

the Warbler



since 1969

Interview with Audubon Master Birders

Karl Brummert, the ASGD Executive Director, sat down with Barbara Masoner and Megan Miller to discuss the Audubon Master Birder (AMB) program. Barbara was a member of the very first Audubon Master Birder class in 2006. Megan is a recent high school graduate and is in the current 2011-2012 class. Megan has the distinguished honor of being the youngest Audubon Master Birder candidate.

Karl: I know this is like one of those annoying job interview questions, but tell me about yourself.

Barbara : I am a native Denverite. I've lived in Kansas, California and Alaska for just a few years but there is no place like home. My interest in nature began with family vacations in the Colorado Rockies. My cousin and I would go



on day long hikes by ourselves even though we were only in grade school. My love of the outdoors lead me to my undergraduate degree in Environmental Interpretation from Colorado State University. For ten years I was the director of the Vail Nature Center.

I love to share the natural world with children. They are so eager to learn and explore. Currently I am also volunteering for Grow Local Colorado, an organization dedicated to promoting local food, local community and local economy. One of our projects is growing produce in various Denver Parks and giving it to communities in need.

Megan: I am also a Colorado native and have lived here my whole life. I've loved nature since I was very young. I think my interest started with bugs and branched out from there. I have memories of keeping grasshoppers, spiders, caterpillars and various other bugs in my dad's mason jars. In fact, I



still do! Every summer I find myself with a desk of jars filled with Parson's spiders and mantises. In addition to birds and bugs, I like to paint and play viola.

I am planning on attending Colorado State University to study Wildlife Biology or Evolutionary Biology if they have it.



Interview with Audubon Master Birders *(cont.)*

Karl: *Something we all have in common: we are all natives! How did you become interested in birds and at what age?*

Barbara: I was a late bloomer when it came to birds. I found plants much more interesting as they don't fly off in the midst of a field identification. Mammals are generally easy to identify with a single glance. However, birds require more patience.

Megan: I became interested in birds when I got a thistle feeder that attracted goldfinches. After that I bought Audubon's guide to western birds and started identifying the birds I saw when I hiked. I think I was in fourth grade.

Karl: *So, what is an Audubon Master Birder?*

Barbara: I see AMBs as ambassadors for Audubon Society of Greater Denver, with above average bird identification skills, trained to provide the public with a variety of "birding services".

Megan: An Audubon Master Birder is someone who completes the Audubon Master Birder Program.



Karl: *Why did you decide to become an Audubon Master Birder?*

Barbara: A friend told me about the class and we thought it would be fun to take together. Also, I felt it was time to get serious about birds. I knew the basics but wanted to have a stronger foundation. And boy did Audubon Master Birders provide that in spades! Also, I wanted to get to know many of the AMB mentors better. This was a wonderful opportunity to do so.

Megan: I decided to become a Master Birder for many reasons. I wanted to learn as much about birds as possible and I thought the AMB program would be a great way to get started. I wanted to meet people who loved the outdoors as much as I did. I wanted to get out and explore the natural places in Colorado.

You meet a lot of amazing people all over Colorado. You gain knowledge and awareness of the things around you.

I wanted to gain an awareness of the things around me.

Karl: *What does becoming an Audubon Master Birder entail?*

Barbara: First and foremost, it requires a time commitment. Participants should appreciate the hours required for this in depth course. Every class and field trip provides another piece of the puzzle to understanding our feathered friends. This information is essential when the AMB then shares their knowledge with ASGD visitors. Also, applicants take an identification test to determine if they have the birding foundation to build on.

Megan: The program requires hikes and classroom sessions every other week as well as keeping lists of the birds and habitats you've seen in Colorado on the hikes. There is homework for each hike. You have to be able to identify the habitats of Colorado as well as the birds of each habitat. You give a certain number of volunteer hours to ASGD. You do Christmas bird counts, volunteer at banding stations, and you could help out at a bird rehab center.

Karl: *What are the benefits of being an Audubon Master Birder?*

Barbara: I'll try to limit myself to just a few of the benefits of being an AMB. The instructors for this course are exceptional. They share their love of birds via their area of expertise. My field ID skills are so much better and I have new found friends. Last, I feel I am a part of this great community of enthusiastic and giving birders.

Megan: You meet a lot of amazing people all over Colorado. You gain knowledge and awareness of the things around you. You support ASGD by leading hikes and various other volunteering. You share your passion with people and hopefully get them interested in birds.

Karl: *What benefits do Audubon Master Birders provide to the greater Denver community?*

Barbara: Master Birders serve so many roles in the metro area. They greet Audubon Center guests, lead bird walks, help with school group field trips, staff tables at partnering organizations' events, volunteer at the ASGD office, and answer caller's questions about Colorado birds. Basically, if there is a way to share all that great knowledge acquired during the course, then AMBs will be there.

Megan: I agree. The more people share their passion of birds and nature, the more others will become aware of what nature exists out there.

Interview with Audubon Master Birders *(cont.)*

Karl: *How have you been involved with ASGD?*

Barbara: The program provided me with confidence to lead school groups and other ASGD programs. I also am an instructor for Thorne Ecological Institute's summer camps. I've helped at various events such as the Denver Zoo's free day and the Tagawa Garden's bird festival. These organizations are just a few that partner with ASGD.

