

Raskins honored for outstanding service

by Mary Marx, ASGD Board Member

Jerry and Arlene Raskin were honored in recognition of outstanding service for their volunteer contributions to ASGD. An award was presented to each by ASGD past-president, Ed Butterfield (1997-1999) and Ann Bonnell, vice-president during the Spring Benefit Dinner & Auction, April 11th at Pinehurst Country Club.

Jerry and Arlene's mutual love of birds and the environment make them natural volunteers for Denver Audubon. Their contributions over the years have been significant – not only through cash donations but with their willingness to give of their time and energy. Jerry's invaluable legal expertise and Arlene's biology and teaching background, as well as their intelligent perceptions, have greatly helped Denver Audubon in making

many important decisions.

The Raskins have been volunteering for more than 15 years assisting with just about every committee and project needing support. Arlene has been active on the education, conservation, field trip, auction and volunteer committees. She has chaired the Bird-a-thon and Dawn Chorus events and served as ASGD's representative to Partners in Flight. Jerry has aided the Audubon Center and development

committees, as well as, served as a legal advisor for the board. He has also led other volunteers on trail projects. Jerry is currently our representative to the Audubon Colorado board and 1st Vice-President for ASGD. Both have generously given many years of service to the ASGD board of directors and executive committee.



Jerry Raskin receives ASGD Service Award from board vice-president Ann Bonnell while past president Ed Butterfield looks on.



Arlene Raskin receives ASGD Service Award from board vice-president Ann Bonnell.

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New volunteer meeting scheduled

Saturday, July 19, 10am–Noon Audubon Center at Chatfield State Park

Want to get more involved in Audubon Society of Greater Denver (ASGD), but not sure where to start? Volunteering is a great way to insure the success of ASGD's projects, meet fellow members, learn about your local environment and have fun. Volunteers are our most valuable assets – and we need more of them!

We need your help on a wide range of projects. Volunteer committees include: conservation issues, field trips & travel, development, membership and education. You can also help on special projects, such as, Adopt-a-Highway, the newsletter mailing crew,

the auction event, and the Bluebird Box Project. At the Audubon Center, we are looking for folks to staff the center, lead school groups and help with trail and garden work.

This is just a sampling of the variety of ways you can get involved in ASGD. To find out more, join us for an informational and fun get-together at the Audubon Center. Board members, committee chairpersons and staff will be on hand to meet with you and answer questions. If you are not able to attend, but still want to volunteer call 303-973-9530 or email ssmith@denveraudubon.org for a volunteer information packet.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

July brings with it firecrackers, hot days and the start of a new fiscal year for ASGD. This means it is time to welcome new members to our Board of Directors. Doris Cruze, Jo Evans, Mary Marx and Allen Stokes were elected in May and will each begin three-year terms. It seems that once you get bitten by the "Audubon bug," you just keep coming back for more! Doris was a board member in the 80's and Allen was president from 1975-1977. Jo recently retired after many years working as the Audubon lobbyist in Colorado. Mary is starting her second term on the board and continues to be active in numerous committees. It is a joy to work with such dedicated folks.

I also want to thank Judy Writer and Loretta Davis for the time and energy they have given to ASGD. Judy helped guide the progress at the Audubon Center as chair of that committee. Loretta lent her expertise to the conservation and auction committees. Judy and Loretta both concluded their service on the board in June.



Thank You!

WITH GRATITUDE—THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING ASGD

- The Queen of Spades garden club donated \$100 towards the wildlife habitat and children's sensory gardens at the Audubon Center.
- Jon McAlear donated a collection of bird books and Jerry & Arlene Raskin donated "The Lives of Birds" to our library.
- Loretta Davis donated graphic design services to develop a flyer on the dangers of tree trimming during nesting season.
- Mary Marx donated envelopes for the auction invitations.

APPLAUSE FOR OUR VOLUNTEERS!

