

THE



# Warbler

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NEWSLETTER OF THE AUDUBON SOCIETY OF GREATER DENVER

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CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE GREATER DENVER COMMUNITY

## ASGD welcomes Karl Brummert as Audubon Center Director

After moving away from Colorado as a teen and living on the East and West coasts for many years, Karl returns to his hometown of Littleton, bringing over thirteen years of experience in program and facility management to the Center Director position at ASGD.

"I know this area well. When I was a child, we used to go swimming and fishing at Chatfield every summer. The Highline Canal was only a block from our house, so we explored this 'wilderness' and went on extended biking journeys along the trail. Our family often went camping in the mountains in the summer and skiing in the winter. We vacationed in the national parks throughout the Southwest and Wyoming."

Although always longing to return



*New Audubon Center Director Karl Brummert with Master Birder Hugh Kingery.*

to the West after moving to New Jersey, Karl remained back East for many years. He graduated from Rutgers University with a BS degree in Conservation and

Applied Ecology.

After a brief period as a substitute teacher, Karl became the Environmental Programs Coordinator at The New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx and later the Education Director at the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon Center on Long Island. Before leaving the Sanctuary, the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution presented Karl with their Conservation Award.

During the time he worked for National Audubon, Karl led trips across the southern U.S., in the San Juan Islands in the Pacific Northwest, and along the east coast of New Zealand. He has also been birding at the famous Asa Wright Nature Center on the island of Trinidad.

When the urge to head West finally grew too strong to ignore, Karl moved to Seattle where he led family nature hikes for a local hiking club, participated in planning a regional wilderness conference, and assisted with teaching children how to kayak. He also worked for

*See ASGD welcomes contd. on page 3*

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## Toronto, Chicago, New York, Detroit, Boston – will Denver be next?

**Turning off the lights in tall buildings during migration saves millions of birds!**  
*by Joe Bartell, ASGD Board*

These major cities are reducing the amount of CO2 they are putting into the air, and the tall buildings that would have contributed to this are saving thousands of dollars each year. And birds!

By turning off the lights in unoccupied offices from the 5th floor up during the spring and autumn bird migration, the owners of the buildings save money, the CO2 reduction helps

mitigate the Global Warming problem, and many thousands of migratory birds have a hazard removed from their flights.

Millions of warblers, wrens, vireos, thrushes, tanagers, shorebirds, flycatchers and other species that migrate at night on their way to their summer breeding grounds or to their wintering

*See Turning off the lights contd. on page 3*

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE—**

### **They Say It Will Grow Back**

If you have not been to Roxborough State Park lately, be prepared for a shock. Large stretches of park land are scraped down to the dirt. The few trees remaining in these areas are pruned grotesquely. The devastation is the result of the park's first ever large scale fire mitigation project. The scars on the land are in sharp contrast to the unique beauty of the landscape. No plans for seeding or monitoring the devastated areas are in place, although concerned volunteers are responding to the destruction and are being encouraged by management. The oak, the grasses, the currants and gooseberry bushes, gone. And so are the Spotted Towhees. Deer wander by but do not linger.

A small group of people knew it was coming. They say studies were done. They say it will grow back. Get some moisture on it and it will grow back, they say. Meanwhile, the most that can be hoped for is a blanket of snow to hide the ugly reality of the destroyed habitat.

Can this situation compare with the situation our country is in? Projects and policies created ugly conditions. Some people saw it coming. Nothing like this had happened in a long time. Will it grow back? How will those who have lost homes and livelihoods survive? How will it affect the Audubon Society of Greater Denver? How are concerned citizens and government responding?

The truth is, both the destroyed vegetation and the wrecked economy will grow back. It will take time. Neither will grow back the same as before, but we will deal with it. Volunteers and staff at Roxborough will work to salvage something positive from the destruction. All of us will be working on recovery of the economy. We may have to tighten our belts, but we will find ways to save the things we love and the things we have worked so hard to build. Roxborough will survive this mitigation, and ASGD will, with your help, survive these rough economic times.



## **Thanks To Our Volunteers!**

**BIRDSEED SALE PICKUP:** Kevin Corwin, Doris Cruze, Jimmy Cruze, Blake Naito, Sara Stokes, Cheryl Teuton

**FALL MEMBERS DINNER:** Deb Armer, Dave & Mary Driscoll, Gina Gerken, Angela Grun, Match Grun, Mary Heyl, Barbara F. Shissler, Peggy Wait

**FALL MEMBERS DINNER MAILING:** Willa Brunkhorst, Jo Ann Bushnell, Allison Hilf, Vi Nicholson, Arlene Raskin, Lori Sharp, Sara Stokes, Roberta Wiseman

**ADOPT-A-PLATTE BIRD SURVEY:** Fran Campbell, Peter Mulholland, Joyce Quigley, Tom Reilly, Peggy Roberts

**OFFICE HELP:** Lynne Forrester, Phil Reynolds, Carolyn Roark, Grace Weber

**TRIP LEADERS:** Doris Cruze, Mike Henwood, Hugh & Urling Kingery, Karleen Schofield, Karen von Saltza



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### **MISSION**

ASGD is a nonprofit group dedicated to maintaining the health of natural ecosystems through education, political action, scientific research and land preservation, with primary focus on birds, other wildlife and ecosystems of the South Platte River watershed.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

FRIENDS OF ASGD receive the Warbler and additional membership benefits. Members of the National Audubon Society in the Denver Metro Area receive complimentary copies of the *The Warbler*.

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

Produced by C. Dale Flowers

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# Why should we "Walk the Wetlands?"

by Linda Strand, ASGD Board Member

Every month, on the first Sunday, one of the Master Birders travels to the Audubon Center at Chatfield and meets a group of eager birders to "Walk the Wetlands". Many are repeat walkers and watchers, some are members of the Beginning Bird Watching class, some found it on the website, and some are just looking for a nice walk with friends (both fine feathered and two legged). So why, you might ask, would we continue to walk the same wetlands, month after month?

First, the South Platte offers a distinctly rich habitat for birds. In Colorado, the cottonwood/willow riparian area along the prairie streams, is visited by most every bird that migrates into or lives in Colorado. It is considered critical bird habitat in this state. In the four years of recorded data from the walks, the groups have seen over 150 species of birds, observing close to 12,000 individual birds. They've seen some birds return to nests year after year, are often treated with the site of a majestic golden or bald eagle or get the challenge of identifying a swallow as it swoops past.

Second, it's a great example of citizen science. We've compiled the data from 2005 through 2008 and will be turning it over to some volunteers on the Conservation Committee to see if the information yields some insights on climate change and the birds of the area. For example, in 2005 groups saw 146 green-winged teal. That number dropped to 59 in 2006, 18 in 2007 and only 6 so far in 2008. We've seen a similar decrease in the ever-present mallard, with 346 in 2005, 163 in 2006,

*ASGD welcomes contd. from page 1*

a season at Mount Rainier National Park developing programs for children, editing and field testing a geology curriculum for teachers, and leading old growth forest and alpine ecology interpretive hikes.