Megan: I helped organize and prepare ASGD's study skins collection, I was in the Kids Birding Club, and I am training to be an Audubon Naturalist.

Karl: *Megan, after you finish the program, how do you hope to use your Audubon Master Birder training?*

Megan: I hope to use my AMB training to kinda jump start my future education, as well as make sure I enjoy studying birds, not just watching them on leisurely hikes. I want to use my training to share my passions with others in hopes that it will inspire them to get out and enjoy the natural world. I want to help ASGD because I've met so many great people and it was ASGD's monthly Walk the Wetland hikes that really got me started.

Karl: *What type of career are you interested in pursuing?*

Megan: I really have no idea what career I'm interested in. I'm not really sure what's out there. But I know I will somehow study birds, whether it's field research or working at a banding station 4 months a year ... I'll find a way.

Karl: *What is your favorite bird and why?*

Megan: I have so many favorite birds. I really love ducks, swifts and woodpeckers. I love ducks (and by ducks I mean mergansers, grebes and ducks themselves) because they are irresistibly adorable and each species is so distinct and colorful. Swifts because they spend most of their lives in the air, with no air traffic controllers, terrorists, and no separating liquids in little baggies no bigger than 8 oz.

Karl: *Boy, wouldn't that be nice. Traveling would be so much more enjoyable...and exhilarating!*

Megan: Very true! I also love woodpeckers because I love the way they fly, the contrast in the feather colors, and the patterns on the heads and wings. I also love the way they go from tree to tree by flying low and then swooping up and landing on the trunk...I also love roadrunners, the way they run, the flash of red and blue behind their eyes... and they catch and eat rattlesnakes!

Barbara (laughs): As parents say, that's like picking your favorite child. There are so many incredible birds in Colorado. If I find a unique bird while hiking, that is my favorite bird for the day. But if you're going to push me to pick just one, it's the eastern screech owl. Occasionally we'll have one visit our neighborhood near Wash Park at dusk or dawn. That unique call is how I know this lovely little owl is back. Owls are incredible birds. Everything about them makes them perfect nocturnal hunters.

Karl: *It's probably a little known fact, but I can do quite an authentic eastern screech owl call. They call back almost immediately.*

Barbara: As long as they don't mistake you for a potential mate!

Karl (laughs): *Where is your favorite birding spot?*

Barbara: I love hiking in the mountains, especially in Rocky Mountain National Park. Regardless of the season there is always something interesting to see or hear.

Megan: I'm not really sure what my favorite place to bird is. I really like prairie, desert, and marsh habitats, but I'd be more than happy to go anywhere.

Karl: *If I was interested in becoming an Audubon Master Birder, how would I go about doing that?*

Barbara: That's easy. Either go to the ASGD website, www.denveraudubon.org, where you can find more information, or give the ASGD office a call.

Megan: When you go to the website, click on 'Programs' and then scroll down and click on 'Audubon Master Birder'.

Karl: *And, I would highly recommend talking to Audubon Master Birders like you to get further details!*



Conservation Report

January/February 2012

1) There's nothing like continuous postponement to make an issue fade into the woodwork. In our case, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS, an acronym you'll see a lot of for the Chatfield Reallocation project) has been postponed yet again, until at least early February, though that seems soon now. In late October we learned from the US Army Corps of Engineers project leader, that the DEIS is "not compliant" with Corps policy. Which policy, and what this means for the project besides this delay, we don't yet know. The postponement did mean that the holiday season rolled by, uncomplicated by public meetings and frantic alerts to members. **But don't let this issue fade!** Watch for announcements on the ASGD website.



2) The Colorado General Assembly starts its 2012 session in early January. One of the biggest issues of concern to Audubon is the merger of the Colorado Division of Wildlife (DOW) with the Colorado Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation into a new entity, the "Division of Parks and Wildlife" or DPW. When this process started last spring, a short bill authorizing the merger passed both Houses and was signed by the governor. Now comes the hard work, a long bill that will fill in the details. Some of the questions that must be resolved include:

The public has voted three times to keep lottery monies for parks, trails, open space and wildlife...

- Will the DPW be an "enterprise" like the Division of Wildlife was? This status, which must be ratified by the General Assembly, lets an agency out from under the spending limits set by the Taxpayers' Bill of Rights (TABOR). That is, it can't increase spending more than 5% above the previous year's expenditures. It also means that the agency in question gets NO money from the state's General Fund, which is derived primarily from income and sales taxes. NOTE: Audubon first proposed, and then worked to pass, the bill that defined "enterprise status" specifically for the Division of Wildlife.
- Will our State Parks system be swallowed up in the DOW's administrative structure? DOW is a much bigger agency. Can Parks maintain its identity?
- How is the money going to be handled? The DOW gets its money from hunter and angler license fees, but those monies MUST be spent on wildlife-related activities or the DOW loses its federal grant funding. How will funds for parks, mostly from lottery proceeds, be kept separate? Is this an accountant's nightmare?
- Where are the affairs of the two agencies met and issued a series of reports, some of which are 80 pages long. They offer alternatives for merging personnel and functions but no decisions and no monetary results yet.

