects on Colorado non-game wildlife. The LWF was established in 1995 to honor ASGD founder, environmentalist and educator Lois Webster, and in its years of existence has distributed approximately \$40,000 worth of research grants. Funds have assisted flammulated owl research, an investigation of Boulder County bat species, a study of burrowing owl population dynamics, research on possible impacts of climate change on pikas, a study of the pre-adult

life stages of an endangered butterfly, and compilation of 14 years of mountain plover survey data.

The LWF was set up to fund research and education projects "designed to lead to the conservation of non-game species in Colorado that are declining or under stress or suffering loss or degradation of habitat," according to the LWF Funding Guidelines. The LWF focuses on partnering with other organizations and expects the grantee to provide the leadership and coordination to obtain additional funding and to involve others. The updated Guidelines and

Application for LWF grants will be available after November 15, 2011 on the ASGD website (www.denveraudubon.org) under the Research Fund or Lois Webster Grant Applications link.

The Committee will be accepting grant proposals through January 27, 2012 for approximately \$6,000 worth of funds for research in the coming year. In addition, the LWF has two spotting scopes available to loan to projects requiring such equipment. Grantees will be notified by early March, 2012 and the funds dispersed in time for the spring field season.

24 Hours to Give Where You Live

Support the Audubon Society of Greater Denver on the second annual Colorado Gives Day! On December 6, 2011, Colorado citizens will come together again to raise millions of dollars for nonprofits like ours. Last year, the goal to raise \$1 million for Colorado charities was exceeded—\$8.7 million was distributed instead! ASGD raised over \$10,000 during Colorado Gives Day 2012. We hope to surpass and even double that amount in 2011!

Presented once again by Community First Foundation and

FirstBank, Colorado Gives Day asks you to give to your favorite charities through the website GivingFirst.org, an online giving resource featuring all of the nonprofits participating in Colorado Gives Day. On this website we share our goals, accomplishments and much more to help you be informed.

- **100 percent of your donation will come to the Audubon Society of Greater Denver when you give through GivingFirst.org.**
- **When you give online any time**

on December 6, the value of your donation will be increased by the FirstBank Incentive Fund.

- **Help the Audubon Society of Greater Denver win cash prizes! We have a chance to win \$1,000 Bonus Bucks and \$5,000 High Five cash prizes when you remember us on Colorado Gives Day.**

Donate online at <http://www.givingfirst.org/DenverAudubon> any time over the 24 hour period of December 6 to Give Where You Live!



Corporate Partner



Nocturnal Wildlife Hike at the Audubon Center

Saturday, November 5, 7-9pm

Go spotlighting for nighttime wildlife on trails at the Audubon Center at Chatfield, and hear "tales" about some of our local nocturnal critters! Also, we will do some owl "calling." Bring a flashlight and warm layers. Activity Level: Some of the trails are narrow and moderately steep for a few feet. We will be hiking in the dark. Elevation 5430 ft. **Leader: Brian Hoffmann, professional wildlife/wetlands biologist.**
Meeting Place: Audubon Center at Chatfield
Registration required
\$8/Friends member; \$10/non-member

Walk the Wetlands

Sunday, November 6, 9am

(Daylight Savings Time ends)

Sunday, December 4, 9am

Walk for about 3 miles along the South Platte River exploring pond, riparian, and grassland habitats for late fall migrants, residents, and winter arrivals. Trails are moderately easy, but do contain rocks, tree roots and poison ivy. Dress for the weather. BBFGSW (and a scope if you have one); some loaner equipment may be available. Activity Level: Some of the trails are narrow and moderately steep for a few feet. Elevation 5430 ft.

Leaders: Audubon Master Birders

Meeting Place: Audubon Nature Center at Chatfield

Registration not required

Donations to ASGD appreciated

Ducks in Winter at Belmar Park

Saturday, November 26, 9am-12pm

Join us for an easy walk of several miles around the beautiful riparian and pond habitat of Belmar Park, looking for late fall migrants and wintering ducks. Ducks and other waterfowl found at Belmar Park include: pied-billed grebes, gadwalls,

northern pintails, redheads, northern shovelers, teals, lesser scaup, ring-necked ducks and ruddy ducks. Often we get close up views. Dress for cold weather and BBFGWS (plus a spotting scope, if you have one).