Karl then went to Los Angeles to work in documentary film production. One exciting project is an upcoming Disney Nature feature about flowers and pollination. While in California, he participated in the National Geographic BioBlitz and volunteered on projects for the protection of California condors, stream habitat restoration, and songbird banding.

Then came the opportunity to return to Colorado.

"It is good to be back home and working with Audubon again. I am looking forward to continuing ASGD's successful education programs, creating new ones, and making the Audubon Center a premier destination for adults and families in the ecologically diverse Chatfield Basin. In the next few months, I hope to meet you at the Center and on the trails."

Exciting times are ahead for the Audubon Center. Stay tuned for upcoming activities, programs, and events for all ages.

109 in 2007 and 64 in 2008. Gadwall, pintail, and merganser numbers have similarly declined. We've been hearing from the Division of Wildlife that migratory duck numbers are declining statewide. This statistic is in comparison to overall numbers of birds seen on the walks which has remained fairly stable with 3460 in 2005, 2893 in 2006, 3411 in 2007, and over 2700 so far in 2008. Whether these are trends or anomalies can be determined by comparing data from other organizations in the state which will help us to track changes in our climate.



*Participants spot another bird species on ASGD's monthly Walk the Wetlands program.*

And, finally, we should walk the wetlands just because it's fun. What better way to get the kids, parents, grandparents and friends out of the house and into nature. The walk generally lasts 2 ½ to 3 hours and starts at 8:00 am in the warmer months,

9:00 am in the colder months. The walk is generally between 2 and 3 miles, at a relatively slow pace. Someone always brings a scope although it would be good to bring your own binoculars and a bottle of water. Who knows you too might get to see a northern parula. (Look it up in your bird book, the November group recorded one.)

Walk the Wetlands is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on January 4, February 1, and March 1, 2009.

*Turning off the lights contd. from page 1*

grounds face many hazards in both directions, including communication towers and buildings with glass windows. One of the most dangerous obstacles is tall, lighted buildings. At night, when these buildings are in the flight path of birds, and when the stars are not visible due to clouds, the lights interfere with the birds' navigation systems, and the birds either fly in circles around the buildings and die of exhaustion or collide with the lighted windows. Daniel Klem, Jr. and David Sibley estimate that nearly a billion birds, such as those listed above, die due to lighted tall buildings during their migrations.

The Field Museum in Chicago states that the mortality rate could be reduced by 80 percent if the lights were turned off in tall buildings from 11:00 p.m. to sunrise during the spring and autumn bird migrations. Mayor Richard Daley in Chicago and Mayor Thomas Merino in Boston both played important leadership roles in their "Lights Out" programs. Volunteers are also essential. Getting the lights turned off in the empty offices of our tall buildings seems so easy and logical but the cities where these Lights Out programs are in place, leadership from both the top and a large number of volunteers were essential to the success of the programs. If you are willing to help reduce Global Warming by reducing emissions, and want to save the lives of our migratory birds, please contact Joe Bartell at [lesliezeus19.8@yahoo.com](mailto:lesliezeus19.8@yahoo.com).



# Eagle Eye

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

## "DECISIONS ARE MADE BY THOSE WHO SHOW UP"

This statement, used in TV's "The West Wing" and probably elsewhere, succinctly sums up citizen responsibility towards society – but not only do you have to show up, you should speak up too.

On February 21, ASGD and the Enos Mills Group of the Sierra Club are co-hosting our annual Legislative Forum, aimed squarely at educating our members about the 2009 session of the Colorado General Assembly. Plan to attend! Why?

**FIRST REASON:** You get to meet Audubon's legislative liaison (lobbyist) Jen Boulton, who is going to present her analysis of the 2009 environmental bills. The best thing about the face-to-face dialogue is having Jen explain some of the complex issues with which the bills deal, like anything to do with water law. Better yet, you can ask questions and have a back-and-forth discussion.

**SECOND REASON:** You get to meet real legislators, sometimes your own, and participate in a dialogue with them on environmental issues. Surprise! They are really nice folks.

**THIRD REASON:** You get a chance to network with Audubon and Sierra Club members who are interested in the same kinds of issues you are.

**FOURTH REASON:** Our panel of experts will discuss the issues in some detail. Then, when you get THE CALL, asking you to contact your State Senator or Representative, you'll feel like an expert too.

**FIFTH REASON:** You get a packet of information that contains tips on contacting and lobbying your legislator and helps you feel at ease when you do so.

**LAST REASON:** the food (no, really). The Sierra Club members provide great lasagna, and Audubon volunteers provide salad, drinks, bread and dessert. You also get a continental breakfast! With coffee or tea.

A typical Forum starts with Jen and the Sierra Club liaison each discussing the environmental bills of the Session. After that we usually take a brief break, then plunge into either a plenary session, or in many cases, several breakout sessions, headed by experts, that each cover an issue in detail. We reconvene for lunch and, during lunch, our guest Legislators speak to the group. Usually four or five join us, give a brief statement, and answer questions. This can be a very lively session! The Forum ends with the awarding of door prizes and a quick wrap-up.

Save the Date: February 21, 2009. Location: First Plymouth Church, 3501 S. Colorado Blvd. Time: 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The information on registration is included in this Warbler.

On the federal level, the Bush administration is following in the footsteps of its predecessors and is issuing hundreds of new "midnight regulations" or rules before leaving the White House. This is nothing new; Bill Clinton published about 26,000 pages of new rules in the last 90 days of his administration. But Bush has proposed a level of environmental de-regulation (or regulation) that would substantially change the way our laws operate--without Congressional approval. One rule would ease restrictions on mountain-top removal

for coal mining companies; another would allow factory farms to ignore the Clean Water Act, and one – which you've undoubtedly seen discussed in the papers – would take away the authority to assess a project's impacts on endangered/threatened species from scientists in the US Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service and give that authority to the federal agency that is proposing the project in question. Imagine what an endangered species assessment by the Corps of Engineers for one of its own projects would look like, and the point becomes clear. Are such rules really in the public interest, or are they gifts to favored industries? Guess. Another fascinating fact: over 250,000 public comments on the Endangered Species Act rule were "reviewed" by the Interior Department in just four days, so great was the push to finalize it and put it beyond reversal.

Usually, federal regulations go into effect 60 days after they are published in final form. At press time (Nov. 24), the rule for endangered species assessments had NOT been published in the Federal Register, which means that it could not take effect until AFTER January 20. President-elect Barack Obama could thus reverse it with the stroke of a pen when he takes office.

