

# the Warbler

## The B.I.G. Day Was Truly a “BIG Day”!

On Saturday, April 21, the Audubon Society of Greater Denver hosted a truly spectacular volunteer event at the Audubon Center at Chatfield. The **South Metro Denver Chamber of Commerce** held its second annual **B.I.G. (Be Involved. Give.) Day** in which volunteers from Chamber businesses select a site in the metro area to pitch in and help a local non-profit. Thank you to the businesses that came out to the Audubon Center!

Also on the same day, **Comcast** held their annual Comcast Cares Day. Employees from Comcast select sites in the Denver region to volunteer. We had over 180 employees at the Audubon Center!

Finally, we had a group of **Girl Scouts** from **Troop 279**: Second Year Cadets. They worked alongside the Chamber and Comcast volunteers on a variety of projects.



All of the volunteers participated in a wide variety of projects at the Audubon Center: weeding in the gardens, planting, spreading woodchips, trail work, clearing for the bird banding nets, and cleaning the nature center. With 200 volunteers, we literally transformed the building and grounds to a beautiful destination!

A special thank you goes to Emily Hertz (Audubon Center Coordinator) and Suzy Hiskey (School Programs Coordinator) for all the time and effort they put into making the B.I.G. Day a HUGE Day. Also, thank you to ASGD volunteers: Carol DeStefanis, Kristine Tunnell, Dick Anderson, Jack & Ginger Sawatzki, Julie Dorosz, Fred Griest, LeAnn Joswick, Claudia Brownlie.



- 3 Conservation Report
- 7 Backyard Birds
- 10 Travel
- 13 Programs

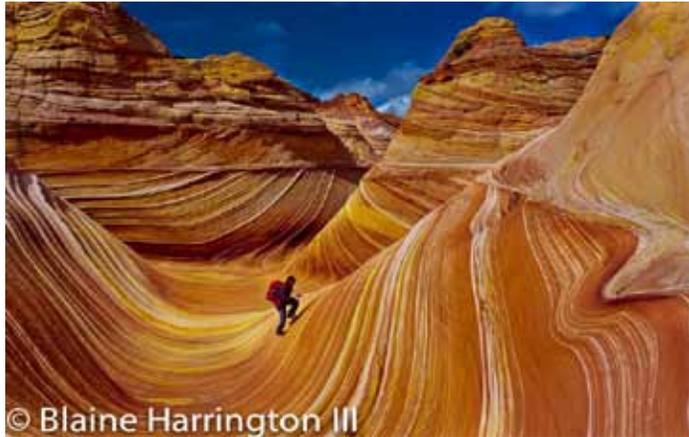
## 2nd Annual Share the View

### SHARE THE VIEW

#### International Digital Photography Contest

Entries accepted 10/15/12 -  
12/1/12

ANNOUNCING THE 2nd Annual Share the View Contest. The Audubon Society of Greater Denver is very proud of the response we received to the 2011 Share the View contest. We expected 800 entries and received over 1,600 - truly outstanding performance for a first year program! The contest was designed to raise money for ASGD and increase our visibility worldwide and we succeeded on both counts. We received many international, national, state and member submissions. In fact, a Brit won the Grand Prize. 33 Colorado photographers are represented in the top 250 and their images can be viewed at <http://denveraudubon.contestvenue.com/> Blaine Harrington III, Bob Stocker, and Robert Winslow each have four images, and their work is represented on this page. With three images each, Donna Carr, Cathy Sheeter, Nancy Stocker and Ethan Welty did very well, as did Bill Bevington, Jane Richards, Wayne Thompson and Lee Farrell with two each.



Our goal this year is to double our entries and we've made a few changes to the contest which we hope will promote interest and submissions. The biggest change is that prize money has been increased to \$3,500 because we're adding a SECOND \$1,000 cash prize. We'll also be modifying the rules slightly to balance emphasis on creativity and originality with technical skill. Here's a rundown on the 2012 contest.

#### Eleven cash prizes will be awarded:

- **Two Grand Prizes: \$1,000 each.**
- **One Grand Prize will be awarded to the Best Bird Photograph and the other Grand Prize will be awarded to the Best in Show.**
- **Four First Place Prizes: \$250 each**
- **Five Second Place Prizes: \$100 each**

- Entries will be accepted from October 15 through December 1, 2012.
- Photographers may enter an image entered in last year's contest provided it was not among the top 250 images selected in the 2011 contest. Judging will take place in early December 2012.



**More to come as  
the contest nears.  
Please help us  
spread the word  
wherever and  
whenever you can.**

# Conservation Report

by Polly Reetz

## Down at the Legislature

Although the Legislature's final working days sounded chaotic and, well, just "weird," and the 3-day Special Session didn't accomplish much of what it was supposed to, Audubon actually came out very well this year. We won on every single one of our priority bills and were actively involved in the passage, death or amending of a total of 43 bills.

Among our priorities:

1) Senate Concurrent Resolution 2 (SCR 2) would have set up a new lottery game, the proceeds of which would have gone to veterans programs. Such a move would have reduced funding to state and local parks, wildlife, trails and open space and not really helped veterans much. It died in committee thanks to Sens. Boyd, Grantham and Neville.

