

## ASGD Welcomes Pete Dunne back to Colorado for Annual Dinner

The Audubon Society of Greater Denver is proud and privileged to present Pete Dunne, Director of the Cape May Bird Observatory, as guest speaker at our Annual Dinner/Silent Auction fundraising event. Mr. Dunne is vice-president of the New Jersey Audubon Society and a well-known author of many popular books about birds including *The Wind Masters*, *Hawks in Flight*, and *The Feather Quest*.

He became interested in birding at the tender age of seven when he was given a pair of binoculars and a bird book. Pete describes these gifts as *“One brought intimacy; the other knowledge; and through them the woodlands behind my suburban home became a portal that opened onto a world of discovery and wonders.”*

He uses his talents and energy to make the natural world real for others. Through his books and columns he weaves information, insight and even fantasy into a net that captures minds and hearts.

Pete comes to us with impressive credentials including the 2001 American Birding Association’s Roger Tory Peterson Award,



the EPA Environmental Protection Award and the 1991 Winchester Good News Hunting Writer’s Contest 1<sup>st</sup> prize.

As involved as Director Dunne is with New Jersey’s educational programming, he takes time to lead an every Monday morning bird walk and assist with the Cape May Hawk Count that he established 25 years ago. *“It keeps me grounded in what is real and what is important,”* he explains.

When not working, writing, traveling, or birding, the internationally known Dunne spends his time with wife Linda and the couple’s volatile trio of Labrador retrievers in the riverside hamlet of Mauricetown.

Whether you were dazzled by Pete Dunne’s talk when he appeared here in 1995 or if you missed his captivating and animated stories, you will definitely want to make reservations for this year. Mark your calendar for Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup> at the Marriott Southeast, I-25 and Hampden. See insert for complete details.

*(Photo by Linda Dunne)*

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### Auction Alert — Help Needed Now

*by Urling Kingery*

As you may remember, you’re *all* on my Auction Committee! Today, the only auction items I have are a magnificent framed Audubon print of a Carolina Wren from his Elephant Portfolio and Bird Class Brownies. But — if you help solicit donations from local merchants and others, and make a donation yourself — then imagine the treasures that you can bid on!

This year we have *two months* before the annual dinner and auction. Last year we promised, and this year we will deliver, a real-live auctioneer with out-loud bidding, along with the usual silent bidding in which you write your bids on a sheet next to an item.

Gift certificates from restaurants, theaters, and merchants are always popular. Arts, crafts, plants, theme baskets, baked goods, services; vacation homes and condominiums are great. Be creative—offer your skills on a field trip or to repair a table or to weed a garden.

You can obtain letters from the ASGD office that introduce Audubon and explain the auction, and also receipts for merchants and others who donate items. Take your donations to the Audubon office (call ahead) or give them to any board member. Put a value on all donations, as well as the donor’s name and address. If you have any questions or need a more convenient drop-off location, call me, Urling Kingery, at

303-814-2723. Thank You! I know you’ll do a great job!

**It’s time for the ASGD Bird Seed Sale  
See insert for details**

## The President's Message ...

Spring is once again upon us and with it comes a new awakening and renewal. ASGD has many initiatives on the agenda for this after-the-melt time of year. It seems each year these grow bigger and more energized. I am looking forward to all that this spring and summer has in store. ASGD has major fundraisers planned, field trips awaiting, and a host of volunteer projects scheduled. Look for specifics inside this *Warbler*.

The Nature Center project continues to roll on. We will celebrate Earth Day with a major trail improvement project (did someone say 500 volunteers!). As summer cycles in we will renovate one of the stone houses. Both of these improvements will make the Nature Center site more open and usable for our education programs.

What else is up for the spring and summer? ASGD wants to take you on a bird watching trip to the Czech Republic, Alaska or the metro Denver area. The Kingery's offer their ever-popular Beginning Bird Watching class. The Annual Dinner is rapidly approaching — be sure to grab your tickets now. Bird-a-thon will be better than ever. Susan Smith, our Education Director, has organized an event with birding trips for all ages, skill levels, and everyone's enjoyment. Don't let me hear you say there is nothing to do this summer!