Activity Level: Most walking is on cement paths, but some off-trail walking may be required for best views. Elevation 5480 ft.

Leaders: Audubon Master Birders Cindy Valentine and Barb Shissler

Meeting Place: Belmar Park parking lot, 8501 S. Wadsworth Blve. (west side of Wadsworth and Ohio), Lakewood, CO.

Registration required

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

Castlewood Canyon or Douglas County Open Space

Sunday, November 20, 2011,

8 am-after lunch

Join expert birders Hugh and Urling Kingery for a 2-3 hour walk along moderately easy trails in Castlewood Canyon or Gateway Mesa, plus a short drive to Walker Road pond. We will visit scrub oak/ponderosa pine and grasslands habitats. BBFGWS. Bring lunch to eat around the bird friendly Kingery feeders.

Activity Level: Elevation 6200 ft.

Leaders: Hugh and Urling Kingery

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.

Registration required

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

Christmas Bird Count Celebration

Saturday, December 17, 8am-1pm

This popular activity and citizen science program has been taking place across the nation since 1900. Auduboners in 1900 decided that instead of having an annual bird hunt, they would count birds

instead. The data they have been collecting all these years allows researchers and biologists to study the health and status of bird populations. Join us at the Audubon Center, learn about this annual event, and participate in short or long counts right around the Audubon Center.

Meeting Place: Audubon Center at Chatfield

No registration required

How to Identify Colorado's Hawks and Raptors and their Natural History

Thursday, January 19, 6:30-9pm

This is a classroom warm up and preview to Raptors of the Northern Front Range field trip. Learn physical markings which help in the field when viewing hawks and raptors. Hone in on key identification points and discover the natural history and characteristics of Colorado's falcons, hawks, osprey, eagles, and the stealthy accipiters. Be prepared next time you go out in the field. Includes a slide presentation with helpful handouts. Bring your bird field guide to the class to use as a reference.

Instructor: Tina Jones, long time Colorado wildlife teacher and Audubon Master Birder

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

Registration required

Meeting Place: ASGD office, meet upstairs in the classroom. Call for directions.

Programs Offered in Partnership with City of Aurora Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Waterfowl Walk at Quincy Reservoir

Saturday, November 12, 8:30am

Saturday, December 10, 9am

Aurora's Quincy Reservoir offers diverse winter waterfowl watching opportunities including scaups, mergansers, buffleheads,

***** BBFGWS = Bring binoculars, field guides, water, and a snack. *****

and ring-necked ducks. Winter access is by guided naturalists only.

Activity Level: Easy off-trail hiking, approximately a mile each way. Elevation 5715 ft.

For directions, additional information, or to register, please contact 303-739-2428 or email nature@auroragov.org.

Leader: Mary Ann Bonnell

Meeting Place: Quincy Reservoir (east entrance off Quincy)

Registration required; No fee

Program offered by the Cherry Creek Stewardship Partners

Winter Solstice Walk in the Cherry Creek Valley Ecological Park

Saturday, December 17, 10am-12pm

Join the Cherry Creek Stewardship Partners, and representatives from land use agencies who are engaged in stream reclamation and flood control projects along Cherry Creek, for a site assessment and quarterly census of wildlife activity at this open space park in Arapahoe County. Considerable resources are being directed to this area in order to mitigate development impacts, improve habitat and encourage civic engagement. We need your input to help transform this 75-acre Park in the heart of the Cherry Creek Watershed into the welcoming avian environment it should be. There will be Hawks.

Activity Level: This should be an easy hike of a few miles with little elevation gain. Approximate elevation 5700ft.