- **Auction Volunteers:** Lavonne Axford, Ed Butterfield, Doris & Jimmy Cruze, Loretta Davis, Carol DeStefanis, Lynne Forrester, Allison Hilf, Susan Hill, Christy Honnen, Courtney James, Urling & Hugh Kingery, Mary Marx, Elaine McCoach, Jeanne McCune, Lynn Owen, Frank & Barbara Shissler, Dorothy Sutherlin, Jean Tarbel, Karen von Saltza, and Steven French of Sheldon Good & Co.
- **Spring Birdseed Sale Volunteers:** Fred Griest, Bob Priester, Jerry Raskin, Jed Raskin, DJ Reetz, Barb Shissler and Frank Shissler.
- **Adopt-a-Highway Volunteers:** Ann Bonnell, Lynne & Kelly Forrester, Margaret Motz, Polly Reetz, Rhonda Shank, DeDe Williams, Diane and the members of Thunder Ridge High School Community Champs: Megan, Tanya, Jason, Tony, Adam, Sierra and Trelawny.
- **Audubon Center Painting Crew:** Fred Griest, Jerry Raskin, Sue Schulman, and Ben cooper
- **Warbler Mailing Crew:** Willa Brunkhorst, Ben Cooper, Kevin Corwin, Bill Funk, Marc Goodbody, Aileen Herranen, Vi Nicholson, Barbara Shissler.
- **Trail Crew Volunteers:** Richard Brandt, Carol DeStefanis, Lynne Forrester, Jason Shaffer, Tyson Steigers.
- **Office Helpers:** Courtney James and Grace Weber.
- **School Group Leaders:** Urling Kingery and Jeanne McCune.



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MISSION

ASGD is a nonprofit group, with over 3000 members, 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*.

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

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TRAVEL, 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



FIELD TRIPS

Walk the Wetlands

SUNDAY, JULY 6 8AM

SUNDAY, AUGUST 3 8AM

LEADERS: Hugh and Urling Kingery

Registration is NOT required.

FEE: None

MEETING PLACE: The Audubon Center at Chatfield State Park (contact ASGD for directions).

DESCRIPTION: We will hike along the South Platte River looking for nesting redstarts and lots of fledgling birds just out of the nest. Bring binoculars, field guides, water, snack, and lunch if you 'd like to stay. Wear long pants as poison ivy is lush. Mosquito repellent is a good idea, too.

Butterfly Trek

Fun, informal, learn-as-we-go field trip to find and identify butterflies. No experience required. Just bring your curiosity, binoculars, field guide if you have one, lunch, water, sunscreen and/or hat, and be prepared for afternoon thunderstorms. Group size limited to 10 people per hike. Carpooling is encouraged as trailhead parking is very limited.

FEE: \$7/Friends members/\$9 non-members.

LEADER: Lynne Forrester (303-904-3664, klforrester@msn.com)

SUNDAY, AUGUST 17

GOLDEN GATE STATE PARK/GOLDEN (8,200 FT)

Open fields, streams and hillsides covered with flowers. Last year there were some unusual species even with the drought. Meet at 9am at Stegosaurus P&R in the southeast quadrant at I-70 and highway 26 (Red Rocks exit #259 on I-70) to carpool to site. Walk will start at 10am from the lower parking area near the restrooms at Ole Barn Knoll in G.G.S.P. on Mountain Base Road with a target return to the P&R by 2pm.

Canoe the Colorado River

JUNE 27-29, 2003

LEADERS: Centennial Canoe Outfitters

***Registration IS required.**

FEE: \$295 per Friends member (tent camping, 3 days 2 nights), Non-members add \$40

MEETING PLACE: Fruita, Colorado

DESCRIPTION: Your trip will cover a 30-mile stretch of spectacular canyon country between Fruita, CO (just west of Grand Junction) and Westwater, UT. The river current is gentle with occasional small Class 1+ rapids to add spice to the journey. Roads do not bind this portion of the river, and the steep walled canyons are accessible only from the river, giving the area a true wilderness setting. There will be ample time along the way for hiking into the canyons, swimming in the cool river or simply relaxing on its banks. Floating through Horsethief and Ruby Canyons, you will pass high walls of red sandstone and shale deposited during the age of the dinosaurs. Interesting side trips into deep box canyons will leave you awed by the immensity of geologic time and the silence of the wilderness. Special treats include paddling through the remnants of an ancient volcano and hiking to some ancient Native American pictographs.