With all this happening at ASGD I do not want to forget to recognize two valued board members who have fulfilled their commitments to the ASGD Board this past January. Ed Butterfield and Dave Hill gave countless hours of their time to see that our organization delivered quality environmental education and community leadership in conservation. Dave served as Treasurer and an Executive Committee member. Ed served as President for two years, but more importantly, was a strong voice of reason, wisdom, and the purpose of Audubon. Ed actually interviewed me when I first offered to join the board three years ago. And now, this President says thank you very much to that President and Treasurer for giving such dedication, heart and soul to ASGD. Thank you, gentlemen.

I encourage all members to get involved in ASGD this spring and summer. Volunteer at the Nature Center, grab your binoculars and sponsor sheet and Bird-a-thon, attend a field trip, and join us at the Annual Dinner and Silent Auction. I will be looking for you.

*Bob Judge*  
President

## Thank You!

As always, we want to give a special thank you to Marc Goodbody for overseeing the process and mailing the newsletter. We also want to thank our great team of helpers: Willa Brunkhorst; Kevin Corwin; Bill Funk; Fred Griest; Aileen Herranen; and Karen Metz.

Thank you also to these Audubon members for their donations of time, equipment, and materials:

Jerry & Arlene Raskin	Printer & fax machine
Robert Vick	Portable typewriter
Nina Routh	Glue gun
Lynne Forrester	Program & database help
Karen Von Saltza	Binoculars
Laura Steigers	Magnifiers, art paper & supplies
Bernie Smith	Computer assistance

ASGD would like to thank these organizations for providing financial support to our education programs this year. *Thank you!*



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*The ASGD is an autonomous local Chapter of the National Audubon Society focusing on birds, wildlife, and ecosystems of the South Platte River watershed.*



# Travel, Field Trips, Classes & Programs

To register for trips & classes call the ASGD office at 303-973-9530

## Field Trips

### Walk the Wetlands

Sunday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> 9AM

Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup> 9AM

Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup> Dawn chorus 7AM/Walk the Wetlands at 8AM

Leaders: Urling & Hugh Kingery and others

Pre-registration: Not Required

Fee: None

Gather at: Parking lot beside the future site of Audubon Nature Center, by the stone houses at Lockheed-Martin's Discovery Pavilion (call ASGD for directions)

We will hike along the South Platte River and look for dippers, ducks, raptors (maybe bald eagles), and other winter residents. Bring binoculars, field guide, water, snack, and a lunch if you'd like to stay.

### Barr Lake State Park

Saturday, March 9th 9AM (half-day)

Leaders: Marilyn & Lee Rowe, 303-659-8069

Pre-registration: Required

Fee: Members \$7, non-members \$9.

Gather at: Barr Lake State Park Nature Center. (I-76 to Bromley Lane; to right (east) about ¾ mile to Piccadilly Road; go right for signs in about a mile.) Parks pass required, or purchase a day pass for \$5.

This is your chance to get to know Barr Lake with leaders who know the area well. Bald eagles and great horned owls will be nesting. You'll see migrating ducks and geese, as well as early land birds. Bring binoculars, field guide, water, snack, and a lunch (if you'd like). Wear layers of warm clothes.

### Hawk Watch – Dinosaur Ridge

Saturday, April 13th 9AM (half-day)

Leaders: Diana & Don Mullineaux, 303-278-7245

Pre-registration: Required

Fee: Members \$7, non-members \$9

Gather at: Stegosaurus Park & Ride lot at Southeast quadrant of intersection of I-70 and Colorado 26 (Red Rocks exit). Coming from the east on I-70, take exit; go left under I-70 bridge, and (after the east-bound on-ramp) left into parking lot.

Climb to the top of the Hogback ridge on a gradual trail and look for migrating hawks using the updrafts to fly north. This is the time of the month when the largest numbers of raptors have been recorded in previous years. Bring water, snack, lunch (if you wish), and layers of warm clothes. Also binoculars and a scope if you have one.