Other "midnight rules" published earlier will be much harder to rescind. Congress has the power to do so but has only taken such action once; the other way is to have federal agencies start the rule-making process all over again. Unfortunately, by the time the process is finished, the damage may have been done. All we can say is, thank goodness this dedication to environmental despoilation will end and a new administration that really cares about combating global climate change, saving endangered species, keeping our air and water clean, and preserving habitat is taking office.

## TILLEY WINTER HATS NOW ON SALE AT FRBC



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# Save the Date and Plan NOW to Attend The 2009 Legislative Forum, February 21 Decisions are made by those who show up!

An all-out attack on Colorado's new oil and gas regulations, particularly the ones that attempt to protect wildlife habitat, and an assault on the legislation that enabled them, are expected for the 2009 legislative session. Find out what our legislators will be up to and meet the Audubon and Sierra Club legislative liaisons as well as some of the influential members of the Colorado General Assembly on Saturday, February 21.

We'll have a continental breakfast during registration, which starts at 8:30, and a pot-luck lunch with guest speakers from the Legislature. In between, Audubon lobbyist Jen Boulton and Sierra Club legislative director Gary Lindstrom will give us their latest reports on the session, followed by discussions of the really hot issues of 2009 with experts such as Mike King, Deputy Director of the Dept. of Natural Resources. The conference ends at 1:30 p.m. Make plans now to attend!

**Cost: \$12 in advance, \$15 at the door. Some scholarships are available to people who will help with set-up and clean-up.**

**Location: First Plymouth Church, 3501 S. Colorado Blvd., Englewood  
(southwest corner of Colorado and Hampden Ave.)**

**Time: 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**

**To register: Call the Audubon office, 303-973-9530, or fill out the form below and mail it to the ASGD office, 9308 S. Wadsworth Blvd., Littleton, CO 80128.**

---

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**I will attend the Legislative Forum on Feb. 21. 2009.**

**My check for \$12, made out to ASGD, is enclosed.**

## – ASGD Donation Programs –

### Donate a Vehicle

#### Help Birds! Help Kids!

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

**To donate a vehicle**, call ASGD at 303-973-9530 or send an e-mail to [rshank@denveraudubon.org](mailto:rshank@denveraudubon.org).

### Leave A Legacy

#### Protect Birds! Protect Habitat!

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

**For more information**, call ASGD at 303-973-9530 or send an e-mail to [rshank@denveraudubon.org](mailto:rshank@denveraudubon.org)

# Saving two birds with one new energy policy

## *Solving the U.S. Energy Crisis and Global Warming perspective from National Audubon*

To solve the quandary that we are in with the growing effects of Global Warming and its intricate connection to our current energy economy, Congress and the President need to come up with a new energy policy that addresses the following key points:

1. Reduce carbon emissions from gas, oil, and coal to meet the basic targets recommended by the IPCC:
  - 20 percent reduction from current levels by 2020, and 80 percent reduction below 1990 levels by 2050.
  - Government must be adaptive to continued scientific developments
  - Create enforcement mechanisms for concrete carbon emissions reductions
2. Commit to the financial investments that will stabilize energy costs, invigorate the economy, and create new jobs:
  - Include government assistance for R&D, and application of new technologies
  - Standards for smart urban/rural growth, energy efficient building codes, and electric grid efficiency mandates
  - Government should encourage more specific standards

from state and local governments, and provide a floor, not a ceiling, for them to start from.

3. Assist workers and communities most affected by the energy transition:
  - Be fair and transparent
  - Return any revenues from a Cap and Trade ( C & T) system to consumers, workers, and communities
  - Institute trade laws to protect the transitioning industries and workers
4. Protect the communities and ecosystems that are vulnerable to the physical effects of global warming:
  - Revenues from a C&T system should go to state and local governments to adapt their infrastructure to protect against floods, fires, droughts, sea level rise, hurricanes, and agricultural/public health impairments
  - International assistance for developing countries that face destabilization from the effects of Global Warming
  - Assistance to natural resource protection agencies that will maximize survival of wildlife species and ecosystems that are facing destruction.

## Post election statement

*by John Flicker, National Audubon Society President*

On November 5th, Audubon Colorado received the following statement from NAS President John Flicker; "Voters in this historic election cast their ballots not only for change, but for a new era of hope for our environment, and the people, birds, and other wildlife that depend on it. Washington has been ignoring critical environmental issues for too long. President-elect Barack Obama and a more environmentally aware Congress offer the promise of leadership and fundamental change that could usher in new protections for America's great natural heritage, and a new lease on life for species in decline." In the same statement, Flicker said

"we welcome the opportunity to help him deliver his promised \$150 billion plan for clean energy technologies that would protect our environment and stimulate the economy, creating up 5 million new green jobs." Just to note, Barack Obama carried Colorado 52% - 45%.

Flicker continued, "despite real reason for optimism, we cannot take conservation gains for granted. Audubon is committed to helping the new Administration and Congress to live up to their great promise; and to make conservation, clean energy and green jobs part of America's path to a brighter tomorrow."

## With strong leadership, yes we can!

*by Gary Graham, Executive Director, Audubon Colorado*

Strong American leadership on combating global warming, what a concept! Leadership requires the intelligence to understand complex problems, courage to look challenges in the face and present solutions, and the strength of character to inspire people to join in efforts to solve problems.

On Nov. 18th, President Elect Barack Obama delivered the strongest, most committed call to action thus far on climate change from any U.S. President.

In a video presented at the Global Climate Summit, Obama stated "Now is the time to confront this challenge once and for all. Delay is no longer an option.

Denial is no longer an acceptable response. The stakes are too high. The consequences, too serious." These words are amazing for their clarity and sense of determination.

He also spoke of "global cooperation", which is a very refreshing change in approach but more importantly a prerequisite to finding and implementing solutions.

For Governor Ritter, and his peers leading the charge to address climate change, the President Elect's assurance that they will have a "partner in the White House" should bolster their leadership and farsighted efforts.

Audubon members are inspired by this message from the highest office in our country.

We believe that nothing less than committed leadership from the most powerful nation on Earth will suffice to combat global warming - considered by most scientists to be the greatest threat to biodiversity in the history of mankind.

With this President Elect, the phrase "Yes We Can" also can thankfully be applied to solving this urgent problem.