Leader: Casey Davenhill

Meeting Place: Cherry Creek Valley Ecological Park, Centennial

The park can be accessed from the intersection of Arapahoe and Jordan Roads. Take Jordan Road south about 1.3 miles, turn left on Jamison Street and then left on Jasper Court.

Questions may be addressed to Casey Davenhill at 303-345-1675 ([\[creek.org\]\(http://creek.org\)\).**](mailto:casey@cherry-</p></div><div data-bbox=)**

No fee or registration required

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, Denver Urban, and Douglas County CBC) for section leaders, meeting times, locations and to join a team. Each count participant is asked to make a \$5 donation to National Audubon for each count they join.

Denver Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, December 17, 2011

Denver Christmas Bird Count is offered in partnership with the Denver Field Ornithologists.

Contact Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748, or go online to www.denveraudubon.org or www.dfobirder.org for more information (available by late October or sometime in November).

The circle for this count covers the southwest sector of the Denver Metro area, from Red Rocks to the Audubon Nature Center, and from Littleton to Tiny Town and Doubleheader Mountain. This area includes Chatfield State Park, Bear Creek Lake Park, 7 miles of the South Platte, and several foothills areas. Elevations vary and depend on the sector, and range from approximately 5430 to 7000 Ft. Trail difficulty will vary with the sector. Contact sector leaders for more information.

Douglas County Christmas

Bird Count -

Saturday, December 31, 2011

Offered in Partnership with Roxborough State Park.

Information available through Roxborough State Park, 303-973-3959. Call the park to sign up anytime and get on a team. Final deadline is Wednesday, December 28, 2011.

Walking distance and difficulty of the trails will vary with the count area (there are about a dozen walks to join), and the elevations will range from approximately 5,000 to 8,000 Ft. Many sectors involve mostly driving, with birding stops along the way. A chili supper will be held at the Roxborough Park Visitor Center after the count.

Denver Urban Christmas Bird Count

Sunday, January 1, 2012

There are 13 area walks one can join on the Denver Urban Christmas Bird Count, with variations on how much walking, the difficulty of the walking and the amount of driving required. This count covers areas along the South Platte River and Cherry Creek in the Denver Metro area, various city parks and cemeteries, Cherry Creek State Park, and the Rocky Mountain Arsenal. Elevations are approximately 5280 ft., with a few hundred feet in variation. For difficulty levels of different walk areas, please contact individual leaders.

Information on leaders to contact to register will be available by late November online at www.denveraudubon.org or www.dfobirder.org. You may also call Hugh Kingery at 303-814-2723 or email him at ouzels8@aol.com.

***** BFGWS = Bring binoculars, field guides, water, and a snack. *****



Bird & Brew Trivia

Wednesdays

January 25, 7-9pm

March 28, 7-9pm

Breckenridge Brewery Ballpark Pub

2220 Blake Street • Denver 80205 • www.breckbrew.com

Join us for an exciting night of nature and outdoor trivia!

Form a team of up to six or join a team that night.

Even if you're not trivia buff,

it's really all about friends, fun, and food.

\$5 entry fee per person proceeds support ASGD programs

303-973-9530 or info@denveraudubon.org

ATTENTION TEACHERS!

Educator Open House

Wednesday, November 9, 4pm-7pm

Kassler Center at Waterton Canyon

Just south of the Audubon Center on Waterton Rd.

Join the CANOE* for a night of science activity ideas for your classroom. Receive information, prizes, and refreshments while several Chatfield basin educational organizations provide information on their programs. Included at the event are ideas to help your students get to place-based science education about birding, habitats, plants and gardening, water sheds, water use, and more. Information on field trip transportation options and Chatfield area resources will be distributed at this event.

*CANOE stands for Chatfield Area Network for Outreach and Education, a cooperative effort between Audubon Society of Greater Denver, Denver Water, Denver Botanic Gardens, Rocky Mountain Land Library, Wildlife Habitat Council, Chatfield Water Authority and the U.S. Forest Service.

ASGD ENCOURAGES YOU TO REGISTER EARLY FOR INCREDIBLE BIRDING TRAVEL!