## Classes

### Beginning Bird-Watching

Thursday, April 4<sup>th</sup> 7-9PM ASGD office

Saturdays, April 6<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>, June 22nd & 29th

Field trips to bird-watching sites around Denver including Chatfield, Barr Lake, and Castlewood Canyon State Parks, Wheat Ridge greenbelt, and Genesee Mountain.

Leaders: Urling & Hugh Kingery

Pre-registration: Required

Fee: \$120 members, \$140 non-members (includes membership).

Voted "Best of Denver!" 20 years 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 outdoors time. You can make up any field trips that you miss during future fall or spring class sessions.

## Travel

### Check out the Birds in the Czech Republic

*\*REGISTER NOW — ONLY 4 SPOTS LEFT\**

May 20th – 31st, 2002

Leaders: Otto Zavalsky & Susan Smith

Registration: Required (*group size is limited*)

Fee: \$1,995 per person, double occupancy; \$2,105 per person, single occupancy. \$500 deposit due at time of registration with balance due March 20. Price includes airfare from Denver to Prague, hotel accommodations, and meals while in the Czech Republic. Price does not include drinks with evening meals or departure taxes.

The Czech Republic is a small, stable eastern European country with wonderfully diverse landscapes. This Audubon trip will be a unique opportunity to explore natural areas while learning about the country's important bird conservation efforts. We will look for black storks and corncrakes in the Beskydy mountains and visit a raptor rehabilitation center. We will identify hawks in Southern Moravia and search for white-tailed eagles in Southern Bohemia. The trip will conclude with viewing birds and historical sights in Prague. (*Options are available for participants who would like to extend their stay in Prague.*)

See the back page for details about the  
Alaska Birdwatching Cruise  
June 11th—25th

## Canoe or Kayak the Niobrara in Nebraska

The Niobrara River flows through a unique ecosystem in the sandhill area of the north west part of Nebraska. This river canyon, with many lovely waterfalls, contains remnants of the eastern deciduous forest and the northern boreal forest. A very easy float at about 7 miles per hour, with most river waters about hip deep. You will hear ovenbirds and see many other species along the way.

The trip is limited to 16 participants. We will stay in Valentine, Nebraska the first night and tent camp in the primitive area at Smith Falls State Park, on the banks of the Niobrara River, walking distance from spectacular Smith Falls. We will assist our super chef with meal preparation and clean up. The tenting area is mowed grasses with shade trees along the river. On Friday, we will float the river for about 12 ½ miles, visit the Nature Conservancy Niobrara Valley Preserve and the Fort Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge on Saturday. On Sunday we will float the rest of the 12 ½ miles to Sunny Brook. Travel is in your private vehicle with carpooling encouraged (car-poolers share costs).

We leave early Thursday, July 11th and return Sunday afternoon, July 14th. Bring a sack lunch for our Thursday stop at Buffalo Bill Cody's Scout's Rest in North Platte and bring money for dinner that evening in Valentine. Trip fee includes Thursday night at the Comfort Inn in Valentine, State Park entrance and camping fees, river permits, donation to The Nature Conservancy and Audubon Society of Greater Denver, lunch Friday (motel furnishes early breakfast), all meals on Saturday, and breakfast and lunch on Sunday. Canoe and kayak rentals, with lifejackets, are also included in the fee. Canoes accommodate two adults and one small child. Kayaks are the very stable type (easy to exit) and are available for one or two passengers. Children over the age of 10 are welcome. Canoe and kayak transfers will be taken care of by Sunny Brook. Camping and floating parts of the trip will be alcohol free, as the river and state campground have alcohol prohibitions.

Each traveler is expected to participate in group plans and help prepare one meal and clean up after one meal while camping. Single motel accommodations cost extra. Bring your own tent, sleeping bag, and eating dishes and utensils.

The cost is \$295 per person (\$150 deposit due by March 29th with the balance due June 1st.)

To register call ASGD at 303-973-9530. For questions about the trip itinerary please call trip leader Ann Bonnell at 303-979-6211.