Birds of Steamboat Springs Area

AUGUST 22-24, 2003 (With option to stay until Aug. 25)

***Registration IS required and space is limited!**

FEE: \$50/Friends member: \$60 Non-member Price includes guide services, entrance fees and lunches on Saturday and Sunday.

DESCRIPTION: Join us for a fun, informal birding adventure in Steamboat Springs! We will leave Friday morning and bird our way to Steamboat Springs. Likely stops include the Alfred M. Bailey Nesting Area, located just outside of Silverthorne in the Eagles Nest Wilderness Area; Kremmling (golden eagles and rosy-crowned finches); and Rabbit Ears Pass. On Friday evening, Steamboat's offerings include a professional rodeo, Strawberry Park Hot Springs, and more. Saturday, the group will visit the Nature Conservancy's Carpenter Ranch and the adjacent Yampa River Preserve. We will then head north towards Steamboat Lake State Park and Crane Park. On Sunday, we will visit Stagecoach State Park Wetland Habitat Preserve and Catamount Lake. Participants will have the option of returning to Denver on Sunday afternoon or remaining in Steamboat until Monday for more fun, relaxation, birding, and the like. All birding trips from Steamboat will be led by local Steamboat birders, Park Rangers, or Colorado Division of Wildlife employees. Contact Allison Hilf for information on carpools and assistance with finding affordable, comfortable accommodations. (Lodging is not included in the price of the trip.)

FAMILY PROGRAMS AT THE AUDUBON CENTER Nestlings—For Ages 2 & Under With Caregiver

***Registration IS required for ALL family programs!**

THURSDAY, AUGUST 14, 10-11AM

NATURALIST: Susan Smith

FEES PER CHILD: \$2/Friends member: \$4/Non-member. Adults FREE

DESCRIPTION: You're never too young to start learning about nature! Take a short stroll around Muskrat Pond and explore the out-of-doors through safe, sensory activities. Discover how to share the wonders of nature with your baby or toddler. (Trail is handicapped accessible, strollers are welcome.)

Fledglings—For Ages 3-5 With Caregiver

THURSDAY, AUGUST 28, 9-11AM

NATURALIST: Susan Smith

FEES PER CHILD: \$3/Friends member: \$5/Non-member. Adults FREE

DESCRIPTION: The pond is a busy place! Discover who lives above, in and below the water at Muskrat Pond. From red-winged blackbirds to crawdads, we'll explore how they survive in this wet world.

Wet, Slimy, Oozy Doozey Day—For Ages 6-11 With Caregiver

SATURDAY, AUGUST 16, 9-11AM

NATURALIST: Laura Steigers

FEES PER CHILD: \$3/Friends member: \$5/Non-member. Adults FREE

DESCRIPTION: Take a closer look at the mud & the muck & who lives in it. Learn how to become a Nature Detective and experience the fascinating world of macro-invertebrates & other pond inhabitants up close.

Night Hike—For The Whole Family

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 7:30-9:30PM

NATURALIST: Susan Smith

FEES: Children 16 and under \$3/Friends member: \$5/Non-member. Adults \$5/Friends member: \$7/Non-member.

DESCRIPTION: Experience the nightlife at the Audubon Center. Sharpen your observation skills while learning how nocturnal creatures hunt and forage in the dark. See and hear wildlife that most people miss.

Volunteer opportunities with ASGD at the Audubon Center at Chatfield State Park

It will be a busy summer at the Audubon Center. We have a great deal of work to do to prepare the site for the hundreds of school children and families that will be visiting this next school year. As the saying goes, many hands make light work! You do not need previous experience or special expertise for these projects—just enthusiasm & a willingness to learn while doing. There will always be a knowledgeable crew leader on hand. Hope to see you at the Audubon Center this summer!