**AUDUBON  
SOCIETY**  
of GREATER DENVER

**Calendar of Events**

**JANUARY 2009**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				Urban Denver Christmas Bird Count New Year's Day 1	2	7:30am Douglas County Christmas Bird Count 3
9am Walk the Wetlands 4	7pm Master Birder Class 5	6	No ASGD Members Monthly Meeting 7	8	9	8:30am Master Birder FT Jewel Wetland FT 10
11	12	5:30pm ASGD Board Meeting 13	14	15	16	9am Ducks in Winter FT 17
18	7pm Master Birder Class Martin Luther King Day 19	7pm Conservation Committee 20	21	22	23	8:30am Master Birder FT 24
9am Raptors of North Front Range FT 25	7pm DFO Members Meetng 26	27	28	29	30	9am Raptors of North Front Range FT 31

**FEBRUARY 2009**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
9am Walk the Wetlands Super Bowl Sunday 1	7pm Master Birder Class 2	3	7pm Members Monthly Meeting 4	5	6	7
8	9	7pm ASGD Board Meeting 10	11	12	Great Backyard Bird Count 13	8:30am Quincy Reservoir FT 14
Great Backyard Bird Count 15	7pm Master Birder Class President's Day 16	17	2pm Field Trip Committee 18	19	20	8:30am Legislative Workshop 21
22	7pm DFO Members Meetng 23	24	25	26	27	28



# ASGD FIELD TRIPS, CLASSES & PROGRAMS

To Register for Trips & Classes Call the ASGD Office at 303.973.9530  
Join FRIENDS of ASGD and Receive Discounts on Field Trips and Classes

**(NOTE: ASGD is replacing its on-line credit card service. While we replace it, please call (303.973.9530) or e-mail the office (rshank@denveraudubon.org) and our staff can assist you with pre-registration. Thanks for your patience while we work on replacing this service.)**

## Audubon Society of Greater Denver (ASGD) Members Meetings

There will be NO January Members Meeting.

**Date:** Wednesday, February 4, 2009

**Time:** 7 p.m.

**Fee:** None

*Pre-registration is NOT required.*

**Meeting Place: NEW LOCATION** – Chambers Center, The Women's College of the University of Denver, located on the NE corner at Asbury and High Street. Do NOT park behind the building; parking there is by permit only. Parking is available across the street for \$1/hour or on the street for free for one hour. The Chambers Center is two blocks directly south of the University Light Rail Station.

**Description:** Fun for all is on the agenda for the February Member's Meeting. The naturalist staff from the Morrison Nature Center in Aurora will be presenting their program, "The Mating Game", a spin-off from the 1960's TV series. The presentation talks about animals and plants and why they choose their "mates." A great way to celebrate the Valentine month! Join us as we learn and laugh our way through the evening.

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## Urban Denver Christmas Bird Count and potluck chili supper

**Date:** Thursday, January 1, 2009

**Time:** Variable - Check with area leaders

**Leaders:** Count Leader Hugh Kingery (303-814-2723)

**Fee:** None

**Meeting Place (and Sign Up):** Contact area leaders for specific locations (details in November-December Warbler or on ASGD website)

**\*Note:** Bob Brown (303-791-6204) will be leading the Cherry Creek Reservoir count

**\*Note:** Barb Masoner (303-777-3376) will be leading the Botanic Garden, Denver Country Club and Wash Park count

**Description:** We invite all levels of birders to participate. The count covers a 15 mile diameter circle that includes the Platte River from the north city limits to Mississippi, east to Buckley Field and Rocky Mountain Arsenal. After the count (5:00 p.m.) join us for a potluck at Casey Davenport's, 415 S. High St. (5 blocks west of University and about 2 blocks south of Alameda). Please RSVP to Urling Kingery at 303-814-2723, or Casey Davenport at 303-744-0613. There will be a pot of chili, Urling's brownies, Casey's hospitality, and your salad, dessert, veggie or finger foods.

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## Douglas County Christmas Bird Count and potluck chili supper

**Date:** Saturday, January 3, 2009

**Time:** 7:30 a.m.

**Fee:** None (no daily state park fee to enter that day if you help with the count)

**\$2.00 charge for chili supper and drinks**

*Pre-registration is required: Call 303-973-3959 by December 31 to register and get on a team.*

**Meeting Place:** Visitor Center, Roxborough State Park  
**Description:** Teams spend the day counting birds and finish up at the Visitor Center for the tally and chili. Please bring a side dish to share.

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## Walk The Wetlands

**Date:** Sunday, January 4, 2009

**Sunday, February 1, 2009**

**Time:** 9:00 a.m.

**Leaders:** Hugh and Urling Kingery (303-814-2723) and other Master Birders

**Fee:** None

*Pre-registration is NOT required.*

**Meeting Place:** Audubon Center at Chatfield located on Waterton Road, 4.4 miles south of C470 and Wadsworth.

**Description:** Walk and bird the ponds and river ecosystems around the Audubon Center at Chatfield. For all ages and all abilities. Monthly and annual counts are recorded. A two to three hour trip, bring water, binoculars and field guides. Restroom facilities available at Audubon Center.

# ASGD FIELD TRIPS, CLASSES & PROGRAMS

To Register for Trips & Classes Call the ASGD Office at 303.973.9530

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



## Ducks in Winter

**Date:** Saturday, January 17, 2009  
**Time:** 9 a.m. - noon  
**Leader:** Harriet Stratton, Harold and Betty Oliver  
**Fee:** \$8 / Friends \$10 nonmembers  
*Pre-registration is required.*  
Call 303-973-9530 or email [rshank@denveraudubon.org](mailto:rshank@denveraudubon.org)

**Meeting Place:** Pasquinell Park, northeast corner of Evans and the South Platte River.

**Description:** In winter ducks wear their most brilliant plumage. Join Harriet Stratton and Harold and Betty Oliver for spectacular, up close views of hooded mergansers, goldeneyes, buffleheads, shovelers, and many other ducks. Past years have produced Red-breasted mergansers and Barrow's goldeneyes. Dress for walking in weather with binoculars.

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## Raptors of the Northern Front Range

**Date:** Sunday, January 25, 2009  
Saturday, January 31, 2009  
**Time:** 9:00 a.m.-3 p.m.  
**Leaders:** Harold and Betty Oliver (303-936-6902)  
**Fee:** \$8 / Friends member; \$10 / non-member  
*Pre-registration is required.*  
Call 303-973-9530 or email [rshank@denveraudubon.org](mailto:rshank@denveraudubon.org)

**Meeting Place:** Exit 1-25 at Exit #225 at 136th Avenue. Meet at WalMart parking lot on west side of 1-25. Bring your lunch. Limit 10.

**Description:** The Olivers are offering these popular field trips again. Reserve your spot now as this trip will fill up fast. We will be looking for nesting bald eagles, great-horned owls, red-tailed hawks and other raptors. Bring binoculars and field guides. (This is mostly a car trip with very little walking).

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## Great Backyard Bird Count –

### Count for Fun, Count for the Future!

**Date:** Friday, Saturday, Sunday and/or Monday,  
February 13-16, 2009 (President's Weekend)  
**Leader:** Self-led  
**Fee:** None  
*Pre-registration is NOT required*

**Meeting Place:** Anywhere! People of all ages and experience levels are invited to take part wherever they are—at home, in

schoolyards, at local parks or wildlife refuges, even counting birds on a balcony. Observers count the highest number of each species they see during at least 15 minutes on one or more of the count days. Then they enter their tallies on the Great Backyard Bird Count web site [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org).