### Denver-Area Christmas Bird Counts

*122,677 birds of 126 species seen in the Denver metro area over the Christmas season*

Four counts held between December 15<sup>th</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup> covered the southwestern and northeastern metro areas, Barr Lake, and northern Douglas County. Each covered a circle with a 15-mile diameter for one 24-hour period between December 15<sup>th</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>.

Most abundant species was Canada Goose with four counts recording a total of 42,200. Next came horned lark—at 11,397 of the 11,560 found in the Barr Lake circle. The four counts recorded 8,575 starlings, 6,496 red-winged blackbirds, 5,561 common mergansers, and 5,348 mallards. All four counts reported bald eagles, with the most, 42, in northeast Denver (most at Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge) and 39 at Barr Lake.

## Programs

*Join the Audubon Society of Greater Denver at the Denver Botanic Gardens and beat the winter blahs with these fun family programs.*



### Senses Alive!

Sharpen your senses as you discover how animals experience the world around them. (Do you know which animal hears with its legs?) You will also practice the tools naturalists use to improve their awareness and ability to spot wildlife. *Course #CH115*

Instructor: Susan Smith  
Date & Time: March 16th, 9-11 AM  
Cost: \$6 per child (member)  
\$8 per child (nonmember)

### Bird-Watching Family Style

A fun filled morning observing and identifying birds! Discover how to include even young children in learning about nature and birds. Bring a field guide and binoculars if you have them. We will have extras for participants to borrow. *Course #CH120*

Instructor: Laura Steigers  
Date & Time: April 13th, 9-11 AM  
Cost: \$6 per child (member)  
\$8 per child (nonmember)

*Registration required.*

*Call the Denver Botanic Gardens at 720-865-2480 to register. No charge for adults or children 3 and under.*

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## Bird-a-thon: It's for everyone, not just the birds! *by Susan Smith*

Do you love watching the birds at your feeders, but don't know your robins from your redstarts? That's OK! Want to learn more about bird watching, but intimidated by binocular-toting folks discussing a bird's undertail coverts? That's OK! We have a fun, social, bird-brained event just for you!

Bird-a-thon-ing is a fun way to get outdoors, improve your bird watching skills, and raise money for ASGD and the Audubon Center. Just like a walk-a-thon, participants tweet and twitter until friends, family or businesses agree to sponsor them. Sponsors are asked to pledge an amount (say, \$1.00) for every bird species that you see on Bird-a-thon Day. All the pledges you collect will stay in Denver to support our chapter and the future Audubon Center.

When is Bird-a-thon Day? Any day (any 24-hour period, to be specific) in May. You can go Bird-a-thon-ing as an individual or with a flock of friends. If you go as a flock, we encourage you to make up a bird-brained team name, just for the fun of it!

If you're not ready to fly solo or want to make some new friends, sign-up for one of our flocks by calling 303-973-9530.

### Kingery's Kingfishers at Bonny State Park

Leaders of the Flock: Urling & Hugh Kingery  
 Starting location: Foster Grove campground  
 Bonny State Park  
 Date & Time: Friday - Sunday, May 3rd, 4th, 5th  
 (Bird-a-thon Day will be Saturday)

*\*For this flock only, please call the Kingery's at 303-814-2723 to register.*

What could be better than a full weekend of bird watching? Camp out or stay in a motel. You'll see an amazing variety of birds as east meets west. Look for migrating warblers, orioles, and flycatchers, red-headed and red-bellied woodpeckers, eastern bluebirds, thrashers, and in the shelter belts, owls. In this wonderful park we'll walk in many different habitats, from wetlands to prairie. We'll have a pot luck Saturday night.

### The Motley Crows

Leader of the Flock: Susan Smith  
 Starting location: Audubon Center, Chatfield  
 Date & Time: Saturday, May 11th,  
 7:30AM - 11:30AM

This flock is for beginners to advanced bird watchers and everyone in-between! We'll work together to meet the migrants and recognize the resident birds at Chatfield. Trip will include a hike into private (Denver Water Board) property bordering the Audubon Center site. Bring a picnic lunch for afterwards.