2) SCR 3 would have created a 5-year "time out," during which time all lottery monies that normally go to the Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) trust fund for trails, State Parks, Wildlife, and open space, would have been given to the State Education Fund. Since GOCO always seems to have a pot of money hanging around,



Photo credit: Dick Vogel

lawmakers can't resist trying to raid it for other purposes. That's not to say we don't need more funding for education – but GOCO monies would be only a drop in that bucket. Meanwhile the trails, open space, parks and wildlife projects that get funded now are crucial. This bill also died in committee, but some version of it will be back again next year.

3) There were a whole slew of bills to handicap the State's regulatory agencies in various creative ways and prevent effective protection of our air, water and land. The shenanigans at the end of the session actually caused a lot of these bills to die – so a positive result came out of a negative action!

4) HB 1317, setting up a new Parks and Wildlife Commission, was amended and somewhat improved, but the recommendations of the current, sitting Commission were disregarded in the end.

The bill, as passed, calls for membership of:

- 3 agricultural producers with reasonable wildlife experience
- 3 sportsmen, 1 of whom must be an outfitter
- 3 parks and outdoor recreation reps, 1 of whom represents a nonprofit,

non-consumptive user group 2 at large.

This bill as passed was better than the introduced version but not as good as we had hoped. In any case, a good governor will appoint people who will advocate for wildlife, and a bad one will appoint people who only think about extracting the last buck from the resource.

*(continued next page)*

## Conservation Report *(cont.)*

Some major issues still remain unresolved, for example the question of how to protect water quality from the oil and gas removal technique called fracking, but in retrospect this was a very positive year for ASGD.

For more details and descriptions of the bills in the final 2012 report by Audubon lobbyist Jen Boulton, contact Polly Reetz at [reetzfam@juno.com](mailto:reetzfam@juno.com).



Photo Credit: Dick Vogel

**Report on the Chatfield Reallocation project:** At the May 8 meeting of project proponents, environmental representatives, the State and the US Army Corps of Engineers, the Corps announced that publication of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for this project had been delayed once again. They gave no revised date for the publication.

Meanwhile, ASGD and the Sierra Club have been requesting that the DEIS include drawings or computer-generated images of what Chatfield State Park will look like under the various scenarios and from

different geographic points in the Park. The Corps, the Colorado Water Conservation Board and the water providers have finally made some (very modest) progress towards creating some images, and we hope that they will be finished by the time that public hearings are held on the DEIS.

Still to do: request an extension of the comment period on the DEIS, so more people can read more of the document; recruit volunteers for a "tour" of the site for State and federal elected officials.

**What you can do:** Talk about Chatfield with your friends and neighbors. Let them know that the proposal to store more water there will severely impact the riparian habitats and all the wildlife that depend on them. Stay alert! And visit the State Park to get a feel for the resources that would be affected: wetlands, riparian vegetation, gallery forests. If you want to help review the DEIS, call the ASGD office at 303-973-9530 to leave your name.

## At the Front Range Birding Company we offer great products for Serious Birders . . .



[www.fronrangebirding.com](http://www.fronrangebirding.com)

A Nature Center for You and Your Family

9956 West Remington Place  
(NE Corner of C-470 & Kipling)  
303-979-BIRD (2473)  
Open 7 Days A Week  
M-F 10-6 Sat 10-5 Sun 12-5



**New Scopes & Binoculars in Stock**

**15% off storewide purchases plus FRBC will donate an additional 5% to ASGD for mentioning this ad**



Offer Expires: August 31, 2012. May not be combined with any other offers. Optics not included.

**For : Sales, Service & Repair..**  
**visit S & S OPTIKA**  
*Extending YOUR Vision, since 1972*

**SPOTTING SCOPES:**  
Swarovski, Kowa, Vortex,  
Leica, Bushnell, Pentax & others.

**BINOCULARS:**  
Swarovski, Leica, Vortex, Fujinon, Bushnell,  
Canon, Celestron, Orion, Pentax & Zeiss

**Telescopes, Microscopes & Magnifiers**

**S & S OPTIKA**  
6579 South Broadway  
~ 1 1/2 blks North of Arapahoe Rd. on the West side of Broadway.  
Littleton, Colorado 80121  
303-789-1089 Toll Free: 877-396-3352

**Store Hours:**  
Tues-Fri 10 am - 6 pm  
Saturday 10 am - 5 pm

## Lois Webster Fund

### **LOIS WEBSTER FUND GRANTEES GIVE PRESENTATIONS ON FASCINATING PROJECTS**

Three of the 2011 Lois Webster Fund (LWF) grant recipients shared their research results and stories with Lois Webster Fund supporters and others interested in Colorado non-game wildlife research at the annual LWF program and reception in Denver on May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Carol Ann Kearns of CU Boulder discussed her study on the comparison of abundant and declining Bumble Bee species. These intriguing pollinators play a critical role in Colorado ecosystems.