To sign up for volunteer projects: e-mail ssmith@denveraudubon.org or call 303-973-9530.

PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU PLAN TO PARTICIPATE ON ANY OF THE FOLLOWING WORK DAYS
The weather and other factors sometimes creates the need to cancel or reschedule outside projects.
While this doesn't happen often, we don't want to miss calling you if our project plans do change.

**Bring PLENTY OF WATER and work gloves. We recommend that you wear sturdy shoes, sunscreen and hat. (We have extra work gloves for anyone who needs them.) If you like, bring a sack lunch and share a meal with your comrades at the end of the project day.*

TRAIL DAYS—Build a crusher fine trail around the Audubon Center building and habitat garden. Once work is completed at the building, we'll move further out into the field and do maintenance on the Audubon Discovery Loop Trail.

Tuesday, July 8, 8am-Noon Tuesday, July 22, 8am-Noon Tuesday, August 5, 8am-Noon
Tuesday, August 19, 8am-Noon

GARDEN DAYS—Create a butterfly garden, a wildlife habitat garden and a children's sensory garden with native Colorado plants.

Wednesday, June 25, 8am-Noon Planting day.
Saturday, June 28, 8am-Noon Planting day.
Saturday, July 12, 8am-Noon Finishing whatever needs to be done in the new gardens and weeding all gardens as needed.
Wednesday, July 16, 8am-Noon Finishing whatever needs to be done in the new gardens and weeding all gardens as needed.
Saturday, August 23, 8am-Noon Weeding gardens, filling in plants as needed, "general garden maintenance."
Wednesday, August 27, 8am-Noon Weeding gardens, filling in plants as needed, "general garden maintenance."

AUDUBON AMBASSADORS—We will be opening the Audubon Center to visitors on weekend mornings (and possibly some weekday evenings) in August. We need enthusiastic, friendly volunteers to greet visitors, answer questions, share natural history information and lead simple craft/nature activities for children. Dates & times for "open hours" will depend greatly on how many willing volunteers are available! Training is required.

Audubon Ambassador Training Course: Saturdays, August 2 & 9, 9am-2pm each day

SCHOOL & YOUTH GROUP LEADERS—Share your love of nature and inspire the next generation of conservationists! The Audubon Center was created just for this purpose. We need volunteers to lead small groups of elementary students through field trip experiences—nature hikes, pond study, insect investigations & more. Training is required.

School & Youth Group Leader Training Course: Wednesdays, September 3, 10, 17 & 24, 9am-2pm each day.

Panama continued from page 8

lated country road "This is likely to be a birdy spot."

Colleagues aside, Guido was a superb guide—savvy (we saw 312 species and heard 22 others in eight and a half days of viewing; a total of 334 species), enthusiastic, cheerful, patient. And a great source for the history and culture of Panama.

Alas, our privilege of birding in isolation comes at a price for the Panamanians. Panama desperately needs a thriving ecotourism sector in the economy to discourage the defor-

estation rampant in the country, to show local farmers that tourist income is renewable, and preferable to slash and burn subsistence farming; to logging for on-time sales.

As much as we'd like to think of Panama remaining as we saw it in isolated splendor, we are even more eager to know its beauty can be preserved through expanded ecotourism.

And so, if you are considering a trip to the neo-tropics, consider the one we just took. Go soon enough and the magic will be yours.

Welcome to our new FRIENDS of ASGD

Barbara Allen, Jill Boice
 Kathryn Bradley, Alison Donnelly
 Jo Evans, Marc Goodbody
 Marla Graber, Kathleen Hamilton
 Lois J. Hooks, Gwen Kelaidis
 Leora Klayder, Don Lawless
 Gregory Lengsfeld, Bob & Judy Miller
 John & Barbara Morrison
 Patrick Mundus, Ricki & Andy Murphy
 Paula Neal, Gretchen D. Porter
 Jason Ray, Dodie Simmons
 Susan Simons, Penni Sorger
 Bill & Evelyn Steinkuhler
 Jean H. Stevenson, Kathy Stollar
 Andrew Sundelin, Karen von Saltza
 Jonathan Wachter, Patricia Willsey
 Steve & Margot Wynkoop

Thank you for choosing to support Audubon Society of Greater Denver!