### Grown-ups & Goslings

Leader of the Flock: Mary Taylor Young author of  
*On the Trail of Colorado Critters, Wildlife Watching for Kids & The Guide to Colorado Birds*  
 Starting location: Cherry Creek State Park  
 Date & Time: Saturday, May 18th, 9AM - 11AM

Kids, grab your favorite grown-up and head out the door. (Warning: adults will not be allowed without child supervision!) We'll take an easy hike to the wetlands and look for quackers and other feathered friends. Babies, toddlers and little ones welcome.

### Chatfield Chicks

Leader of the Flock: Laura Steigers  
 Starting location: Plum Creek Picnic Area, Chatfield

Date & Time: Saturday, May 25th, 8AM - Noon

Calling all bird watching babes! This all-female flock is for you. We'll canvas Chatfield State Park from Plum Creek to the South Platte River to the wetlands. From herons to hummingbirds, enjoy a thrilling (or is that trilling?) experience tracking down some of the 345 species seen in the park. Bring a sack lunch for a chick picnic.

After you've spent the day chasing your feathered friends, call, write or send a homing pigeon to each of your sponsors. Share your adventures and bird lists with them. Collect your pledges and join us for a Bird-a-thon Celebration on Saturday, June 8. We'll have a potluck picnic at the Audubon Center site and tell tall tales about our birding exploits.

The Bird-a-thon participant who raises the most money from sponsors will win (drum roll, please) a Bushnell Spacemaster Spotting Scope with a 15 - 45x zoom eyepiece valued at \$325!!! Many, many chirps of praise go to Scott Menough at Wild Birds Unlimited for donating this eye-grabbing prize. Please visit his stores at 2720 S. Wadsworth and 7400 E. Hampden Avenue and thank him for so generously supporting ASGD!

Have we got your feathers ruffled with excitement yet? Call the ASGD office at 303-973-9530 to register for Bird-a-thon and get your pledge sheet. And, if you really don't want to be a Bird-a-thon-er (even though we can't imagine why you wouldn't!) you can still get involved by being a sponsor. Just give us a call, we would love to hear from you!

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# Eagle Eye

*Watching Public Policy  
for the Environment*  
Polly Reetz

So many issues, so little time . . . The Colorado Legislature has reconvened, and although a major growth bill may not be in the cards this year, there are still plenty of interesting and stimulating – to say the least – bills for conservationists to consider. Let's start with the simpler ones.

Senator Entz introduced a bill to allow the Division of Wildlife to extend the hunting season for black bears. It now starts September 1st, but under the new bill, SB 44, it could start July 15th. Senator Entz is obviously responding to the wave of bear nuisance incidents last summer, but his bill is unnecessary. The Division already has the power to remove nuisance bears, and the bears killed by hunters in the extended season would most likely be bears in the high country that are minding their own business. The problems occur in towns and suburbs, where hunting is not allowed anyway. The bill could put hunters into the mountains during the high tourist seasons, with hikers, backpackers, picnickers, walkers, runners, etc. – you get the picture. To top it all off, it reverses part of an initiative passed 10 years ago by Colorado voters, by a 70% margin. The initiative won all but 2 counties and passed handily in Entz's own district.

Then there's a bill to enlarge the Wildlife Commission by one seat, to a total of nine, and require that three of the

members come from the Western slope, three from the Eastern. Having nine members will eliminate the problem of a tie vote (in which case the measure under consideration fails). Audubon's concern is the possible lack of urban representation on the Commission, since most of our members – and most Coloradoans – live in urban areas.

But here cynical reality sets in. The Commission members are appointed by the Governor, and if he wants to stack that body with conservative rural types, he will find a way to do it. If he wants to stack it with urban representatives, he will find a way to do that too. The Commission serves at the Governor's pleasure, no matter his (or her) party or political philosophy.