Rebecca Brylan showed burrowing owls' ability to understand the alarm calls of the black-tailed prairie dog. Her study included dragging a fake rattlesnake through prairie dog villages to elicit alarm calls, which were recorded and played to the owls in an observation experiment in the Pawnee Grasslands in Weld County.



photo credit: Rebecca Brylan



Lynn Wickersham of the San Juan Institute of Natural and Cultural Resources in Durango explained how the Colorado Breeding Birding Atlas II is being compiled. Over 6 years, hundreds of volunteers will participate in the project, which is reaching its culmination. The LWF grant funded studies of ten priority “blocks”, out of a total

of 1,505 blocks mapped for study. Her maps and photography were intriguing and she shared some of their preliminary findings with the attendees. (Estimated publication is in the fall of 2014.)

For additional information or to read the research reports go to the Lois Webster Fund on the ASGD website and scroll down under the project history and click on the project in which you are interested. The LWF was established to fund research and

education projects designed to lead to the conservation of non-game species in Colorado. It focuses on partnering with other organizations in supporting projects concerning non-game wildlife in Colorado.

## Rumors on the Prairie - Eavesdropping Owls?

by Rebecca Brylan

Do you think eavesdropping is impolite, or do you love to be “in the know” on the gossip? If you find that eavesdropping is a great way to get good inside information, you’re not alone – in fact, you share a trait with many animals.

If you were a wild animal and you overheard another animal in the area

sounding an alarm, you would probably pay attention. You would want to know what the alarm was about so that you could keep yourself and your offspring safe. Many species have evolved the capacity to listen in on their neighbors in order to increase their fitness; they eavesdrop, just as we do.

I thought we might find one of these animal eavesdroppers right here in Colorado. In the spring and summer, burrowing owls (*Athene cunicularia*) are commonly found nesting on active black-tailed prairie dog colonies in this state. Prairie dogs use an alarm calling system to let each other know about threats in their environment. Because eavesdropping on alarms can be beneficial to an individual, it seemed likely that owls nesting on the colonies were listening in on the prairie dogs’ alarms. If so, this could make them more aware of threats in their environment; prairie dogs might act as a back-up look-out system for the owls.

I spent June and July on the Pawnee National Grasslands testing this hypothesis. I played a series of recorded sounds to burrowing owls nesting on active prairie dog colonies. For each trial, I played a 5 minute long recording which included 30 seconds each of cattle mooing, an airplane engine, and a



Photo credit: Rebecca Brylan

prairie dog alarming, with ambient prairie noise between each sound. I played the series of sounds in a different order each time, and I videotaped all of the trials so that I could analyze the owls’ responses.

I looked at: 1) how long it took for the owls to show an alert response to any of the sounds, and 2) how many of those alert responses they showed in the

first 10 seconds of the recorded sound. (An alert response included any type of vigilant behavior.) I found that the owls responded faster and more often to the prairie dog alarm call than to the other sounds. When they heard the airplane engine, they responded quickly, but did not continue to respond, and when they heard the cattle mooing they were relatively slow to respond at all. The quick and continuous response to the prairie dog alarm indicates that the owls are likely eavesdropping on this alarm; they are increasing their vigilance in response to what they overheard. Owls that are more aware of threats in their environment can ultimately increase their evolutionary fitness.

Populations of prairie dogs have undergone a rapid decline in Colorado due to plague, management, and habitat loss. Burrowing owls are considered a threatened species in Colorado. If burrowing owls are nesting on active prairie dog colonies and using prairie dogs’ alarm calls to enhance their fitness, their fate is closely tied to that of the prairie dog.

---

**Owls that are more aware of threats in their environment can ultimately increase their evolutionary fitness.**

---

# Backyard Birds

by Hugh Kingery

Lynn Willcockson sent in four pictures of an amazing observation in downtown Denver. He photographed a Common Poorwill that roosted in the rose bed of Trinity Church at 18<sup>th</sup> & Broadway for a week – April 25-May 1! Lynn says that it always “backed in” to the rosebush, but it returned for an entire week. Five feet away hundreds of people passed by on the sidewalk and probably nobody noticed except Lynn – because he volunteers for the



Photo Credit: Lynn Willcockson

church and, in this case, to weed the rose garden. Apparently, Lynn’s photos document the first report of a Poorwill in the City & County of Denver. By the way, at the Colorado Field Ornithologists convention in Trinidad last month, CFO granted Lynn its Lifetime Achievement Award.

In Parker, Great Horned Owls like to nest in the outdoor section of Home Depot. E.B. Ellis sent in the first report I heard (April 23) of Great Horned Owls that nested behind the Dentist’s sign in the Roxborough Village shopping center. After a report of the strange nest site on TV in May hundreds of people observed the “nestlings”



Photo Credit: Hugh Kingery

peering out from the jagged edges of the dentist’s sign. “Obviously,” said E.B., “the owls aren’t bothered by people.”

Then on May 18, Tom Parchman reported “a raven nest in the garden center at Lowe’s at Colfax and Miller, a few blocks west of Kipling.

It is an outdoor area with a corrugated covering, back in an area with little traffic, but with some foot traffic. The nest was not occupied when I was there but there were four birds sitting nearby in the rafters. Fun stuff.”