**Description:** Millions of novice and accomplished bird watchers can make their fascination with nature add up for science and for the future during the 12th annual Great Backyard Bird Count, led by Audubon and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. These reports create an exciting real-time picture of where the birds are across the continent and contribute valuable information for science and conservation.

For the February 2008 Bird Count, 85,000 checklists identifying 635 species were submitted! Each tally helped researchers learn more about how North American birds are doing, and what that says about the health and the future of the environment.

For more information on how to participate, including identification tips, photos, bird sounds, maps, and information on over 500 bird species, visit [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org). The Great Backyard Bird Count is sponsored in part by Wild Birds Unlimited.

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## – LOOKING AHEAD TO MARCH AND BEYOND –

### Sandhill Crane Festival, Monte Vista, Colorado

**Dates:** Friday, Saturday and Sunday,  
March 13 – 15, 2009  
**Leaders:** To Be Announced  
**Fee:** \$250 Friends, double occupancy;  
\$290 Friends, single. Nonmembers add \$40.  
Includes lodging for two nights at Pecosa  
Inn and dinner Saturday night. Be prepared  
to buy dinner on Friday and lunch on  
Saturday and Sunday. Continental breakfast  
is included.

*Pre-registration is required.*  
Call 303-973-9530 or email [rshank@denveraudubon.org](mailto:rshank@denveraudubon.org)

**Meeting Place:** TBA in Monte Vista on Friday at 5 p.m. for a tour of the refuge to watch the cranes fly in. Participants will provide their own transportation to and around Monte Vista. Audubon can coordinate carpooling.

**Description:** Experience one of Colorado's most impressive wildlife spectacles against the backdrop of the snow-capped



# ASGD FIELD TRIPS, CLASSES & PROGRAMS

To Register for Trips & Classes Call the ASGD Office at 303.973.9530

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

Sangre de Cristo mountains. See thousands of Sandhill Cranes feeding on Monte Vista Wildlife Refuge, flying in at dusk and out at dawn. Young cranes dance to attract their life long mate. We'll also visit the Alamosa Refuge to look for large numbers of Bald Eagles and more. The Festival tour will take us to areas usually closed to the public. The Monte Vista Crane Festival presents a menu of short workshops of interest to naturalists and a craft fair during the day on Saturday. Monte Vista is a scenic 4 hour drive from Denver. You will be free to return to Denver on Sunday after lunch in Alamosa (or earlier).

## Beginning Bird-Watching Class

**Dates:** Classroom Session: **Thur, March 26, 7-9 p.m.**  
**Field Trips: Saturdays, Mar. 28, Apr. 4, 11, 18, 25, and May 2; 8 a.m.-2 p.m. – to bird-watching sites around Denver including Chatfield, Barr Lake, and Castlewood Canyon State Parks, Wheat Ridge Greenbelt, and Genesee Mountain Park.**

**Leaders:** **Urling & Hugh Kingery**  
**Fee:** **\$145/members, \$165/non-members (includes membership)**

**Pre-registration is required.**  
**Call 303-973-9530 or email [rshank@denveraudubon.org](mailto:rshank@denveraudubon.org)**

**Description:** Voted "Best of Denver!" two decades ago and still going strong! Colorado's premier (and most entertaining) birding couple teach the art and science of birding as no one else can. Learn bird identification, choosing binoculars and field guides, and much more. Visit a variety of habitats and some of the best birding spots in the Denver metro area. Become observant and develop a practiced eye and ear. Make new friends and change the focus of your time outdoors. You

can make up any field trips that you miss during future fall or spring class sessions.

## Master Birder III

Denver Audubon's third Master Birder course will start in August, 2009. The course offers 20 evening lectures and 25 field trips which cover the birding gamut. Evening talks cover bird topography, migration, identification of difficult groups, answering wildlife questions, ASGD activities, and lots more. Field trips go from the Denver area to Pueblo, Pawnee National Grassland, Rocky Mountain National Park, Loveland Pass, and other prime spots. The program has 17 rigorous requirements. Upon completion, you will truly be a Master Birder!

Applications, testing, and interviews will occur in June and July. Classes begin in August. Applicants must pass a bird identification test, commit to the course, and volunteer 48 hours per year to ASGD for at least two years after graduation.

Look for additional announcements in future Warblers and on the ASGD website.



## – AURORA PARKS & OPEN SPACE MONTHLY BIRD WALKS –

### Jewell Wetland

**Date:** **Saturday, January 10, 2009**  
**Time:** **8:30 a.m.**  
**Leader:** **Joy Thompson**  
**Fee:** **None**  
**Registration, directions, and meeting place information at 303.739.2428 or [nature@auroragov.org](mailto:nature@auroragov.org)**

**Description:** Explore an Aurora winter gem for raptors, sparrows, finches, and more.

### Quincy Reservoir

**Date:** **Saturday, February 14, 2009**  
**Time:** **8:30 a.m.**  
**Leader:** **Mary Ann Bonnell**  
**Fee:** **None**  
**Registration, directions, and meeting place information at 303.739.2428 or [nature@auroragov.org](mailto:nature@auroragov.org)**

**Description:** Quincy's gates may be closed and locked for the season, but birders will get a special glimpse of winter waterfowl on this walk. If the water is still open, we could be treated to buffleheads, goldeneyes, mergansers, scaups, teals, and more.

# ASGD TRAVEL

To Register for Trips & Classes Call the ASGD Office at 303.973.9530

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



## Birding South Texas & Northern Mexico

February 20 to March 2, 2009 (10 nights)

This is a wonderful opportunity to bird the Texas Valley and northern Mexico's El Cielo Biosphere Reserve lead by local experts! The Texas Valley is a world renowned area for birding. Ecosystems from riparian woodlands to brush land and costal areas make this a perfect destination to see a large number of birds. Only 6 hours away from the Texas Valley we visit Mexico's El Cielo Biosphere. This protected area contains tropical jungle, gallery forest, pine-oak forest and the northernmost cloud forest in the American Continent. El Cielo is the perfect place to add as many as 120 species to your Texas Valley list. Furthermore, by visiting El Cielo with us you will contribute to our Sustainable Development through Birding Project. Cost is \$2,295 for double and \$2,595 for single and includes transportation from McAllen, Texas to El Cielo and back, 6 nights lodging in McAllen and 4 nights in Gomez Garias, all park entrance fees, most meals, bottled water and snacks, boat ride at Bocatoma and full time birding guide. For a complete itinerary call Becky Beckers, Travel For The Birds, 303-766-5266, send an email to [AgentBecky@aol.com](mailto:AgentBecky@aol.com) or go to [www.TravelForTheBirds.com](http://www.TravelForTheBirds.com)

## The Columbia and Snake Rivers: A Small-Ship Experience

April 17 - 24, 2009 (7 nights/8 days)

Roundtrip from Portland, OR on the Spirit of '98 (96 guests)

Step back into history as we follow in the footsteps of Lewis and Clark on the Columbia and Snake Rivers on this Cruise West expedition.