3) In tough economic times, legislators look to whatever sources of funding they can find, and Colorado has a tempting pot of money left: Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), funded by the net proceeds of the State lottery, disperses millions of dollars each year for parks, open space, trails, and wildlife. Legislators in past years have tried to divert those funds to support education, water projects and other endeavors, but it will take a constitutional amendment to do so. The public has voted three times to keep lottery monies for parks, trails, open space and wildlife, realizing quite rightly that we can have both education and open space. The whole reason to channel lottery money to GOCO was so that funding for the outdoors wouldn't have to compete with funding for education. Audubon would like to have legislators stick with that bargain.

Conservation Report *(cont.)*

Legislators will deal with other environmental issues, but one deserves particular notice: a proposal to put \$75,000 of taxpayer money into a study of a pipeline to bring water from the Green River in Wyoming to the Front Range. We expect to oppose this measure, as the money isn't enough to research any new information on this project and the expected environmental impacts will be monumental. The money would be appropriated to the Colorado Water Conservation Board's projects fund, so we'll be keeping an eye out for it.

Mark your calendar for the upcoming Sierra Club/Audubon Legislative Forum on Saturday, February 4, 2012, when these and other issues will get full treatment. You can find full details in a related announcement in this Warbler (p. 5).



Give Birds Water All Winter With a Heated Bird Bath!



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9956 West Remington Place
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**10% off storewide purchases
plus FRBC will donate an
additional 5% to ASGD for
mentioning this ad**

Offer Expires: Feb 29, 2012. May not be combined with any other offers. Optics not included.

Join Us for the Audubon/Sierra Club 2012 Legislative Forum

Saturday, February 4, 2012

8:30am to 1:30pm

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

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 and we'll discuss several of the key issues with invited experts, including legislators. In 2012, hot topics will include the merger of the Colorado Division of Wildlife and State Parks, and possible threats to GOCO. A final agenda will be available shortly before the meeting on the ASGD website.

\$12 in advance and \$15 at the door. We can always use help with setup and cleanup, so if you are interested in volunteering call Rhonda in the ASGD office at 303-973-9530 or send an email to Polly Reetz, Conservation Chairman, at reetzfam@juno.com.

Decisions are made by those who show up!

Lois Webster Fund

Grants Available in 2012 for Research and Education Projects Supporting Colorado Non-Game Wildlife

The Audubon Society of Greater Denver's Lois Webster Fund will be offering grants in 2012 to support research and education projects that lead to the conservation of 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 \$46,000 for selected projects.

Our funds have assisted research on:

- flammulated owls
- Boulder County bat species
- burrowing owl population dynamics
- possible impacts of climate change on pika
- pre-adult life stages of an endangered butterfly
- compilation of 14 years of mountain plover survey data
- studies of the home ranges of free-ranging domestic cats
- hybridization of sucker species
- monitoring of garter snake movements by high school students



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 is available 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 \$6,500 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, described in the Guidelines. Grantees will be notified by early March, 2012 and the funds dispersed in time for the spring field season.

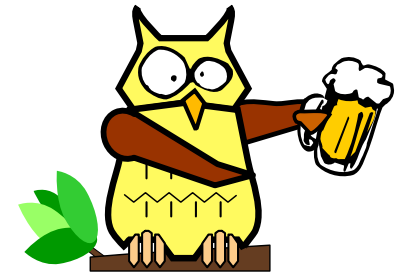
Contact: Polly Reetz, polly.reetz4@comcast.net

Bird & Brew Trivia Night

Join Us for thrilling, action-packed nature trivia

Wednesday, January 25, 7-9pm
Wednesday, March 28 7-9pm

Breckenridge Brewery Ballpark Pub
2220 Blake Street
Denver 80205
www.breckbrew.com



Gather together a team of up to six or join a team that night. You don't have to be a trivia master or nature scholar.

It's really all about hanging with friends, having fun, enjoying great food ...and crushing other teams.

\$5 entry fee per person - proceeds support ASGD programs
303.973.9530 or info@denveraudubon.org

Keeping Common Birds Common

by Hugh Kingery

Common birds count. Many of you report Cornell's FeederWatch, eBird and participate in Christmas counts.

When we report the common birds, we help scientists track populations of the birds that make a difference. We get excited about rarities, but they don't have the biological importance of keeping track of robins, Yellow Warblers, House Finches, and House Wrens. Although we certainly need to protect the rare and endangered birds, we also need to ensure that the common birds remain common.

David Wilcove wrote in the Cornell Ornithology Lab newsletter: "Sentiment aside, important ecological reasons exist for paying closer attention to common birds." Studies all over the country show that insectivorous songbirds significantly reduce populations of leaf-consuming caterpillars in forests. In aggregate, obviously, more abundant species eat more insects than the rare ones."

Take, for example, Yellow-rumped Warbler, he said. Partners in Flight estimates that 127 million Yellow-rumps breed each summer in the boreal forests of Canada and the U.S. That translates into roughly 3.4 million pounds of Yellow-rumps. Assume that each warbler consumes roughly 35% of its body weight per day in insects. During the spring and summer this one species eats well over a million pounds of insects!

This offers, he said, an intriguing way to view North American birds. "Who would have imagined that more than five million pounds of Red-eyed Vireos and six



million pounds of Swainson's Thrushes breed in our forests each year? Or that more than 50 million pounds of American Robins scour lawns, gardens, and forest floors for insect prey during the summer?"