A third wildlife bill, HB 1183, would make prairie dog management easier. Right now, relocation of these little guys requires the approval of county commissioners in the county to which the dogs go. This bill permits some relocation without prior commissioner approval, to federal, state or municipal land considered suitable by the Division of Wildlife, or to private land that is enrolled in a conservation incentive program (just being started by the DOW). It could play a role in saving prairie dogs and the grassland species, such as burrowing owls, that live with them.

More sweeping, and potentially more destructive, than the above bills is HB 1107, a "takings" bill. It allows citizens to sue the state, its agencies, its citizen boards, commissions, councils, and institutions of higher learning, as well as all local governments, for ANY regulatory action that burdens private property owners. For example, if a city passes a zoning regulation to

protect the public health, safety, or welfare of its citizens, the owner of property affected by the zoning can consider this a "taking" of his property and sue the city for compensation. The bill even broadens the definition of a taking from what is currently in the Colorado and US Constitutions. Such a measure, if it passes, would paralyze government and keep it from protecting its citizens and the environment. A disaster in the making!

Lastly some good news. Senator Ken Gordon has introduced a bill to allow ANYONE, not just the state, to acquire existing water rights to keep water IN the stream for recreation, fish and wildlife, scenic beauty, or ecological diversity. Local governments, water districts, private individuals, corporations, or land trusts could change existing uses to in stream uses. Keeping water in streams would help to restore many of our creeks, rivers, and lakes as wildlife habitat and for recreational use. Currently anyone can secure a water right to take water OUT of the stream, why not let them keep it in the stream? Watch for intensive opposition from the old guard Water Buffaloes on this one.

**If you'd like to be a part of Audubon's work in the Legislature,** send your name and email address or phone number to the ASGD office and we'll put you on our email/telephone tree. We are starting to prefer emails, because it is an effective way to reach people in what is often a limited amount of time! You'll be contacted when your representative's vote is needed on crucial bills.

## Celebrate Earth Day with Audubon & Make a Difference!

*"Connecting to nature enriches my life.  
I have a role in taking care of nature."*

These words express the message we hope every person takes home after visiting the Audubon Center at Chatfield. To achieve this vision, we need to bring families and children outside, where they can explore nature in a fun, supportive and safe environment. We need a trail system that draws visitors out to discover the muskrat family living in the ponds and the bullfrogs hiding in the cattails. We need places for families to listen to the arguments of red-winged blackbirds and the warbling notes of song sparrows.

Currently, the existing trails at our Audubon Center site are limited and in poor

condition. Plus, more work is needed to restore the ponds (former gravel pits) to productive, diverse wetland habitat.

This is why ASGD is so excited to announce that Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado (VOC) will host a major trail improvement project this spring for the Audubon Center. VOC will provide much needed technical assistance, trained crew leaders and overall coordination for the project. We are grateful to Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) for providing the funding for the trail improvements through a Legacy Grant. Thanks also go to our partners in the Chatfield Basin Conservation Network for making the Legacy Grant application possible.

The VOC project will create an ADA accessible trail around one pond, along with a wildlife observation deck and boardwalk through the cattails. Volunteers will also rehabilitate a natural surface trail around the second pond. Crews will improve habitat by planting wetland species in and around the ponds and removing noxious weeds. This trail and habitat restoration project will make it possible for ASGD to expand programs connecting families and children to nature at the Audubon Center site.

It only seemed appropriate to plan this event on Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, as a celebration of Earth Day weekend.

*(Continued on page 7)*

# backyard birds....



by Hugh Kingery

Christmas bird counts serve up a lot of information about backyard birds. The Denver Urban count covers east Denver and Aurora, and observers at 23 feeders counted 2,830 individual birds of 28 species. House sparrows topped the list with 823 birds, followed by 791 Canada Geese, 484 house finches, and 164 starlings.

Cat Anderson and Candy Gray, in Englewood, reported the only cedar waxwings and spotted towhees on the entire count, and Dodie Hampton had the only scrub-jays. Hazel Briggs in Montclair and Elaine Hanak-Hall in Aurora have had a scrub-jay off and on, but not on count day.