For Lewis & Clark, the Snake River was an area of almost continual rapids and waterfalls. Today, the area is starkly beautiful, with a mixture of orchards, farmland, and rangeland where beef cattle and deer graze. Many scenic parks dot the shoreline. Several areas have also been set aside as wildlife refuges by the Corps of Engineers to mitigate natural habitat areas lost when water backed up behind the dams. Look for osprey, golden eagles, and numerous species of hawk along the cliffs, bluffs, and shorelines.

As our small ship approaches the mouth of the mighty Columbia, you disembark to visit Fort Clatsop. Other new wonders await around every bend-- dramatic waterfalls and ancient petroglyphs carved into the 4,000 foot cliffs. And a fascinating look at how the rivers themselves were tamed in the 1930s, as you transit almost 1,000 miles and navigate eight major sets of locks and dams.

Cruise West staff and exploration leaders will guide a series of excursions to help you recapture the past. You'll learn about the hardships of establishing the Whitman Mission in the wil-

derness; the contributions of the Nez Perce in the shaping of this region and their vision for the future, and about modern environmental issues of salmon survival and irrigation rights. The trip offers an exquisite balance of discovery, adventure, relaxation, and personal exploration.

Group pricing per person, double-occupancy cabins start at \$3,069 for Qu yana Members and \$3,235 per person for first time Cruise West passengers; add \$50 for non-ASGD Friends member. Cruise includes meals, gratuities and selected shore excursions. Save up to \$330 per person off of brochure rates. Single share roommate match available in some cabins. Trip will be led by ASGD Second V.P. Ann Bonnell. For complete itinerary or additional information, contact Becky Beckers, 303-766-5266, [AgentBecky@aol.com](mailto:AgentBecky@aol.com) or go to [www.TravelForTheBirds.com](http://www.TravelForTheBirds.com)

## Bird Southeast Arizona

May 1 - 7, 2009

Southeast Arizona is one of the most biologically diverse areas in the United States. Habitats include the Sonoran Desert with its dramatic columnar cacti, the Chihuahuan desert with its grasslands and desert scrub, and the dramatic "Sky Islands" where species from the Rocky Mountains and Mexico's Sierra Madre come together. During our journey, we'll explore most of these habitats, encounter a tremendous diversity of plants and animals, and enjoy fine weather at one of the richest times of year. We'll visit many of the birding and wildlife hotspots - Madera Canyon, the Patagonia area, Ramsey and Garden Canyons in the Huachuca Mountains, and the San Pedro River. Species we're likely to see include elegant trogon, vermilion flycatchers, painted redstart, Grace's, Lucy's, red-faced and other warblers, three species of Myiarchus flycatchers (ash-throated, brown-crested, and dusky-capped), thick-billed kingbird, up to ten species of hummingbirds, and many others. We'll also spend time learning about the general ecology of the area and explore the fascinating relationships among southeast Arizona's birds, plants, mammals, reptiles, insects, geology, and regional climate.

Our guide will be Mark Pretti who formerly was the naturalist at Ramsey Canyon. Mark is thoroughly knowledgeable about all aspects of this area's natural history as well as expert in finding the regional bird specialties.

The cash discounted price for ASGD members is \$1595 (\$1645 for non-members) with the trip starting from Tucson. Assistance with travel arrangements to Tucson will be available. The land cost includes meals, accommodations in attractive bed and breakfasts and hotels, van transportation during the tour, guiding, and park entrance fees. Both tours have similar itineraries - they are essentially the same tour. Maximum group size for each tour is nine.

For a detailed itinerary and additional information, please contact Bill Turner, the ASGD representative accompanying these trips, at (303) 795-5128 or e-mail [toursbyturner@aol.com](mailto:toursbyturner@aol.com).

# – ASGD PARTNERING ORGANIZATIONS –

## – DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS –

### Members Meetings

**Date:** Monday, January 26, 2009

Monday, February 23, 2009

**Time:** Doors open at 7:00 p.m. and are locked at 7:30 p.m. Mark your calendar for each meeting and plan to come by 7:15 p.m.

**Fee:** None

*Pre-registration is NOT required*

**Meeting Place:** Meetings are held at the Ricketson Auditorium in Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Park on the north side of the museum and walk around to the west door. If late, you can enter through security/volunteer door.

#### Description:

**January:** Dr. Hugh Mclsaac from the University of Denver will share his research on bird navigation.

**February:** Dr. John Demboski, of the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, will share some of his special knowledge about the bird skins collection at the Museum

### Denver Urban Count

**Thursday, January 1**

Get a good start on your 2009 list! Check DFO's website or the calendar in this Lark Bunting for areas and leaders.

### Denver Museum of Nature and Science – the Bird Collections

**Saturday, January 3**

Jeff Stevenson, Zoology Collection Manager, will lead 15 lucky DFO members on a new kind of field trip (no weather worries!) This renowned research area is not open to the public. It has the largest gathering of study skins in the American west – from around the world and right around home. Museum entrance fee is included in this morning tour (10 am to noon) Please call Patty Echelmeyer (303-233-4947) by December 30th to put your name in the hat (or in the nest?) to see who will be the “fortunate fifteen.”

### Belmar Historic Park

**Sunday, January 4**

Leader: Paula Hansley 720-890-2628. Meet at 0830 at the parking lot in Lakewood, 800 S. Wadsworth. From Wadsworth, turn west on Ohio Avenue. Go straight ahead for 2 blocks into Irongate parking area next to the lake. ½ day trip. A special place for urban birding. An easy walk and a great way to start your annual tally.

### South Platte Park Wanderings

**Saturday, January 10**

Leader: Ed Holub 303-979-2194. Meet at 0800 at the Carson Nature Center parking lot, north of Mineral Avenue, 1 block

west of So. Santa Fe Drive behind Aspen Groe Shopping Center. Lunch optional. Trip may go beyond noon. This area yields surprises in all seasons.

### Wheat Ridge Greenbelt & possibly Mt. Olivet Cemetery

**Sunday, January 11**

Leader: Paul Slingsby, 303-422-3728. Meet at 0800 on south side of Clear Creek where Youngfield crosses the creek. ½ day trip possibly gathering for lunch at a nearby restaurant.

### 88th and the Platte River

**Saturday, January 17**

Leader: Buzz Schaumburg, 303-699-1721. Meet at 0830 at parking lot at 88th and the Platte for ½ day trip. Always ducks galore – possibly Long-tailed Duck and Barrow's Golden Eye.