Travel Adventures

Birds of Paradise An Hawaiian EDventure

CHOOSE FROM THESE DEPARTURE DATES
 August 2-9, 2003
 September 6-13, 2003
 November 1-8, 2003

Are you passionate about adding "lif-ers" to your list? Sightings of Hawaii's "winged-jewels" abound on this University of Hawaii's 2-island journey to Kauai and the Big Island of Hawaii. Join expert birding guides, field interpreters, naturalists and photographers as you discover Hawaii's anchialine ponds, and shoreline habitats that offer awe-some encounters. Our price of \$1,325 (double occupancy) and \$1425 (double) for Friend's members, includes 7 nights, 8 days (starting from Lihue, Kauai), inter-island air travel from Kauai to Hilo, oceanfront hotels, all ground transportation, park entrance fees and meals. (Non-members add \$100 each.) Pre- and post-trip extensions are available. Space is limited to 12 per group. For more information, contact Becky Beckers, Travel For the Birds at 303-766-5266 or email at AgentBecky@aol.com.

Spring Benefit a success

Over 100 people attended ASGD's Spring Benefit Dinner & Auction on April 11th at the Pinehurst Country Club. Kathy Walsh, TV Channel 4 News Anchor, inspired bidding on silent the evening. Long-time volunteers, Jerry and Arlene for their contributions to French from Sheldon Goodning by getting everyone live auction. Attendees also with old friends and make enjoying a gourmet meal. raising over \$9,500 for and environmental proj- the volunteers who put in event (please see page 2 for Special thanks to Marilyn it possible for ASGD to hurst Country Club.



Hugh Kingery, ASGD columnist and author discusses the bidding process with ASGD member Alice Stokes

auction items throughout ASGD board members and Raskin, received applause the organization. Steven & Co., capped off the eve- involved in an energetic enjoyed time to catch up new acquaintances while The event set a new record, ASGD's Audubon Center ect's! Our gratitude goes to long hours organizing this a complete list of names.) & David Fowler for making hold this event at the Pine-



Become a FRIEND of the Audubon Society of Greater Denver

Become a Friend of ASGD at the following levels

INDIVIDUAL \$25

Benefits:

- ◆ Satisfaction that all of your Friends membership dues will stay at the local level.
- ◆ The award-winning, bi-monthly newsletter, the *Warbler*, to keep you informed on ASGD projects and activities.
- ◆ Invitations to Friends' only events.
- ◆ Friends discounts on ASGD field trips, classes and workshops for one person.

FAMILY \$35

All the benefits listed above, plus:

- ◆ Friends discounts on ASGD field trips, classes and workshops for an additional adult and the member's children or grandchildren under the age of 18.

YES! I am a FRIEND of the Audubon Society of Greater Denver.

Individual (\$25) Family (\$35) I have included an additional donation of _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Enclosed is my check payable to **Audubon Society of Greater Denver**
9308 S.Wadsworth Boulevard
Littleton, CO 80128

Please charge my: ___ Visa ___ Mastercard

Name on card: _____

Account # _____ Exp. _____

Signature: _____ **Thank You!**

Please do not share my name with affiliated organizations or other groups.



Eagle Eye

Watching Public Policy for the Environment
by Polly Reetz

The 2003 Colorado General Assembly—otherwise known as the Legislature—adjourned for the year late on May 7. The newspapers have been full of the news that the last three days of the session were spent by the Republican majority blasting through a bill to redraw the Congressional district boundaries. Democrats spent that time trying vainly to block the bill. Audubon lobbyist Jen Boulton called this “the ugliest end to a session I have ever seen”; she characterized the proceedings as “much dirtier” than anything the newspapers described. Evidently the public has gotten a sanitized description.