These urban owls don’t restrict themselves to busy commercial places. Jeff Stroup, on Apr. 10, “was on the back patio and just started the grill. I looked up to see a large female Great Horned Owl swoop by and land in the next door neighbor’s cottonwood tree. Maybe about 30 yards from where I’m standing. She sat there for about 5 minutes and flew away. Then about 20-30 minutes later, I heard loud crow squawking noises and saw

two American Crows chase across my backyard what looked like the same large Great Horned Owl. One crow actually bumped the owl in mid-flight.

What a sight. My house is about 3-4 miles from the Carson Nature Center owl nest if you draw a straight line. So I just wonder. . .”

## Backyard Birds *(cont.)*

---

In the Fort Logan cemetery, Tina Jones has found 2-3 Great Horned Owl nests, including one in her neighbor's yard, so maybe Jeff's owl came from a closer site. Tina says, "I have very few songbirds because of the Owl chicks presence. My hummingbirds zip back and forth in front of the owl's face, about 5 inches in front of the face, for a long period of time. I have seen one of the young owls leap into the air to try to catch a robin and a Morning Dove.



Photo Credit: Hugh Kingery

Its talons were about 3-4 inches behind the tail of the fleeing birds. Years ago a Great-horned Owl killed and took down a Canada Goose in my yard in the evening."

Mark Rudolph, on Mar. 28, saw 10 Wild Turkeys trotting down an alley in Park Hill near 29<sup>th</sup> and Monaco – and wondered if that was common. If you remember past Backyard Birds columns, no but becoming more so. Chris Blakeslee reported a Wild Turkey nest (last year) in the Tech Center "right against one of the office buildings adjacent to I-25 west and south of the Landmark development between Belleview and Orchard. According to the e-mails the nest became a topic of conversation between the UPS driver and a

woman working in one of the offices in the building. The hen produced 7 poults, according to Bob Brown; Chris saw one. I have now heard turkey reports from as far south as Arapahoe Road between Quebec and I-25." Another new county bird.

"We live very close by," says Chris, "and as of 2005 have a permanent population of coyotes which eat more little cats and dogs (and maybe turkey) than rabbits. When we had just Red Fox the rabbit population was well under control, but now that the coyotes have killed our foxes, the rabbit population is "through the roof!" I hope at least some of the turkey survived.

Bill and Evelyn Steinkuhler got "so excited to see a male Varied Thrush hopping around our Arvada backyard Mar. 15-17. At first we thought he was a robin. Then we saw his black breast band, orange eye stripes, and orange markings on his wings. According to Stoker's Field Guide their habitat is normally northwestern coniferous woods, but in winter they may rarely wander as far as the East Coast."

Barbara Spagnuolo (Natural Resource Specialist for Castle Rock Parks & Recreation Dept.), on March 30, "observed a complete Mountain Bluebird nest (with cup) in one of our bluebird boxes in Castle Rock! Earlier last week I had checked and cleaned this box to prepare for this breeding season, but was surprised to find a few strands of grass already in the box. When I approached the same box this morning I observed the male bluebird in a nearby tree and the female sitting on the fence right next to the box. The nest looks ready for eggs. This is the earliest I have ever recorded a full nest in the seven years of this project.

"Another interesting note regarding this box is its location – on a wooden fence surrounding a school playground. Despite its less than stellar habitat (no nearby shrubs and soccer field 20 feet away), this box has been very successful. A Mountain Bluebird pair raised 6 chicks here two years ago (first year the box was available) and last year a pair successfully raised nine chicks from two broods. Definitely an excellent teaching and nature-watching opportunity for the local students at this elementary school!"

## Backyard Birds (cont.)

Randy Nelson, in Parker, reported on Apr. 25, “a female Broad-tailed Hummingbird arrived in our yard, sampling a few flowers and the deck feeder several times during the mid-morning till early afternoon. This was our FOS hummer for the yard, the first time it has been a female. Last year’s was a male Black-chinned on the same date.”

Merrye McGilvray, nearby in Franktown, “walked out on my back deck at 6:30 p.m. and saw a wake of about 20 Turkey Vultures circling above me.



Photo Credit: Cornell Birds

After circling for awhile, they started roosting in my backyard neighbor’s pine trees.”

Many of you visited the Nature Center banding station this spring. On May 9, Meredith McBurney, our Master Bander, compared data from 2011 with this year. “I’m ready to declare that some of our most common species are arriving earlier. Here are some arrivals this year compared with last (which was a pretty typical year)[FOS means first-of-season.]

*Gray Catbird: FOS last year was 5/10. We caught our FOS this year 5/5, and they are back in numbers.*

*Yellow-billed Chat: FOS last year was 5/14. We caught our FOS this year 5/6, and they also are back in numbers.*

*Yellow Warbler: FOS last year was 5/6; this year it was 5/1.*

We wonder about the impact of climate change on our birds, and many this year have speculated about changes. The migration seemed sparse, with not many migrant birds seen in the City or on Spring Counts. Dave Leatherman, retired entomologist and master bird watcher, says that warmer springs will have an indirect effect: they can throw out of whack the synchrony of plants, their insect predators, and the insects’ avian predators. Most songbirds, even if seedeaters in winter, feed insects to their nestlings. If the plants emerge early, the insects may attack early, and unless

the birds return early, an adequate food mass for nestling songbirds won’t exist.