On the Denver count, backyarders reported 50 species, an amazing and a record-setting variety, totaling 5,625 birds. Canada Geese topped the Denver list, with 1,798, followed by 474 house sparrows, 445 house finches, 412 juncos, 411 starlings, and 357 red-winged blackbirds. Other notable totals included 131 pine siskins, 133 black-capped chickadees, 73 Steller's jays, and 34 downy woodpeckers (The urban count had 19 downies.). Denver backyarders added five species not seen by field parties: goshawk, gray and pinyon jay, Cassin's finch, and red crossbill.

Urban backyard counters reported 5 sharp-shinned hawks. We offer seed to attract seedeaters and the seedeaters attract hawks that feed on them. Joy Schieving has seen both sharp-shinned and Cooper's in south Denver, but neither on count day. Suzanne Gammon reacted to last issue's report of Cooper's hawks with this note about a Christmas Eve rescue at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in 2000: "I helped rescue a young female who crashed into the glass going after a pigeon. *Birds of Prey* (Rehabilitation Center) came for her. I visited her four days later. Two weeks later she was set free. One day later she was standing in front of the museum. I told her to go back to Broomfield (BOP site). I hope she went back; I guess not." Suzanne, an artist, created a striking painting of the hawk, on exhibit (I think) at her gallery at 772 Santa Fe

Drive.  
Janet  
Johnston had  
a surprising

late fall report: a gray catbird spent November 10<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> in her yard near Park Meadows. Out in Franktown, the plethora of Townsend's solitaires in the fall has diminished; in our neighborhood we now have only 2-4 compared with 4-10 in November. The Christmas counts had only a few at feeders—Denver feeders had two and urban count feeders reported none! Nan Brehmer, though, did have one on Green Mountain during December. Donna Randolph and Lois Foreman, in south Denver, had few birds for the Christmas count, but on January 16<sup>th</sup> saw lots of birds—12 species, 50 birds; among them 3 flickers including a hybrid. They also welcomed a "flock of 20 robins that came to eat berries we have on our bushes (frozen I'm sure). Then they would all try to drink out of our heated birdbath. They made a tight circle around it and would drink and drink until I had to fill it up at least once during that session."

In Parker, Patty Perron still has a flock of 12-15 bushtits "munching happily at my 5 suet feeders." She also reports "an adorable ruby-crowned kinglet—a first in my yard. I saw it January 18<sup>th</sup> on the upside-down suet feeder. It actually let out its 'scolding call' when I opened the door to go fill my feeders—but it stayed to eat. The next day it came back and its beautiful red head flashed in the sunlight."

Nearby in Franktown, Buzz and Shirley Bowers have "the largest flock of pine siskins (80-100) we have ever had in winter. Mixed in with them are about 8-10 American goldfinches and a few house finches." Urling and I have the same mixture—50-75 siskins daily, over 100 when it snowed a week ago. Spotted towhees have stayed in their yard, though Urling and I have only seen one all winter. Nan Brehmer also has had towhees all winter.

Several feeders reported red-breasted and white-breasted nuthatches: Donna and Lois, Flo deCesare in Greenwood Village, and we and Buzz and Shirley had both; Hazel had a white-breasted and Joy saw a red-breasted. Joy also watched a mountain chickadee on 13 days in October.

Steve Stachowiak reported last

month, "I am sure this post will make many people cringe, but I feel obligated to report this sighting. While I trudged up to the top of the south stands for today's Bronco game (October 8<sup>th</sup>), a small brown bird shot by in front of me. Of course my sub-conscious birding radar kicked in and I said to my son, "the markings were all wrong for the typically expected house sparrow. To which he replied, 'Huh?' Quickly moving up the steps, I looked to my left and found an actively foraging rock wren! I am willing to volunteer to continue the field work in researching this sighting to determine if the rock wrens are resident breeders, if someone can work something out with the Broncos. . . ."