A look at the accomplishments of the legislature in the environmental arena reveals a number of successes and one major defeat. On the success side, we saw a provision pass that prohibits any more homeowners’ covenants from REQUIRING bluegrass plantings (this was tucked into HB 1001 regarding use of water resources). Another two bills improved the prospects for conservation easements by, first, permitting water rights owners to include these rights as part of an easement on land, and, second, allowing a conservation easement to be created through a RESERVATION by a governmental entity or charitable organization, thus eliminating the need for a complicated set of real estate transactions.

We saw two bills pass that will allow temporary loans of water rights during droughts, one for agricultural users in the same stream basin (vetoed by the governor May 23) and one to maintain instream flows for fish and wildlife. Unfortunately the latter bill requires a ponderous bureaucratic process, so it is unlikely that it will provide many benefits. Hopefully the law can be amended in the future to remove the bureaucratic hurdles. HB 1092, a bill regarding the management of state forests, was passed WITHOUT a provision requiring the State to log its forests for water production; the deleted language would have resulted in very destructive logging without producing much water at all.

The passage of SB 236 represented the major environmental defeat of the session. It sends a referendum to the voters, asking permission for the State to go \$2 billion in debt for the construction of dams and reservoirs. The process goes like this: the Colorado Water Conservation Board will produce a list of storage projects (ONLY storage, NOT conservation) which are then prioritized and sent to the governor. The governor must approve at least 2 of these projects, one of which has to have a start date no later than July 2005. They then go back to the Water Conservation Board, a highly political entity whose members are appointed by the governor, which issues bonds out of the authorized \$2 billion. THERE IS NO CHANCE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW OF THE PROPOSED PROJECTS. Only when a project’s proponents apply for federal permits do we get a chance to weigh in on its feasibility or environmental costs. Opposing this referendum will be an Audubon priority between now and November.

Why is financing new storage projects a defeat? Because there is NO requirement for utilizing existing supplies as efficiently as possible, no incentives for conservation, no mention of the need to assess environmental impacts. Colorado’s rivers and streams are already being used beyond their capacity to supply water; building more reservoirs means there will be more empty, barren lake beds when snow pack fails to materialize. Please note that legislators killed ALL the comprehensive water conservation bills.

Now for a change of gears. The Colorado Division of Wildlife (DOW) staff has suggested that the Wildlife Commission authorize the routine killing of red-winged blackbirds, yellow-headed blackbirds, rusty blackbirds, Brewer’s blackbirds, and grackles as agricultural pests. Evidently blackbirds were a problem for a sunflower grower in Eastern Colorado last year, and because of the drought he couldn’t use firecrackers to haze the birds off his fields. The DOW is considering the use of lethal methods in such cases, without need for a depredation permit. The question is: should shooting (or poisoning) of these species be allowed without any requirement for corroborating evidence? Without any requirement that non-lethal methods be tried first? What about effects on non-target species? Is this just an attempt to reduce the Division’s workload by not requiring inspections, corroboration, or proof of depredation? The birding community needs to ask these questions and the Division needs to provide answers. The matter will come up at the next Commission meeting in July, but you can call DOW staffer Mike King at 303-291-7348 in the meantime to ask about the issue.

Request for Assistance: the Conservation Committee needs someone to represent ASGD at meetings of the DOW Environmental Roundtable. These occur once a month during the legislative session, and every other month from June–December. They are on the 2nd Wednesday of the month and last about 2 hours.

Please call the ASGD office or Polly Reetz, Committee chairman at reetzfam@juno.com, if you are interested.

Backyard Birds Continued from page 7

CAROLYN SUTTON filled her southeast Denver bird bath for the first time in several months; within minutes birds flocked to drink and bathe: flickers, downy woodpeckers, juncos, robins, blue jays, and Townsend’s solitaire.