At the CFO convention, Brian Linkhart, Biology Professor at Colorado College (and recipient of the CFO Ron Ryder award for long-term research accomplishments), showed a chart that delineated scientific studies of return dates for migratory birds over 10-20 year periods. Migrants that winter in the southern United States, where they can respond to U.S. weather cycles, show return dates about 10 days earlier than formerly (e.g., Red-winged Blackbird). Long-distance migrants – ones that winter in central or South America, observe tropical weather patterns rather than those farther north.



Photo Credit: Dick Vogel

Their return dates have accelerated only 5 days earlier.

E.g., Flammulated Owl, a species he has studied for 30 years and the birds that Meredith reported on from the banding station (although her report covers only one year).

These dates imply that, if plants and insects start earlier, the less-accelerated, long-distance, migrants, may have trouble obtaining enough food for their kids, and therefore may start to suffer climate-related declines. That is, the birds’ food supply won’t hitch up with their nesting cycle.

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

**Northern California Specialties  
September 9-14, 2012**

Join Harry Fuller for 5 days of Pacific Coast lifers to add to your list. Have you seen those black oystercatchers and chestnut-backed chickadees since you purchased a digital camera? Come see the embattled yellow-billed magpie, a California endemic decimated by habitat loss and West Nile Virus. In one day alone, see Brandt's cormorant, Heermann's Gull, California towhee, chestnut-backed chickadee, Pacific loon, Clark's grebe, Hutton's Vireo and Townsend's warbler plus a few dozen more western birds.

Harry Fuller has been birding California for decades and can even tell you about Brandt, Heermann, Townsend, and Clark. Among the birds with limited range you should see: wrentit, the only babbler in America; surfbird; black turnstone; white-tailed kite; the western scrub-jay that is soon to be split from its inland congener; Nuttall's woodpecker; oak titmouse; and California quail.



Photo credit: US Fish & Wildlife

As an extension, go on one of the Pacific Coast's finest pelagic trips (Shearwater) to enjoy some of America's most elusive species: albatross, skua, and auklet. The whales, sea otters, California sea lions, giant sequoias and redwoods are a bonus. When you eat after birding, this trip guarantees some of the best food in a region full of foodies. Or you can eat in your room, if you prefer.

*\$1,390/person (estimated), including lodging for 6 days of birding, 5 nights, five breakfasts, lodging taxes, bird guide, driver, trip planning and other services. Single supplement \$390. \$150 to \$200 will likely be your cost for additional meals at restaurants and box lunches. See Itinerary at [www.pibird.com/NorthCalif-2010Sept-1.html](http://www.pibird.com/NorthCalif-2010Sept-1.html). Call Charles Thornton-Kolbe at 888-203-7464, ext. 912 or by email at [charles@pibird.com](mailto:charles@pibird.com) to discuss or book this trip. Also, feel free to call Harry Fuller toll free at 888-203-7464.*



Photo credit: Dominic Sherony

bordering sierras, and the lovely Pacific coast.

Tropical deciduous forest, the lush evergreen forests of the Sierra Madre del Sur, mangroves, beaches, and the arid scrub of the Oaxaca valley make up the sites we'll visit as we enjoy the birds, natural history, and culture of southern

**The Birds and  
Natural History of  
Oaxaca, Mexico  
Mark Pretti Nature  
Tours, L.L.C.  
December 4 - 14, 2012**

Harboring about ten percent of Earth's biodiversity, Mexico is one of the most biologically rich countries in the world. During this natural adventure, we'll explore and learn about some of that richness as we travel through the valley of Oaxaca, the

Mexico. During our journey, experience fantastic birding as we search for species such as dwarf jay, red warbler, bumblebee hummingbird, mountain and citreoline trogons, white-throated magpie jay, ocellated thrasher, gray-breasted



Photo credit: Creative Commons

woodpecker, gray-barred wren, russet-crowned motmot, spot-breasted oriole, and many others. Tour the Zapotec ruins of Monte Alban, visit a master weaver in Teotitlan del Valle, tour the Oaxacan Cultural Museum, and

spend an unforgettable day

with Seasons of My Heart Cooking School, as we tour the Mercado Abastos, enjoy a superb lecture on regional farming, culture and cuisine, and savor a delicious lunch.

In addition to the natural wonders, a major trip highlight is the unique and superb lodging situations. All have excellent food, warm hospitality, and terrific views, and some have great birding right outside your front door.

Led by naturalist and bird guide Mark Pretti and local guide Benito Hernandez.

\$2850/person (with a full group of 8), double occupancy. Includes all lodging, meals, admissions, donation to the ASGD, and transportation from Oaxaca City.

Gulf Slope extension available December 15-19, 2012.

Group size limited to 8 participants. For more information, contact Mark at (520) 803-6889 or [mpnaturetours@earthlink.net](mailto:mpnaturetours@earthlink.net)

### Florida Winter Birding Break

**January 20 to 26, 2013 and January 27 to February 2, 2013**

South Florida in January 2013 has pleasant weather (in the 70s).