Winter Birding at Bosque del Apache

January 27 – 30, 2012

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, guided by an experienced ASGD trip leader, typically sells out quickly, so sign up soon!

Leaders: Hugh and Urling Kingery

\$849 per Friends member (double occupancy), \$999 per Friends member (single occupancy). Non-members add \$75 per person. Price includes round-trip motor coach transportation, guide services, three



nights' accommodations, driver gratuity, refuge entrance fees, 3 breakfasts, 4 lunches and 3 dinners. Deposit of \$150 due at registration with the balance due December 23, 2012.

Details: The trip departs from Denver at 8:00am on Friday, January 27 and returns late afternoon on January 30. 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 and two nights in Socorro. (Note: We will arrive too late to explore Santa Fe, since most shops and galleries close by 6:00pm in winter.)

Physical requirements: Easy to Moderate. This trip will include

short hikes over uneven terrain, but with some viewing taking place from the bus. Travelers should be prepared to spend time outdoors in cold temperatures.



by Hugh Kingery

CYNTHIA MADSEN, in our current Audubon Master Birder Class, devised a new scientific theory during a presentation to the class on migration by Bill Schmoker.

Bill: What prompts a Yellow Warbler to migrate?

Cynthia: He gets a Tweet.

CYNTHIA REPORTED ON RESULTS, Sept. 9, of her S3 approach: Stop, Stand, and Scan. In Willow Creek Park, east Centennial, she saw, "to my surprise, a beautiful Common Nighthawk catching a few winks on a bare limb in the warming morning sun. How thrilling!"

THEN, AT HOME DOING YARD WORK, "a flock of 20+ Common Grackles greeted me, taking showers and baths in my waterfall. As I observed the commotion, I heard another grackle above me in my Silver Maple. With a second glance, however, I discovered that it was a Blue Jay imitating a grackle. I wonder if it was one of the juvenile Blue Jays, that have been in my yard this past month, practicing some new sounds. Or maybe it just wanted to join the gang."

CAROLINE NIER, NEAR PARKER had a different set of juveniles: a Loggerhead Shrike nest with two babies. "I believe two babies survived and are still (July 22) being fed by the parents. They have been living on the ground and in trees on our property. One fell into our window well (I rescued him)."

DEB SHEPPARD HAD, on July 7, "two beautiful (Cooper's) hawks living in my urban backyard. They recently had their offspring. Some of the behavior has been unusual. One being very friendly and seems to want to connect with me. For instance, it watches me move from room to room, sits on my deck many times a

day, dropped food to me even though she is feeding babies, and sat in a nesting position on my deck and watched me work for 20 plus minutes. When I was gone for four days and returned, she flew into the window at me. My daughter did not hear or see the hawk while I was out of town." Deb called me for an explanation, which she did NOT receive.



Cooper's hawk on kill
by Harold Bowers

ON REFLECTION, I thought of two related factors. You may have read about a Western Kingbird that would attack a



Western Kingbird
by Dick Vogel

person wearing a certain face mask: it didn't matter who wore it – tall, short, skinny, fat – it attacked the one with the mask. A book I just began reading talks about how chickens can identify people as well as other chickens. Somehow this Cooper's Hawk had a passion for Deb.

GINA GERKEN VOLUNTEERS for the raptor education group, HawkQuest. On July 19, "a man came up to me at a HawkQuest event. He's in charge of maintenance in an Inverness high-rise. A couple of weeks ago, he was on top of the building working and was attacked from behind by a female Swainson's Hawk. He said it felt like a very strong man had slapped him hard on the back of his head. He received nine shallow puncture wounds. He ran downstairs into the parking lot. The hawk tried to attack him again. In the past two weeks, this protective mama has attacked a total of five people. One man had to go to the hospital for stitches. Memos have been sent out to several hundred employees, signs posted around the parking lot, and half the parking lot blocked off as unusable until the hawks leave.