LAST YEAR Wes Lindahl noticed that “in the early evening a crow would come by with half a dry bun, drop it in the bird bath, and after a few minutes take it out and fly away. I put the bath (dingy white) in storage for the winter. In mid-April I found some green paint and re-painted it. Within 30 minutes after I put it out a crow arrived with a half of dried bun. After allowing it to soak a few minutes the crow retrieved it and flew away.

“SOME MYSTERIES—where do the small buns come from and where do they go? How did the crow learn to soak them? Where was the crow to observe the new water after all these months?”

I WELCOME your contributions to this column. Drop me a note or post card at PO Box 584, Franktown 80116, or Email me, ouzels@juno.com.

backyard birds....

by Hugh Kingery



NAN BREHMER, up on Green Mountain, discovered a junco trapped in her garage, frantically flying against a window. She liberated it but it, like killdeers, pulled the broken wing act, “dangling one wing as if it were broken and tilting its head as if its neck were broken. I went back into the garage for less than five minutes. When I came back the junco was gone.”

NAN TRAPPED one bird in her garage; our Franktown neighbor, Ron Kmiecik, specialized in birds in barns. First, in March, a Cooper’s hawk paid regular calls into his big barn to catch roosting pigeons. In May Ron found, trapped in another barn, a poorwill chasing miller moths. Then, in a cabin next to his hay field, a male bobolink pursuing moths couldn’t find a way out. Ron liberated the poorwill and bobolink.

FLO DE CESARE, in eastern Centennial, watched a Cooper’s or a sharp-shinned hawk kill a flicker and fly away with his catch. “It’s amazing what you might see going to your mailbox to pick up the mail.” Cat Anderson on May 8 found near Kent School the nest of an eastern screech-owl. (In Denver on June evenings we used to watch groups of scolding robins until we found some protesting the existence of baby screech-owls.) Along the Highline Canal, Cat also located, in the hollow of a cottonwood where a branch had broken off, a great horned owl nest.

DODIE HAMPTON, in Aurora, reports “a pair of mallards that think our swimming pool cover, full of snow melt, is their private pond. I had not realized ducks are so noisy! They leave when our greyhound lunges at them and they act very affronted.” Kay Stone, also in Aurora, called on May 21 because a male mallard had taken up residence in her pool; Kay worried that the chemicals in the pool might harm the duck. I think that mallards probably can survive the stuff we mix into swimming pools, although I’m not sure.

DODIE REGULARLY has scrub-jays (and blue jays), but in April added a second mountain jay: two Steller’s jays. Bill Kanter in Aurora saw a Steller’s on Apr. 4; his scrub-jays peaked at five during the winter. Mary Ellen Peckham, in early May in Englewood, hosted one scrub-jay, definitely out of its normal haunts. The two that daily visit Nan’s (“getting rather tame: fly to the bird feeder when they see me coming.”) are close to Red Rocks Park where they nest. In south Denver, two mountain chickadees come to Ursula Barsch’s feeder on Mar. 28, and “on Mar. 9 a red-breasted nuthatch probed the safflower feeder, did not like it, went straight to the sunflower feeder, snatched a seed, and darted right back to the nearby blue spruce, all within 2 seconds.”

URBAN YARDS, during May migration, featured tanagers and grosbeaks. Ursula, on May 4, saw a brightly colored male western tanager that “flew into our young apple tree, probed twigs and blossoms before it took off again.” Judy Butterfield reports a western tanager (and western kingbird) May 12-14 in Aurora, and a black-headed grosbeak May 14. Two black-headed grosbeaks visited Kathy Warnkey’s Park Hill yard and suet feeder May 13-14. In Parker Debbie Carlson “saw a blue bird and

did a double-take because it wasn’t a scrub-jay or bluebird. He looked exactly like a cardinal, so I went to the field guide page for cardinals, and there he was—a blue grosbeak.” Not exactly like a cardinal, I’d say, but the huge beak definitely resembles a cardinal’s.