The trip includes a wide variety of locations and habitats, resulting in productive and fun birding. After starting in the palmetto palm forests for Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Bachman's Sparrow,



Photo credit: US Fish & Wildlife

we will bird cypress swamp and marsh (Everglades National Park, Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary) for warblers, herons, egrets, snail kites and more.

Surprise species include (1) Caribbean strays which often find their way here in winter, and (2) the Miami area has several specialities, such as parakeet species, Spot-breasted Oriole, Red-whiskered Bulbul and Common Myna (now naturalized and in some cases "countable").

## Travel (cont.)

---

Other year round species, which will be new for most North American birders, include Snail Kite, Short-tailed Hawk, Purple Gallinule, Reddish Egret, Roseate Spoonbill, and Pine Warbler. This start plus numerous surprises and specialities make this a fun and productive birding trip.

*\$1,690 to \$1,790 (depending upon how early you commit to the trip). Trip price includes lodging with breakfast for six nights, services of a professional bird guide and ground transportation.*



Photo credit: Creative Commons

*Early Sign Up Discount: The price of these above services amounts to \$1,790, but you will get a \$100 discount if you sign up by July 15 and \$50 off if you sign up by September 1.*

*Early sign up saves us on booking costs and saves everyone on the trip on air fares.*

*To learn more, call Charles at the Partnership for International Birding at 720-320-1974 or try our website at <http://www.pibird.com/Florida-2010-1.html>*

## PROTECT BIRDS & HABITAT, EDUCATE GENERATIONS

---

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

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

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL 303-973-9530**

**OR E-MAIL**

**INFO@DENVERAUDUBON.ORG**

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

Tax Identification Number: 23-7063701

Date of Incorporation: September 30, 1969

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

## Programs & Field Trips

### FIELD TRIPS JULY AND AUGUST 2012

To register: 303-973-9530 or [info@denveraudubon.org](mailto:info@denveraudubon.org)  
BBFGWS: Bring binoculars, field guides, water and a snack

#### Walk the Wetlands

**Sunday July 1, 8am**

**Sunday August 5, 8am**

Everyone welcome, beginners to advanced birdwatchers of all ages. Hike along the South Platte River, looking for summer resident birds, fledglings and early fall migrants. Wear sun protection, long pants, closed shoes (there's poison ivy along the trail). We can lend you binoculars and field guides if needed. BBFGWS

*Meeting Place: Audubon Center parking lot*

*Leaders: Karen von Saltza and Master Birders*

*Registration NOT required; No fee.*

#### Little Fledglings Preschool Nature Hour

**For Children ages 3-6 (and parent/guardians, too!)**

Explore a theme each month with stories, songs, crafts, and activities exploring wildlife and the natural world. This program introduces science skills and encourages active outdoor play.

July, Wednesdays, July, 11 & 25 from 10-11am

"Hummingbirds"- Discover what they eat, how they make their homes, and see what they look like up close!

August, Wednesdays, August 1st & 15th, from 10-11am

"Reptiles"-- Where do reptiles live? What do they eat? Why is a toad different than a frog?

*Meeting Place: Audubon Center at Chatfield.*

*Registration Required: Friends Members: \$5 per child and their adult; \$2 each add'l child*

*Non-members: \$8 per child and their adult; \$4 each additional child*

#### Hummingbird Hustle

**Saturday, July 7, from 9-12pm**

Join us in celebrating hummingbirds! Learn how to paint a hummingbird with Israeli painter Raz Seri, take a tour of our beautiful hummingbird garden, and explore hummingbirds through other fun activities!

*Meeting Place: Audubon Center at Chatfield*

*Registration recommended. Acrylic paints included with fee.*

*\$15/ adult, \$8/child (painting activity only)*

*Please bring your own painting smock*



#### Genesee Mountain Park

**Saturday July 14**

**9am – 11am**

Join us to see what birds are feeding and breeding in this beautiful mountain park. Be prepared for off-trail hiking and foothills elevations. We will look for bluebirds, nuthatches and sapsuckers, as well as broad-tailed hummingbirds. Be sure to wear sun protection and a hat. BBFGSW

*Meeting Place: Genesee Mountain Park, 20 miles west of Denver; Take I-70 West to Exit 254 and turn south. Meet at main parking lot.*

*Leaders: Audubon Master Birders Marilyn Rhodes and Harriet Stratton*

*Registration required. No fee. Donations to ASGD appreciated.*

### **Botany Field Hike**

**July 14, 9am-12pm**

Join native plant expert Carol English to discover the different plants and their accompanying pollinators growing in the Chatfield State Park area! There are many plant-insect connections to be found right at our Nature Center!