### Bear Creek Lake Park

**Sunday, January 18**

Leader: Mike Henwood, 303-716-8551. Meet at 0800 at Park Entrance (SE corner of Morrison Rd. & C470) Call leader to arrange for fee park's pass. ½ day trip. This is Mike's special territory so if the birds are there, he'll find 'em.

### Castlewood Canyon and local feeders

**Saturday, January 24**

Leader: Gail Evans 303-758-2231. Call leader for where and when to meet. May carpool at Parker Regional Park. Surprises in winter in this area. ½ day trip but good spots for picnicking. Gail will check for recent sightings.

### Cherry Creek Recreation Area

**Sunday, January 25**

Leader: Karen van Saltza 720-568-4652. Meet at 0800 at the marina. Bring scopes and dress for changeable weather. ½ day trip so lunch is optional. Good time to buy your annual Parks pass. Karen has been an enthusiastic and capable Master Bird-er Program participant.

### Pueblo Area

**Thursday, January 29**

Leader: Chuck Thornton-Kolby 720-320-1974- Nestling Tours. Meet at 0600 at I25 & Yale Park 'n'Ride. Full day trip, carpooling important! If weather is BAD we'll decide in the parking lot what our route will be.

### Ponderosa Pine Preserve in Aurora

**Saturday, January 31**

Leader: Mary Ann Bonnell, Get information and sign up at 303-739-2428. Mary Ann is Aurora's lead naturalist, so she'll have updated news of bird happenings out there! Patty Echelmeyer, scheduler 303-233-4947

# backyard birds....

by Hugh Kingery



**"IS IT USUAL** to see a Red-tailed Hawk on Capitol Hill?" asked Jeremy Wiest. "One just flew right down the middle of Logan Street between 12th and 13th. This, the most urban of the hawks, this fall had some mates. Amy Law, on Oct. 6, saw a Red-tail mobbed by crows on Wadsworth near Bellevue. Kevin Corwin saw one Oct. 27 in Centennial. Jill Holden had a close encounter with an immature – see the side bar with her Red-tail diary.

**COOPER'S HAWKS**, also turning into urban birds, perched behind Walt and Linda Knudsen's on Oct. 23 and Kevin saw two immature – a female Oct. 9-10 and a male Oct. 28. Joy Schieving, in south Denver, saw one three times in October. Elissa McAlear writes, "Oct. 5 we heard a real racket by Blue Jays, chickadees, and finches about 11 a.m. Looking out our window, we could see only those birds and a squirrel huddled on a branch. About four hours later, Jon called me out to the trash containers. An Eastern Screech-Owl was huddled on a recycle bin in the corner. It didn't move until I checked after dark about 9 p.m., and it was gone."

**ORNITHOLOGISTS DEBATE** about whether or not birds "play." Dave Hill's wife, a dental hygienist, had a patient who described magpies at play on her Littleton roof Oct. 14. The morning dawned with ice on the roof. She watched two magpies slide down the shingles to the gutter, then fly up and do it again!

**MERIKAY HAGGERTY SAYS** "Woo hoo! A backyard first tonight (Nov. 18) – Great Horned Owl." From Franktown, Kenneth Gammon, on Sept. 9, "had two new bathers at my pond: Great Horned Owl and porcupine!"

**SANDHILL CRANES** highlighted the fall for Urling and me. We saw flocks of 50-250 over the house Oct. 9-12, a total of 1198 plus others we heard but couldn't see. This intrigued me, and I polled people in Douglas and Elbert counties. Over those four days, they reported a total of 6,559 cranes flying overhead, plus uncounted but heard flocks. Other parts of the metro area saw/heard them too: Gene Reetz in Cherry Creek, Bill Steinkuhler in Arvada, Mark Chavez in Lakewood, Robert Dorris in Bennett, and Gerry Pawley near Cherry Creek Reservoir. Douglas & Elbert reports came from Ginny Ammons, Kit Bazley, Pat Brodbent, Jackie Dunn, Veronica Holt, Meg Johnston, Loch Kilpatrick, Karen Metz, Sara Nelson, Dave Rapley, Fran Shepperdson, Bernie Smith, and Debra Trujillo.

**ROBINS MAY OUTNUMBER** Sandhill Cranes, and they stay. I'd estimate around 1000 in the three miles from Hidden Mesa Open Space to Castlewood Canyon State Park; Urling counted 125 Nov. 23 just on our lot. A bumper crop of juniper berries/cones has attracted them and kept them here. Before the robins came, we counted 10 Townsend's Solitaires on our hillside; I'd estimate 75-100 within that same three miles. Solitaires have also showed up in metro Denver; Joy saw them twice in October and others reported them on Cobirds.

**KEVIN SENT** a Sept. 11 report: "we had a female Western Tanager stop by for a drink at a water pan. My first thought upon seeing her was, 'Geez, that's a huge goldfinch!'" Kirk Huffstater in Castle Rock and Joy saw tanagers in September. Joy saw a Wilson's Warbler and Townsend's Warbler in both September and October and three kinds of hummingbirds in September. Kenneth Gammon's hummers left in September, but we had a malingering Broad-tail Oct. 4-5. Joy saw a Green-tailed Towhee and Brewer's and White-crowned Sparrows. Kirk had an Orange-crowned Warbler, White-crowned and Chipping sparrows, and a Rock Wren in September. Nan Brehmer (Green Mountain) saw only Broad-tailed Hummers in September, but she also saw a Cassin's Finch. She wrote, "Finally got my bird book out to ID the several juvenile Spotted Towhees that I can't recall seeing before. They are so non-descript compared to their gorgeous parents!"

**JAN JUSTICE-WADDINGTON**, up Coal Creek Canyon, has seen many Red Crossbills all fall – feeding ponderosa seeds, not at her seed feeders, but then coming down in droves to drink and bathe at the water in her yard. An odd visitor started crawling around our house in November, and came to dip into the water that we have trickling and recirculating out of big boulders: a Canyon Wren. How many people can report that species to FeederWatch?

**"WHERE ARE ALL THE BIRDS?"** questions occasionally come to Denver Audubon. Hannah Pavlik emailed from Wheat Ridge in mid October with this query. Usually foothills birds start dribbling into her yard then, but this year she and her neighbors encountered only a few. I procrastinated in answering her (see next paragraph); she wrote back in mid November: "Our birds are slowly returning to our feeders, but still nothing like a normal year. I suspect weather is the chief culprit. The juncos and Spotted Towhees are already here, robins are passing through, and American Goldfinches are increasing in numbers." I had posited three possible causes for her dearth of birds.

**"FIRST**, this fall has seen good weather in the foothills and perhaps many of your prospective tenants haven't had a need to drop down to lower elevations. We live in a 'foothills' habitat near Castlewood Canyon State Park, and have more than our usual birds, particularly robins and Townsend's Solitaires. We don't yet have many juncos and Pine Siskins haven't arrived though we do have some American Goldfinches. (Lessers moved south a month ago.) So, good weather may provide a partial explanation.