"Many studies suggest that numbers of many long-distance migrants declined dramatically in recent decades. Have other species, perhaps permanent residents such as chickadees or short-distance migrants such as bluebirds, increased by taking advantage of the greater food supply of insects, or have the insects simply increased?"

Citizen Scientists Wanted

Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory is recruiting volunteers for 2012 to count birds, collect migration and nesting data, run education programs and much more. These citizen scientists are essential to RMBO's work to conserve birds and habitat. Consider becoming a citizen scientist to:

- Enhance your knowledge of the natural world
- Have a valuable and rewarding volunteer experience
- Be part of a community that cares about the environment and inspires others

Programs include: HawkWatch, ColonyWatch, Bald Eagle Watch or Volunteer Naturalists. For information contact Kacie Ehrenberger at 303-659-4348 ext.16 or kacie.ehrenberger@rmbo.org



Backyard Birds

Hummingbirds stayed late in Douglas County, with reports from several backyard feeder folks the second week in October.

Nancy deLong, in Larkspur, emailed on Oct. 8, “that hummingbirds are still making their

way through our area! We had 2 on Oct. 6 and 2 sitting together on a feeder this morning, Oct. 7 at 7 a.m. I am thankful for all the agastache, Hummingbird mint, I have planted everywhere, as it is in full bloom and will help them if my feeders



are empty! Oct. 9, 5 p.m., a solitary hummingbird just sat for about 5 minutes at the feeder before heading off. Fly safely tiny bird on your incredible journey!”

Chris Arthun in Franktown saw one Oct. 8, and Gina Gerken in Castle Rock said (Oct. 10), “I had seen a female Western Tanager near my suet feeder, so I decided to put out my hanging oriole feeder. I took it in during the summer as my spring migrants had all passed through. I was surprised to see a female Broad-tailed tasting the jelly several times. This is my first year putting out jelly, so maybe this is common. I saw a hummer today, at a distance.”

Karen Metz’s saga began Oct. 8: “As I write this, a young Rufous is at a feeder hung from my window, here in Deerfield. A Calliope showed up yesterday and a female/immature Broad-tailed is here today also.

“With snow forecast, I can still keep four feeders out, hung from the upper level window hangers that will be sheltered from snow filling up the holes - those are also bear-proof. Some of the hummers’ favorite flowers were destroyed in yesterday’s winds; I’ll bring in the potted salvia greggii, lantanas, and cupheas tonight.” Oct. 10: “Since our 4 inches of snow, hummingbirds make frequent visits to peanut butter/lard cakes. Most of my annuals spent more than a full day in the kitchen, so the hummers relied on nectar feeders - and discovered the suet. We assume that the suet attracts tiny invertebrates and those are what the hummers are looking for when hovering there - just as fruit scraps that I sometimes hang in a red mesh bag attract fruit flies, and consequently hummingbirds.”

Lois Levinson reported one of the few migrants, Oct. 1: “I had a Green-tailed Towhee foraging and doing his leaf dance in my back yard. I live near Cherry Creek State Park, along a swath of trees and shrubs that appears to be a bird migratory highway to and from the park.”

Dave and Mary Driscoll saw the other towhee - “a Spotted Towhee in our Chokecherry tree; also Townsend’s Solitaires returned, two first heard then seen last week.” Solitaires arrived in force in the Castlewood Canyon area - Urling and I counted at least half a dozen on our hillside Nov. 1. Males and females set up winter territories, by both singing and calling, around a supply of juniper berries sufficient to last them through the winter. They defend them against all competitors except robins. On Nov. 18, ninety robins flew into our scrub oak grove; we heard no solitaires all day. We hope that the robins haven’t squandered the solitaires’ winter food supply, although I suppose if they leave here, they might come to residential Denver.

Lynn Willcockson noted, on Sept. 21: “For the past two days we have had an adult American Goldfinch feeding young in our backyard. Not sure where they came from but the “kids” (actually only one) were doing the usual behavior of ‘feed me feed me’ routine. Seems a little late for the fledged and feeding young scenario.” Goldfinches nest late, but this will substantiate a really late date for the breeding bird atlas.

Backyard Birds (cont.)

Lynn mentions that "We continue to have Bushtits regularly. Now they often number 10-12. And a Red-breasted Nuthatch, now a regular feeder visitor usually picking up sunflower seed and probably sticking it in a bark some place and pecking on it." Karen hosted a Brown Thrasher Nov. 8-12: "Sticks out like a big reddish beacon next to the juncos."

Bill Wuerthele began the fall sparrow reports: a White-throated he saw Nov. 2 in Park Hill; we had one from Nov. 10-18. We also saw a Harris's Sparrow briefly (Nov 8-13), and so did Kirk Huffstater in Castle Rock, Nov. 16-18. Bob Santangelo not only saw one Nov. 20 in north Denver, but photographed it. American Tree Sparrows arrived for the winter in November – besides the rusty crown, look for the two-tone bill (dark above, yellow below).

Mel Melnicoe, southeast Denver, heard (didn't see) Sandhill Cranes overhead, Nov. 7; lots of us in Douglas and Elbert counties heard or saw them, Oct. 14-Nov. 12: Debbie Trujillo, Fran Sheppardson, Jerry Pauley, Karen, and us. The sound entrances us as do their waving flocks searching for wind currents.