*Meeting Place: Meeting at Audubon Center at Chatfield.*

*Registration required: \$15/member/\$20 non-member. Limited to 20 people.*

### **Ponderosa Preserve**

**Aurora Parks, Recreation and Open Space Guided Bird Walk**

**Saturday July 14, 7:30 am**

Enjoy montane ecosystem birding in a prairie setting. We will look for pygmy nuthatches, American and lesser goldfinches, lark sparrows, Swainson's hawks and more on this Aurora ponderosa pine savannah open space property. BCFGWS

*Registration required: For registration, directions and additional information, please call 303-739-2428 or email [nature@auroragov.org](mailto:nature@auroragov.org).*

### **Nocturnal Wildlife Hike**

**Friday July 20, 7pm-9pm**

**Friday August 17, 7pm-9pm**

Join us at the Audubon Nature Center to discover who is out and about at night and what activities these creatures are up to! Please wear shoes to hike in, weather appropriate clothing, and bring a flashlight if you'd like.

\*If the weather is inclement, this outing may be cancelled. Please call our office (303-973-9530) before 4pm the day of the hike to see if it has been canceled.

*Meeting Place: Audubon Center at Chatfield*

*Registration required: \$5/Friends members; \$8/non-members; \$10/family*

### **The Sanctuary Wilderness Area**

**Highlands Ranch Backcountry Wilderness Area**

**Saturday, July 21, 8am**

The Sanctuary Wilderness Area is closed to the public with vast acreage providing a sanctuary for wildlife. It adjoins Daniels Park, a Denver Mountain Park, and the Cherokee Ranch Conservation area. There are no trails in the Sanctuary. We will tour the area by hay wagon, stopping at various locations to view birds and other wildlife that flourish in this wilderness area including wild turkey, eagles, hawks, elk and deer herds.

BBFGWS

*Activity Level: Elevation is 6300 ft.*

*Meeting Place: We will meet at the Law Enforcement Training Center off of Santa Fe.*

*From Highlands Ranch Parkway and Santa Fe, go south on Santa Fe 3.5 miles to Ron King Trail (Black Top Road). Turn left on Ron King about 1.5 miles to the parking area.*

*Leaders: Urling Kingery and Cindy Valentine*

*Registration Required: Cost is \$8 for Highlands Ranch Residents and ASGD Members; \$9 for the public. You must sign up with the Highlands Ranch Community Center at 303-791-2500; trip limited to 25 participants. For additional information contact Hope Marasco, Highlands Ranch Wilderness Area Coordinator 303-471-8876 or Cindy Valentine, Audubon Coordinator 303-790-2805.*

### **Explore Chatfield State Park**

**Saturday July 28, 7 am**

**Saturday August 25, 7am**

Join volunteer naturalist and bird expert Joey Kellner to explore various habitats and their avian residents in Chatfield State Park. All ability levels welcome. Recommended: sunscreen, insect repellent, long pants, sturdy shoes for hiking (expect to walk 1- 3 miles). No pets. BCFGWS

*Meeting Place: Platte River parking lot in Chatfield State Park (turn right just past Kingfisher Bridge). Parks pass required.*

*Leader: Joey Kellner*

*Registration NOT required. No fee.*

To register, call 303-973-9530 or go to [info@denveraudubon.org](mailto:info@denveraudubon.org)

BBFGWS: bring binoculars, field guides, water, and a snack.

## **Mount Evans Summit at Sunrise - Atop the Highest Paved Road in North America**

**Saturday, August 4, 4:30 am – 10:30 am**

We'll carpool to be at the summit of Mount Evans at sunrise, then bird along the road, Summit Lake, Mount Goliath and Echo Lake on the way down, looking for white-tailed ptarmigan, hummingbirds, mountain bluebird, horned lark, gray jay, Clark's nutcracker, peregrine falcon, brown-capped rosy finch, white-crowned sparrow, American pipit, rock wren, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, elk, and alpine wildflowers. Breakfast afterwards at Echo Lake Lodge.

**BBFGWS**

*Activity level: Most observations will be from the car. Some mild to moderate hiking.*

*Meeting place: Bergen Park RTD Park-n-Ride near Evergreen.*

*Leaders: Audubon Master Birders Marilyn Rhodes (303-674-9895; cell 720-333-2551) and Bob Santangelo (720-641-3899) Call Marilyn with questions. Leaders can be reached before and during the trip on their cell phones.*

*Registration required; No fee. Donations to ASGD appreciated*

*\$10 park access fee per vehicle; no charge with Annual or Senior National Park Pass*

## **Water Critters, Overland Park Pond**

**Tuesday August 7, 9 am – 11 am**

Water Critters is a family program that is part of Denver Parks' "Wild in the City" program. Join us in searching for and talking about macroinvertebrae. Kids should bring water shoes and plastic jars. We will provide nets and pond guides.

*Meeting Place: Parking lot, Overland Park. Lot is off of South Platte River Drive, just east of Florida Ave.*

*Leader: Audubon Master Birder Barb Masoner*

*Registration required. No fee.*

## **Eisenhower Park and Wellshire Golf Course**

**Saturday, August 18, 2012, 9am-11am**

In mid-August we may still see a few juvenile birds around. Many common breeders should be found at Eisenhower, and some additional species will be seen at Wellshire. After birding Eisenhower, we will walk along the Highline Trail to the golf course to see waterfowl and raptor habitat. Wear sun protection.