**"URLING MENTIONS** the impact that new housing developments can have on bird populations. When we alter a habitat, the birds can't go somewhere else, because ordinarily the other suitable habitats already support as many birds of each species as usual. The displaced birds could move to marginal habitat, but there they probably don't have as much success in breeding and surviving.

**"HANNAH MENTIONED DISEASE.** Several years ago West Nile virus hit some species quite hard: corvids such as jays, crows, and magpies; chickadees; and some others. All those have started to come back to more normal numbers. At our

*Backyard Birds continued on page 14*

## Book Review—

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

Reviewed by Michael Lazare, ASGD Member

**T**ake a very simplistic example: You drive to Breckenridge every winter weekend for some good skiing. Suppose the Eisenhower Tunnel is permanently closed one day. You find other roads, other ski slopes. It's a major inconvenience, but you adapt.

But if you happen to be a migrating bird or whale or salmon or butterfly, a bison or wildebeest or giant sea turtle, which journeys up to thousands of miles twice yearly, and suddenly your migration route is closed, it's more than an inconvenience; it's a major and potentially catastrophic disruption of patterns that have existed for eons. Life and death are at stake. Research has shown that there has been a 50 percent decline in flocks of migratory songbirds crossing the Gulf of Mexico between the mid-1960s and the late 1980s. Routes used by migratory elks and pronghorns in Yellowstone have dropped by 60 to 80 percent. Salmon swimming up the Columbia River at spawning time represent about 10 percent of the estimated number two centuries ago.

This is the premise addressed by David S. Wilcove in his

### Backyard Birds continued from page 13

feeders we sometimes see eye disease (conjunctivitis) and other problems, but usually those confine themselves to only a few species, especially House Finches and goldfinches. (We advise people who observe birds with this disease to clean their feeders thoroughly with a clorox solution, and to stop feeding for 2-4 weeks. The disease spreads, often, by birds in close proximity to each other, the kind of association that feeders bring on.)"

**IN EARLY OCTOBER** our rabbit brush burst out with flaming yellow flowers, and the flowers attracted a bonanza of butterflies. The quantity of butterflies amazed us: daily from Oct. 7-19 we counted 10-50. Painted Ladies composed the bulk, though Urling picked out two Western Ladies, Common Checkered Skippers, Checkered White, Clouded Sulphur, and one Monarch. Big fat flies covered the blooms as well; Dave Leatherman identified them as "Adejeania vexatrix", a Tachinid fly. They lay their eggs on caterpillars of various moths and butterflies and the larvae develop within the bodies of their host. The adults are often seen at flowers. On balance, they are beneficial."

**SANDY BOLTON** shared a story about her grandchild. "On Sept. 19 Ava Grave (age 6) and I watched a White Pelican floating on Cherry Creek Reservoir. Later that afternoon, I showed her the picture of it in the Colorado Birds folded plastic guide. She started looking at all the birds, pointed to the Bald Eagle, and said, 'I know this one, he's the United States guy.'"

**I WELCOME YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS** to this column. Drop me a note or post card at P.O. Box 584, Franktown 80116, or Email me at ouzels8@AOL.com.

challenging book *No Way Home: The Decline of the World's Great Animal Migrations*, published in 2007. Wilcove is Professor of Public Affairs and Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University. He has studied and written about the delicate balance between nature and industrialization for many years.

In this latest work he manages not to sound a doomsday note, although he describes in great detail the encroachments that human development has made and is making on countless varieties of wildlife. He knows his subject extraordinarily well, and he is a gifted writer. In three divisions – air, land, water, he recounts anecdotes about following individual birds for miles at night by car, trying to stay within range of the miniature transmitters placed on them. He writes about dragonflies equipped with miniaturized radio transmitters weighing one-one hundredth of an ounce.

But miniaturized radios or not, migrations paths are swiftly dwindling, thanks to commercial fishing, damming, immense industrialization, urban construction and, of course, global warming. All are seriously harming, and threatening to destroy, migration paths. He describes what migrations looked like before man tampered with them, how they are today, and what they are likely to develop into. He acknowledges that science still has much to learn about migration. But the irony is that as research advances, migration is declining.

His writing style is a delight. Try to read this opening paragraph without being drawn in irresistibly:

"Pick the right night and you will hear them. A September night, perhaps, when a northwest wind has swept the clouds from the sky and the stars are out in full force. As midnight approaches, find a quiet spot away from the rumbles and groans of urban life and listen carefully. Soon you will hear soft chirps and whistles drifting down from the sky. These are the calls of migrating songbirds. A thousand feet above you, extending for hundreds of miles in all directions, is a vast highway of birds – millions of thrushes, warblers, flycatchers, tanagers, vireos and sparrows – heading south."

Is this sort of magic on the way out? Not necessarily. In the current issue of the magazine "Orion," Wilcove writes:

"...the time to save a migration is while the animals are still abundant. Governments and the public must be prodded to take action.... Canada and the United States signed a joint waterfowl management plan in 1986 that led to the protection of millions of acres of wetlands for ducks, geese, and swans. Decades ago, Kenya and Tanzania created protected areas on each side of their border to safeguard the Serengeti's spectacular migration of wildebeest, zebras, and other mammals....

"If ... we fail to protect the great migrations, our descendants are unlikely to be angry. They probably will have no idea what they are missing."

If you care anything about nature, the environment and what kind of world your great-grandchildren will live in, you must read this book.

# ASGD Recognizes our valued Donors

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## ASGD recognizes our New Friends Members

Amber Davis, Arthur Hertel, Beth Stallman, Bob Turner, Carl Kuhlman, Carol Wilson, Catherine Anderson, Eileen Lowey, Jacquelyn Graves, Jane Grogan, Jeff Stroup, Jenny Snyder, John Lillie, Katharine Dickson, Kenneth Bennett, Marjorie Almond, Melissa Dove, Robert Vick, Sharon Wilkinson, Stephen Mohr, Von Fransen, William Lambertson, William Titus.

## ASGD welcomes new board members

**JOE BARTELL.** Joe is a past president of the Detroit Audubon Society and has served on their conservation, membership and finance committees. He has also held a position on the Audubon Michigan Board. He is a member of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, in addition to many other world conservation and birding organizations.

**TOM PARCHMAN.** Tom has worked as a high school teacher, a gymnastics coach, a grocery clerk, a criminal prosecutor, and an assistant state attorney general. After retiring in 2005 Tom decided it was time to get serious about birding. He re-took Hugh and Urling's class, began volunteering at Audubon, and, finally, joined the Board. When not birding or being a househusband, Tom enjoys woodworking and lots of reading.

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