"DESPITE THE ATTACK, J.R. became quite fond of the nesting Swainson's. The nest is in a ponderosa pine at the edge of the parking lot and he has watched them painstakingly build it over the last two years. A large, strong nest, this is first year they've used it. I came to see it; they have three lovely babies who look like they are about to fledge. Luckily, the mama didn't seem too interested in attacking us



Swainson's hawk overhead
by Hugh Kingery

because she was too busy panting and trying to shield her babies (who are almost as large as she is) from the 95-degree sun. The male has been somewhat missing in action – one more reason this mama deserves kudos.

"HERE'S THE SAD PART OF THE STORY.

The man from U.S. Fish and Wildlife who came to check out the situation encouraged the property owners to remove the nest at the end of the summer, because of all the problems. Isn't it sad that these amazing birds, particularly this amazing female who adapted to an environment filled with buildings and parking lots, can't be cut some slack and allowed to nest next year? So what if half the parking lot has to be emptied out for a few weeks. So what if people have to be a bit more aware of their surroundings. Two of the five people attacked were up on the roof (few people are even allowed there) and the others were in the closed section of the parking lot. The man who had to go to the hospital was walking along texting, not even looking where he was going. heaven forbid that someone might be inconvenienced by two amazing birds just in from a several thousand mile migration in hopes of fighting the odds of having a family."

I REPORTED LAST TIME on Jeff Stroup's hummingbird nest in his Littleton

Backyard Birds contd on page 10

Backyard Birds

Backyard Birds contd from page 9



Broad-tailed hummingbirds in nest by Jeff Stroup

yard. On Aug. 2 he emailed, "We lost one of the newborns. Came home from work and one was gone from our front yard nest. Second one survived and finally fledged. This week we're seeing both the adult female and the surviving offspring visiting our backyard hummingbird feeder several times a day. Saw them both twice after dinner last night. Appears they are sticking around for awhile."

THEN HE EMAILED MORE. Aug. 11: "Amazingly tonight, I discovered a second broad-tailed nest in my other tree (maple) in the front yard. This time, the nest is higher (15') and since I discovered it tonight, the adult female has been sitting in the nest immobile from dinnertime to darkness. Can't tell if one egg or two because nest is higher. In the morning I may be able to see from the upstairs window so stay tuned."

AUG 12: "This morning's light has given much more information: Two broad-tailed chicks are sitting in the nest. Nest is about 10 feet from upstairs bedroom window. Saw adult female buzz away and come back to feed both newborns."



Broad Tailed Hummingbird by Dick Vogel

AUG 13: "Second set of pictures were taken last night and this morning. Pictures taken from upper bedroom window. (Had to remove window screen). Both chicks pretty large and probably close to fledging. One picture has adult female at

the nest but I missed the shot of actual feeding by about 0.0001 seconds. (Now I know why people spend about \$2,000 or more for telephoto camera lenses-gotta talk to the wife...)"

SOME TIME AGO Mary Jane Black emailed about a certain vireo. "OK, I confess, I didn't have any idea what the word 'plumbeous' means. Finding out became more of a winding adventure than I anticipated."

"MY AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY did not have the word. So, I brought out my Oxford English Dictionary (and the magnifying glass), and there it was. Explained it meant lead or lead-coloured. One of the references used was "1874 Coues, Birds of the North West," and the example of usage was "Feather... plumbeous at base and brown at the tip. So, googled Coues and found there was a flycatcher named for him - probably, among other things. Looked up Coues' Flycatcher. Not in any books except a 1946 edition of Peterson. And then looked at Ken Kauffman field guide, just in case, and there it referred the reader to Greater Pewee. That I know from Arizona - "Jose Maria" bird. Some of the wing feathers plumbeous at base and brown at tip."

"SUMMARY: Plumbeous means, basically gray (or grey). Personally speaking, I have plumbeous hair and my grandmother, at about the same age, could have been called Blue-headed. At that time they rinsed their gray hair to make it whiter and prettier, but it was usually blue. We could have been vireos."