Karen, on Oct. 7, saw "an adult Northern Goshawk (female, I'm sure, by the size) perched a few feet from my deck, eye-level with me on the third story of the house. By the time I got the camera, she had flown off - probably because my husband chose that moment to begin raking pine needles off the roof and she didn't like that!"



While the Audubon Master Birders group watched through the scope as a Prairie Falcon devoured a Northern Flicker, Rhonda Kelly shouted, "Oh, my gosh, the Prairie Falcon is eating the flicker's tongue!"

Chuck Aid responded, "Does that make it bilingual?"

Lois, on Oct. 1, "had a Great Horned Owl perching in one of the silver maple trees in my yard in mid-morning. The evening before, just before sunset, I had seen first one, then two Great Horneds in a snag in my neighbor's cottonwood. The second bird, the larger of the two, probably the female, had been hooting from a distance before joining the first. They sat on separate branches, one just under the other for a while. Then the female climbed up to sit beside the male, and she preened his head. Then they duetted for a bit. I was amazed to see what I took to be courting behavior in early fall. I looked it up in BNA (Birds of North America, available from Cornell) and learned that it is not unusual for a pair to begin roosting together as early as September or October."



William Neal wrote from Canon City, "Even behind prison walls, I am able to still call various birds to come to the day hall window. I'd see them on the barbed wire and call them and they came right over to the small metal screened window. Do robins hang around into October? As I twinkled I saw one on Oct. 7. . . I was watching TV recently and some soldiers were in Afghanistan looking for IEDs; one said, 'You need to be able to look for things that are out of place.' As an Army Ranger in the 70s, I was used to spotting booby traps. Bird watching enhances our abilities to spot things that are out of place and to notice details quickly. . . I think it also might help fight PTSD and suicide, help soldiers spot snipers, etc. The armed forces need to be taught to bird-watch so as to enhance their abilities to notice details quickly."

Cynthia Madsen videotaped a drama Sept. 26. "I walked by the back door and glanced at my flat feeder. There sitting on top of the pole was an adult Cooper's Hawk which I'm guessing was a female because of its size. It flew to my honey locust and as I videotaped it, lo and behold, a squirrel got right in its face. I was so hoping I would be down by one squirrel, but no luck. All the tape needs is some 'Gunfight at the O.K. Corral' music. When it flew away, I went out on the deck to see where it had gone and all of a sudden another Cooper's Hawk flew out of that black walnut tree to the south, buzzed past me and headed in the same direction as the first one." Email her to see her tape at cmadsen08@gmail.com.

Backyard Birds (cont.)

Monna Krebs, near the Wheat Ridge Greenbelt also “enjoyed” a squirrel drama. “I feed the birds and have containers of bird seed in my garage. I left my garage door up one day last fall while my nephew/wife came for a short visit. Unknown to me, a squirrel invited itself in for a visit also. Several days later when I reached into my bag of sunflower seeds to fill the bird feeder, I grabbed a ball of fur that jumped at my chest and ran behind shelves. It did not want to leave, but I finally succeeded in getting it to run outside.

“I drove my car all winter and all summer. Last Sunday my nephew put a new battery in my car for me and did a fall check-up of filters, etc.



When he removed the air filter, he could not believe his eyes - the air filter box was crammed full of sunflower seeds. He had to scoop them out - no wonder the squirrel did not want to leave his winter stash. Also, it’s a wonder my car did

not overheat last winter and especially this summer.”

I welcome your contributions to this column. Send a note or postcard to P.O. Box 584, Franktown 80116, or email me: ouzels8@aol.com



Beginning Birding Class

New to birding in Colorado? Wonder where to begin? Join Colorado’s foremost and most entertaining couple as they introduce the art and science of birdwatching as no one else can. Learn bird identification, choosing and using binoculars and field guides, and much more. Instruction takes place, not in a classroom but rather on field trips to the best birding spots in the Denver metro area. Learn to develop a practiced eye and ear. Meet new friends and change the way you spend time outdoors. Make up any field trips that you miss during future class sessions. Be forewarned: this class has hooked hundreds on the lifelong adventure of watching birds!

Classroom session: Thursday, March 29

Field Trips: April 14, 21, 28, May 5 & 26 to bird-watching sites around Denver including Chatfield, Barr Lake, and Castlewood Canyon State Parks, Wheat Ridge Greenbelt, and Genesee Mountain

Date TBA: Zoology Dept., Denver Museum of Nature & Science
\$150/members, \$175/non-members (includes membership)

Graduates of the class may drop in at \$20 a field trip

Pre-Registration required. Call 303-973-9530 or e-mail info@denveraudubon.org

Leaders: Urling & Hugh Kingery

It's Not Just a Walk in the Park...

Lois Levinson

Not anymore. State and local districts, in response to cuts in state funding and drops in revenues, have had to devise new and creative ways

to sustain their budgets. No longer can a field trip leader blithely lead his or her group into just any park to look for birds.

Some parks are now requiring ASGD to apply in advance for and

obtain a permit authorizing us to conduct a field trip in their park. Oh yes, and there is a fee for the permit. Some parks will even charge us a percentage of the fee you pay to ASGD for the field trip.