COOPER’S HAWKS that started to nest for the fifth year in Patty Echelmeyer’s block in Wheat Ridge disappeared in April; nevertheless she sees lots of interesting birds in her yard. At 6 a.m. May 23 an unfamiliar song woke her: the chase revealed a hooded warbler that spent 20 minutes before moving on. On May 19 Earl and Eve Denton, next to Aurora’s Piney Creek open space, probably spied a blue-winged warbler that stayed about as long as Patty’s warbler. Eve wonders “if the current lack of construction work on either side of the open space is a factor. We would certainly vote for a moratorium on further construction!”

TWENTY CEDAR WAXWINGS dropped into Flo’s yard on Mar. 12 for a drink. “They were all moving quickly and flying across the pond and drinking, it was hard to focus on one bird.” Toni Rautus saw waxwings in Arvada in January and Ursula’s old crab apple tree attracted some on May 5. “Their fine high-pitched notes: “*Sweet sweet sweet*” caught my attention before I even spotted them. [Listen to bird sounds—they can lead you to different birds (like Ursula’s waxwings) and they can help to identify them as well. Each species has its own unique calls and songs.]

FOUR AMERICAN GOLDFINCHES in spring plumage stopped at Ginger Sawatzki’s feeder in Ken Caryl Ranch on Apr. 20, and in Franktown both we and Buzz and Shirley Bowers watched them molt into summer finery. (I rather like the subtle shades of goldfinches in winter.)

TWO EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVES appeared in January in Jo Caviness’s backyard, near C470 and Alameda and stayed six weeks. Her daughter in Thornton also reported a couple. Veronica Holt regularly sees collared-doves at her feeder in Elizabeth, where blue jays nested in her yard for the first time.

CHUCK RICHARDSON in Broomfield sent some amazing pictures: a robin sitting on two different nests (2 feet apart) in his patio at the same time. One nest had two eggs, the other one.

TWO NON-BACKYARD urban reports: David Weimar saw a white pelican at Washington Park on May 3. On May 1 Jeanie Murray, walking her dogs at Lowry in an area that “had flooded due to all the recent rains. We saw the usual mallards and some coots. However, you can imagine my surprise when a bunch of white-faced ibis flew by us after the dogs had startled them. They settled down across the temporary lake and proceeded to forage along the shore, paying little attention to the dogs or us. Oh, the muskrat didn’t bother them either!”

ANN SCHAFFER, responding to my *Denver Post* article on intersection swallows, telephoned with her observation: these swallows congregate at intersections during cool weather—especially in the morning. At night miller moths roost in car engines and tailpipes and when the cars go out the next morning the millers pour out of the tailpipes and the swallows chase the moths. The birds often dart between cars to catch the moths. She’s seen this for several years, and says that the swallows do this in the spring during the miller migration and don’t feed at intersections after the millers move on to the mountains.

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Spellbound in Panama

by Liz Kreider

Trip Report: Panama April 16-25, 2003

Spellbound—Even the frequent flyers to Central America among us were dazzled by how fresh and intimate we found the birding on this trip. Panama hosts over 950 species of birds and as ecotourism has yet to embrace this land link between North and South America there was none of the crowding one can experience in other neo-tropical habitats. (We saw not one tour bus, and at times our group of eight comprised the only people in entire sections of national parks.) Without exception, as we birded rain forests, cloud forests, shore habitats, and points in between, we were alone and our experience was of the unspoiled beauty of the countryside and its flora and fauna. Could Columbus or Balboa have seen more pristine habitat?

Much of the credit goes to our guide, Guido Berguido, whose connections with birders at various stages of our trip allowed us to experience the birds in their isolated surroundings. We saw Resplendent Quetzals at the invitation of a local potato farmer who led us across his fields and up a hillside beyond to view the birds feeding in their favorite Bambito, or avocado, trees. A day at the country home of one of Panama's Audubon members led to the viewing of many of the 30 tanagers we saw on the trip. Our viewing of the rare Turquoise Cotinga and the Fiery-Billed Aracari—in the same tree!—came thanks to a tip from another local birder who said, as we rounded a bend on an iso

Panama continued at bottom of page 4



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