TONY LEUKERING RESPONDED, "I suggest that the word 'plumbing' also comes from the same root, as piping was originally lead-based. The following from www.etymonline.com/: 'Plumber. c.1100, "a worker in any sort of lead," from O.Fr. plummier (Fr. plombier), from L. plumbarius "worker in lead," properly an adj., "pertaining to lead," from plumbum "lead" (see plumb). Meaning shifted 19c. to "workman who installs pipes and fittings" as lead water pipes became the principal concern of the trade. In U.S. Nixon administration (1969-74), the name of a special unit for investigation of "leaks" of government secrets. Plumbing "water pipes" is first recorded 1884.' "

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.



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Decisions are made by those who show up!

Saturday, February 4, 2012, 8:30am to 1:30pm

**First Plymouth Church, 3501 S. Colorado Boulevard, Denver
(SW corner of Colorado and Hampden)**

Registration required. \$12 in advance; \$15 at the door

Call the ASGD office at 303-973-9530 or send an email to: info@denveraudubon.org.

The Audubon Society of Greater Denver and the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Sierra Club invite you to attend the 2012 Legislative Forum to learn about the hot environmental topics of the 2012 Colorado 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 the Sierra Club lobbyist, Chuck Malick, will review the session's environmental bills followed by discussions of the key issues with invited experts and legislators. In 2012, hot topics will include the merger of the

Colorado Division of Wildlife and State Parks, and possible threats to Get Outdoors Colorado funding. More details will be in the January/February Warbler, and a final agenda will be available shortly before the meeting.

We can always use help with setup and cleanup, so if you are interested in volunteering, call the ASGD office at 303-973-9530 or send an email to: info@denveraudubon.org.

Your Letters Needed: Denver's Wildlife Ecologist Could Be Gone in 60 Days

The City and County of Denver has a \$25 million budget shortfall to make up, and one of the casualties will be our only wildlife ecologist, Ashley Delaup, who works in the city's Natural Areas Program.

Ashley has made a big difference to Denver. She has spearheaded the writing and publication of management plans for coyotes, beaver and prairie dogs in the city, which guide city staff and residents in dealing with these species. Her guidelines for coyote management have been adopted by 10 other cities in the U.S. The suburbs of Chicago paid her to train their animal control and police officials on hazing and other coyote management practices. She has also spoken at two international conferences about coyotes.

Ashley took almost 300 calls in 2010 concerning various wildlife issues, trained city staff on ways to deal with them, co-founded the Urban Wildlife Working Group, and developed the avian botulism response for park staff and rangers that helped save over 50% of affected birds at Duck and Lollipop Lakes. She has spoken at many public meetings, including Homeowner Associations, initiated signage in city parks, and personally handled many injured wild birds.

Ashley has also initiated partnerships in environmental education, including with ASGD. At a time when childhood obesity and lack of connection to the natural world are acknowledged, and there is an increasing number of problematic encounters with wildlife, it does not make sense to eliminate this important wildlife ecologist position.

With wildlife proliferating in the City and County we also need a wildlife ecologist to handle the many issues involving wildlife survival and habitat protection. Ashley has done an exemplary job. The City should find other places to cut the budget.

You can help by calling or writing all these people:

Your City Council member at 1437 Bannock St., Rm. 451, Denver, CO 80202, Tel. 720-865-9534

Mayor Michael Hancock at 1437 Bannock St., Suite 350, Denver, CO 80202, Tel. 720-865-9000

Dody Erickson, Manager, Denver Parks and Recreation, 201 W. Colfax Ave., Dept. 601, Denver 80202



Donate a Vehicle

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.

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Lynne Forrester donated birdseed to the Audubon Center

Brian Hoffmann donated a collection of animal pelts to be used in the education program

John Wright donated a vehicle through Cars Helping Kids

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Thank You Volunteers

Audubon Center/School Programs: Dotty Biggs, Sheila Burns, Angela Grun, Kate Frost, Marsha Heron, Brian Hoffmann, Rhonda Kelly, Barbara Shissler, Jeanne McCune, Ginger Sawatzki, Julie Dorosz

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