You would think that places like Colorado State Parks, Jefferson County Open Space parks and others would be happy to have birders in their parks. After all, we carpool in hybrid cars, we don't bring in controlled substances (OK, maybe a Power Bar now and then); we don't play loud music, get into brawls or require the intervention of law enforcement. We just trudge around and look for birds. We pack out our own trash as well as trash left by others. We are kind and respectful to those who fish, bike, run, walk and walk dogs in the park. We are really no trouble at all. But in the minds of some park officials, we are to be treated just like organizers of rock concerts, 10K races, weddings and family reunions. No permit, no field trip.



We carpool in hybrid cars, we don't bring in controlled substances (OK, maybe a Power Bar now and then); we don't play loud music, get into brawls...we are really no trouble at all.

So, if you've noticed that ASGD is charging a fee for some field trips but not for others, it is because there are different rules at different locations. The field trip charges have been a source of funds for ASGD that support our education and conservation programs and activities. We are in the process of

determining where we can charge fees, and where we cannot. Some of those rules are just in the discussion stage and have yet to be enforced. Others are in place and are being enforced. Since it

is bad form to have your field trip leader hauled away in irons before your eyes, we are trying to comply with all regulations. Please bear with us as we adjust to these new requirements.

A promotional poster for the 'Share the View' International Nature Photography Contest. The text 'SHARE THE VIEW' is prominently displayed at the top. Below it, the words 'INTERNATIONAL NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST' are written in a smaller font. To the left of the text is a photograph of a landscape with mountains and a blue sky. To the right of the text, the prize amounts are listed: '\$1000 GRAND PRIZE', '\$250', '4 FIRST PRIZES', and '\$100'. The background of the poster is a light blue gradient.

Photo Contest

Share the View, ASGD's first ever International Nature Photography Contest was a huge success! We received wide exposure by sponsoring this exciting competition, and raised money for ASGD's education, conservation and research projects.

The top ten winners of cash prizes and the top 250 overall winners are featured on the contest website throughout 2012. Check them out at <http://denveraudubon.contestvenue.com> and "Like" us on Share the View's Facebook page.

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 experienced ASGD trip leaders, 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, 3 dinners and a tax-deductible donation to ASGD.

Deposit Due: \$150 due at registration with the balance due January 4, 2012.

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.

Sandhill Crane Festival, Monte Vista, Colorado Friday, Saturday and Sunday, March 9 – 11, 2012

Experience one of Colorado's most impressive wildlife spectacles against the backdrop of the snow-capped Sangre de Cristo mountains. See 20,000 Sandhill Cranes feeding on Monte Vista flying in at dusk and out at dawn, and young cranes dancing to attract their life-long mate. Between dawn and dusk we'll bird the area lakes and roads for waterfowl, wintering eagles and raptors. After a community pancake breakfast on Saturday, the Crane Festival presents various short workshops and lectures of interest to naturalists, and a local craft fair. Following the Sunday fly-out, return to Denver -- the leader will stop at feeders and wildlife areas along the route.

Leader: Audubon Master Birder, Harriet Stratton

\$250/per Friends member (double occupancy) \$290/Single; nonmembers add \$40 each. Includes lodging for two nights at the Pecos Inn, fortified continental breakfasts, dinner Saturday night and a tax-deductible donation to ASGD. Be prepared to buy Friday dinner and Saturday-Sunday lunches. Register by phone with credit card at ASGD 303-973-9530 or mail fee total to ASGD by March 1.

Meet at the Pecos Inn, Monte Vista, on Friday at 4pm for the evening fly-in. Participants will provide their own transportation to Monte Vista. Audubon can help coordinate carpooling. Monte Vista is a scenic 4 hour drive from Denver.



The Spring Dance in Southeast Colorado Saturday-Sunday, April 21-22, 2012

Marvel at the ancient, springtime courting ritual of Lesser Prairie-Chickens, Sunday morning, April 22 at a lek on private property east of Lamar, CO. Watch as the males flaunt their feathers and throat air sacs while running and jumping to, hopefully, attract a partner.

Trip leaves Denver 8am Saturday, April 21, by car caravan. Along the way, we stop at Fountain Creek (south of CO Springs), Pueblo Reservoir or City Park, and John Martin Reservoir. Arrive at Blue Spruce Motel in Lamar about 5pm. Dinner in Lamar and early to bed for 3:30am wake-up and continental breakfast at motel. Leave motel 4am to meet school bus (which also serves as our blind) in Granada at 4:30am. Arrive at lek before sunrise and



observe the “dancing” ritual until approx. 7am. Return to Granada (bathrooms!) and drive our cars 6 miles to the home of tour operators, Fred & Norma Dorenkamp, for a chuck-wagon breakfast. Return to motel 9:30am & check out. Bird the Lamar Community College trail (Northern Cardinal) before returning to Denver.

Leaders: Audubon Master Birder, Harriet Stratton and Arena Dust Tours
Registration: \$200/per Friends member

(double occupancy) \$220/Single; non-members add \$25 each. Price includes guide services, dinner and one night lodging in Lamar, early continental breakfast and later chuck-wagon breakfast, and a tax-deductible donation to ASGD. Limited to 15 participants. Questions: Harriet Stratton 303-798-9924. Register by phone with credit card at ASGD 303-973-9530 or mail deposit to ASGD.

Deposit Due: \$100 due at registration and balance due by March 22

Bring sack lunch for Saturday. Audubon can help coordinate carpooling.