Nan Brehmer has contributed observations to this column since it began (an unknown number of years ago). She has lived in Green Mountain for 25 years and reminisced about the birds back then. "Every night for several weeks during that first fall, a mockingbird flew up the street, stopping at the top of each telephone pole. That was the bird that got me paying attention. Have never seen one here since. Saw a much larger variety of hawks and eagles. Two streets were added, after a 25-foot railroad tie wall and a landfill. Could no longer see the ridges where they occasionally sat. A few swoop through the backyard occasionally.

"When hiking way up the drainages we noticed many spotted towhees in the shrubs on north-facing slopes—but never in winter in our backyards. Now they are the first bird we see at the feeder in the morning, and the last at night, and they stay winter and summer."

Nan added a spectacular sight: "a bighorn sheep with horns of more than a full curl appeared on Green Mountain right above our house. He was seen for over a week—our street was full of neighbors and their guests looking through binoculars on Thanksgiving Day."

I welcome your contributions to this column. Send a note or postcard to PO Box 584, Franktown 80116, or an e-mail to ouzels@juno.com.

(Continued from page 6)

Sound like a full day of work? It is, and that's why we need your help! We will need up to 500 volunteers on April 20<sup>th</sup> to make this project a reality. It is a great opportunity for families to volunteer together; youth age 8 and older are welcome. ASGD and

VOC also need a handful of volunteers to help solicit and prepare food donations before April 20<sup>th</sup>, as well as a small crew to serve meals on project day.

To volunteer for this important trail project, log onto [www.voc.org](http://www.voc.org) or call VOC at 303-715-1010.

- Please visit the ASGD booth at the **2002 Spring Gardening Echxpo at Echter's Greenhouse, Garden Center & Nursery** in Arvada March 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 2002. Call 303-424-7979 for Echxpo details
- **Birdwatching Cruise in Alaska June 11-25, 2002**  
ASGD is offering a 14 night Birding Cruise that begins and ends in Vancouver, British Columbia. Stops along the way include Wrangell, Sitka, Skagway, Glacier Bay, Seward, Valdez, Hubbard Glacier, Juneau, Ketchikan, Victoria, British Columbia. Prices start at approximately \$3,250 per person and include nonstop air from Denver to Vancouver (depending on availability) and airport-ship transfers. For complete details contact Becky Beckers, 303-766-5266 or e-mail to AgentBecky@attbi.com.
- **Canoe the Gunnison River with Audubon Colorado June 21-23, 2002.** Join other Audubon members from across the state, along with Audubon Colorado staff and expert guides, in exploring this treasure of Colorado's canyon country. Price - \$285/person. Call Centennial Canoe Outfitters at 303-755-3501 (or toll-free at 877-353-1850) for details and to register. Last year's trip filled quickly, so register early!
- **New Bird Lecture Series Announced** The Tattered Cover Book Store's Rocky Mountain Land Series, in association with the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, offers a new monthly series of lectures and slide presentations on the birds of Colorado's mountains and plains. Lectures will be held at the Tattered Cover's LoDo location, 16<sup>th</sup> & Wynkoop. For more information, please contact Jeff Lee at 303-322-1965, ext. 2729, or via email at jeffl@tatteredcover.com.

Audubon Society of Greater Denver  
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**See page 7  
for details  
about this  
year's new  
and improved  
Bird-a-Thon!**

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#### Mission

The ASGD is a nonprofit group, with membership over 3500, 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

National Audubon Society members in the Denver metro area are automatically members of the ASGD and receive *The Warbler*.

#### ASGD Winter Fundraising Campaign

It's not too late to participate in Audubon Society of Greater Denver's Winter Fundraising Campaign.

Members like you are essential to the success of ASGD. We rely on your annual donations of financial support and volunteer time. Your support is critical to the continued success of ASGD programs.

See the Jan/Feb *Warbler* for details and a donation form or call the office at 303-973-9530 for more information. Thank you for your continued support.

Don't forget, ASGD  
Adopt-a-Highway clean up day is  
March 9th. Contact Dede Williams at  
dede.williams@ing-usdenver.com or  
call the Audubon office



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