Physical Requirements: Easy terrain. Travelers should be prepared to spend time outdoors and on the bus (viewing time) in cold temperatures. Bus does Not have a bathroom and all must remain on the bus for approx 3 hours.

Cape May in Spring May 5-11, 2012

Every spring, as waters warm and full moons cause tides to grow high, horseshoe crabs leave the ocean floor and make their way to shores and estuaries along the Atlantic coast to spawn. Delaware Bay is home to the world’s largest population of horseshoe crabs. The eggs left on beaches during crab spawning are an important food source for migratory shorebirds, including Red Knots. This trip has been scheduled to correspond to May’s full moon and spring migration. We will be targeting migratory birding hotspots on both the Delaware Bay and Atlantic Ocean sides of the Cape May Peninsula. Each day may find us back at some of the locations we’ve already visited, as new birds could have arrived overnight.

This exciting adventure provides ample opportunities to see, first-hand, what makes the local ecology of this region so special.



Leaders: David Trently of Partnership for International Birding and Sheridan Samano of Reefs to Rockies

\$1495/per Friends member (double occupancy) \$1,970/Single; non-members add \$75 each. Price includes guide services, six nights lodging in historic Cape May, New Jersey; all meals, transportation in rental vehicles from Philadelphia airport, entrance fees, two boat tours: whales, birds & dolphins and a final night sunset cruise, and a tax-deductible donation to ASGD. Limited to 14 participants. Questions: Sheridan Samano 303-860-6045. Register by phone with credit card at ASGD 303-973-9530 or mail deposit to ASGD.

Deposit Due: \$500 due at registration and balance due by March 28

The trip starts and ends in Philadelphia. The group will use rental cars to move between locations.

Physical requirements: Easy to Moderate. This trip will include hikes over uneven terrain. Travelers should be prepared to spend time outdoors.



Leave a Legacy

Protect Birds & Habitat. Educate Generations.

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

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

For more information, please call 303-973-9530 or e-mail info@denveraudubon.org

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

Tax Identification Number: 23-7063701

Date of Incorporation: September 30, 1969

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

**Audubon Naturalist Training
Open House Informational Session
Saturday, January 21, 2-3pm
Audubon Center at Chatfield**



Audubon Naturalists play a valuable role at the Audubon Center at Chatfield assisting with programs and nature hikes, as well as teaching in the schools or leading nature hikes at locations throughout the Denver Metro area.

With Audubon Naturalist training you will:

- Gain a valuable and rewarding volunteer experience
- Meet and socialize with other people interested in birds, nature and the outdoors
- Expand your knowledge of Colorado's natural history and ecology through ongoing, informal workshops, trainings, programs, and hikes
- Know that you are making a difference in a child's – and adult's – life connecting them with nature and developing a sense of stewardship
- Have fun and enjoy the outdoor life!

Our Audubon Naturalist Training Program offers a total of 40 hours of classroom & field training, plus additional in-the-field mentoring to ensure you have the skills and confidence to be a successful Audubon Naturalist.



Our core training led by experts working in the field covers the following Colorado topics: History of ASGD and Chatfield Natural Areas, Ecosystems/ Ecology, Geology, Plants, Insects, Reptiles, Wildlife Signs and Identification, Bird & Raptor Identification, Teaching and Interpretive Guide Techniques

You also receive continuing education sessions throughout the year at Naturalist Gatherings to update and expand your knowledge and skills.

Naturalist Training Open House Informational Session: Free
January 21, 2-3 pm

Training Program: Registration required:

\$125/Friends member; \$150/non-member

Wednesdays, Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 6-9pm; Saturdays, Feb. 11, 25, March 3, 9-5pm

For more information or to apply for the ASGD Audubon Naturalist program, please contact Emily Hertz at ehertz@denveraudubon.org or 303-973-9530.



Programs

Douglas County Christmas Bird Count Saturday, December 31

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). 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

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.

Walk the Wetlands Sunday, January 8, 9am (note date change due to Denver Urban Christmas Bird Count) Sunday, February 5, 9am

Everyone, including families, is welcome to join us on this popular program. Hike along the South Platte River looking for wintering birds, including migrants from



further north. This is a wonderful adventure for all ages and birding levels. Dress for cold weather. BBSGWS. (We can lend you binoculars and field guides if you don't have them.)

Meeting Place: Audubon Center parking lot

Leaders: Audubon Master Birders

Registration NOT required: No Fee

Little Fledglings Preschool Nature Hour For children ages 3-6 (and parents/guardians, too!) Wednesdays, January 4 & 18; February 1 & 15 from 10-11am

Explore the outdoors each month through stories, songs, crafts, and activities that focus on wildlife and the natural world around us. This program introduces science skills and encourages active outdoor play! Snacks are included.

January: "Hibernation" Children discover why some animals stay around and eat and some animals stay around and sleep during the winter months!

February: "Seed Need" Children explore seeds as food for people and animals and learn how animals spread seeds. **Registration required.**

\$5/Friends member child and their adult; \$2 each additional child.
\$8/non-member child and their adult; \$4 each additional child.

Ducks in Winter Saturday, January 14, 9am-12pm

Walk along the South Platte and enjoy close-up views of ducks in their bright, breeding plumage. Likely sightings include: American Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Hooded & Common Mergansers, and Common Goldeneye. In previous

years, Red-breasted Merganser, Barrow's Goldeneye and Long-tailed Duck have also been seen. Dress for cold weather. BBSGWS

Leaders: Audubon Master Birders Barbara Shissler & Cindy Valentine

Meeting Place: Grant Frontier Park, Southeast corner of Evans & South Platte River Drive

Registration required: \$10/Friends member; \$12/non-member, children - no charge

Programs

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, buteos, 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.

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

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

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



Neighborhood Open House Saturday, January 21, 10am-2pm

Residents of Roxborough, TrailMark, and Chatfield Farms are invited to attend classes, guided hikes, and preschool story time provided on this day for FREE. Join us for crafts, snacks, and beverages while you enjoy the beautiful scenery, have fun with nature, and learn more about this wonderful resource right in your "backyard".

Meeting Place: *Audubon Center at Chatfield.*

Registration not required; *Craft fees may apply.*

Leader: *Experts from throughout the Denver Metro Area*

Meeting Place: *TBD Registration required: \$125/Friends member; \$150/non-member*

[BBFGWS](#) = [Bring binoculars, field guides, water and snack](#)

Great Backyard Bird Count Saturday, February 18, 10am-2pm

Join the celebration with crafts, hiking, short workshops, and informational booths on backyard birding. Classes will be held throughout the day on watching, feeding, and landscaping for birds. Learn how to be a citizen scientist and participate in the national Great Backyard Bird Count.

Pre-registration for workshops required.

Pre-registration for event not required. *Classes free to Friends members; \$5/nonmembers
Donations to ASGD appreciated.*

Meeting Place:

Audubon Center at Chatfield registration not required; Craft fees may apply



Raptors of the Northern Front Range Sunday, January 22, 9am - 3pm Saturday, January 28, 9am - 3pm

Follow Audubon Master Birders Kris Koff and Tom Bush to spot surprising numbers of raptors and other high-flyers, such as Bald Eagles, Red-tailed Hawks, and Great-horned Owls. This car caravan trip is quickly paced and is not suitable for extended photographic studies. We stop along public roads and on private property - very little walking required. For the trip summary & discussion, we stop for lunch at a Safeway deli -- bring or purchase lunch. Limit 10. BBFGWS

Leaders: *Kris Koff (hm 303-794-1372) & Tom Bush*

Meeting Place: *I-25 to Exit #225 at 136th Ave. Meet at WalMart parking lot on West side of I-25 -*

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

Volunteers, Donors, New Members and Officers

Field Trip Leaders

Chuck Aid, Richard Anderson, Mike Henwood, Mary Keithler, Michael Kiessig, Hugh & Urling Kingery, Lois Levinson, Janet Shin, Barbara Shissler, Cindy Valentine, Karen von Saltza

Annual Appeal Mailing

Marc Goodbody, Bridget Milnes, Tom Parchman, Jerry & Arlene Raskin, Phil Reynolds, Carolyn Roark, Lori Sharp, Esther Weiner

Audubon Center/School Programs

Dotty Biggs, Kate Frost, Dick Anderson, Angela Grun, Polly Reetz, Mary Keithler, Urling Kingery, Tina Jones

Fall Members Dinner

Carol Destefanis, Julie Dorosz, Kate Frost, Christy Honnen, Courtney James, Bridget Milnes, Arlene Raskin, Jerry Raskin, Barbara Shissler, Frank Shissler, and Karen von Saltza

HOOTenanny

Dotty Biggs, Mary Keithler, Steven DeGrush, Meg Miller, Barbara Masoner, Brian Hoffmann, Koa Halpern and friend

Pumpkin Festival

Carolyn Roark, Julie Dorosz, Carol Destefanis, Brian Hoffman, Meg Miller

Website/Media

Dick Anderson, Mary Urban

Share the View Photo Contest

Marilyn Rhodes, Wendy Shattil, Harriet Stratton

Education Committee

Jeanne McCune, Dotty Biggs, Polly Reetz, Barbara Masoner, Doris Cruze, Arlene Raskin

Thanks to all committees, board members and Audubon Master Birders for volunteering their time.

Hootenanny Owl & Share the View Flyer - M. Urban

Photo Credits: Hugh Kingery, Dick Vogel, Marilyn Rhodes, Robert Martinez, Debbie Miller



New Friends Members

Bernard Poppenga

Cheryl Lahr

Cindy Schindler

Holly Houser

Jane Smith

Jenni Peters

Mindy Propen & Sean Howley

Patty Jaacks

Phyllis Blecha

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Maxine Johnson

Maralee Nobis-Jacobsen

Dorothy Sutherlin

Bird-a-thon

Chris Goulart



In-Kind Donations

Marc Goodbody donated two bird puzzles

Anne Schaefer donated an Epson printer and bird books

Memorial Donations

Donations were made in memory of Patty Salyers by Edna Miller & Colleeorgin

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Officers & Directors

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Staff

Karl Brummert
Executive Director
kbrummert@denveraudubon.org

Suzy Hiskey
School Programs Coordinator
shiskey@denveraudubon.org

Emily Hertz
Audubon Center Coordinator
ehertz@denveraudubon.org

Rhonda Shank
Office Manager
info@denveraudubon.org

9308 S. Wadsworth Boulevard
Littleton, Colorado 80128
phone - 303.973.9530 fax-303.973.9530