**BBFGWS**

*Leaders: Audubon Master Birders Mary Keithler and Dick Anderson*

*Meeting Place: 4300 E. Dartmouth Ave., meet in Rec Center parking lot.*

*Registration required. No fee. Donations to ASGD appreciated.*

## **THE WILDCAT MOUNTAIN TRAIL**

### **Highlands Ranch Backcountry Wilderness Area**

**Saturday, August 18, 8am**

Join us for a hike through prairie grasslands, along a stream and to the top of a ridgeline with pines and high cliffs where eagles and hawks nest. Along the trails we will look for a variety of frogs, toads and snakes, as well as deer and elk. We should see grassland sparrows, ducks, swallows, and a variety of mountain birds. Be prepared for a 3 hour hike: Wear long pants and hiking boots (This is rattlesnake habitat). **BBFGWS**

*Activity Level: Some of the trails may be narrow and moderately steep. Elevation is 6300 ft.*

*Meeting Place: Parking lot at Wildcat Ridge off Monarch, 1950 Monarch Blvd. Follow Quebec until it becomes Monarch past the High School and Middle School in Highlands Ranch.*

*Leaders: Audubon Master Birders Barbara Shissler and Cindy Valentine*

*Registration Required: No fee, but you must sign up with the Highlands Ranch Community Center at 303-791-2500; trip limited to 25 participants. For additional information contact*

*Hope Marasco, Highlands Ranch Wilderness Area Coordinator 303-471-8876 or Cindy Valentine, Audubon Coordinator 303-790-2805.*

To register, call 303-973-9530 or go to [info@denveraudubon.org](mailto:info@denveraudubon.org)

**BBFGWS: bring binoculars, field guides, water, and a snack.**

## **Ecology Field Hike**

**August, 8am-5pm (date TBA)**

Join a local ecology expert to explore the diverse front-range eco-systems from the grassy plains to the alpine tundra of Mt. Evans.

*Meeting Place:* TBA

*Registration required: \$15/member/\$20 non-member. Limited to 20 people.*

*We will be carpooling to reduce footprint and extra expenses. Please bring your Nat'l Parks Pass if you have one. Fee for entry to Mt. Evans is \$10 per vehicle.*

## **Beginning Birding Class - Classroom Session + Field Trips Thursday**

**September 13, 2012 - classroom session**

**6 Saturday Field Trips**

**(September 15, 22 & 29, October 6, 13 & 20)**

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

*Bird-watching sites around Denver including Chatfield, Barr Lake, and Castlewood Canyon State Parks, Wheat Ridge Greenbelt, and Genesee Mountain Park.*

*Date TBA: Zoology Dept., Denver Museum of Nature & Science*

*\$150/members, \$175/non-members (includes membership)*

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

*Registration required. Call 303-973-9530 or e-mail [info@denveraudubon.org](mailto:info@denveraudubon.org)*

*Space limited to 20 participants.*

*Leaders: Urling & Hugh Kingery*

To register, call 303-973-9530 or go to [info@denveraudubon.org](mailto:info@denveraudubon.org)

BBFGWS: bring binoculars, field guides, water, and a snack.

## **Wildlife and Wine Painting Class**

**Saturday, July 28 7:00pm - 9:30pm**

Join local artist Raz Seri for an evening of painting and wine. Raz will provide step by step instruction as he teaches us how to express the colors and textures of the natural world on canvas! No experience required! Enjoy an evening - tap into your creativity while savoring a glass of wine.

*About the artist: Raz Seri has been painting for 12 years, he studied drawing & painting for 3 years in Florence, Italy at St. Florence Academy of Art. His passions for painting are portrait, landscape, and figure. He is currently working teaching painting to children with the Young Rembrandts art education.*

*Meeting Place: Audubon Center at Chatfield*

*Registration: Required.*

*Fee: \$25/ member*

*\$30/non-member.*

*Please bring your own painting smock.*



Photo Credit: Raz Seri

## Donors

### Contributor Circle

Fred Griest  
Donations for Audubon Nature Trail  
Cathy, Lowe's of Littleton  
Bill Harrell, Pioneer Metal  
Finishing, Inc.  
Jeff Madsen, EMJD  
Corporation  
Christina Valenzuela,  
ImageTek

### Direct Donors

Willa Brunkhorst  
Carol DeStefanis  
Benjamin & Laurie Duke  
John & Barbara Eckler  
Bayard Ewing  
Naomi Funk  
Judy Garcia  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Beavers  
Fran & Carol Haas  
made a donation in memory  
Mike & Suzy Hiskey  
of Lionel Authier  
Robert Judge  
Doug Kibbe  
Bridget Milnes  
Carl Norbeck & Diane Matt  
Bruce & Pat Paton  
Richard A. & Rachel K.  
Paull  
Marilyn Rhodes  
Lori Sharp  
Ben Allen & Tracy Valentine  
Bill & Suzanne Wuerthele  
Steve & Margot Wynkoop



The Warbler is published  
bi-monthly by the  
Audubon Society of Greater Denver (ASGD)  
Produced by M. Urban © 2012  
ISBN 1531-2283 Vol. 46 Number 3

9308 South Wadsworth Blvd.  
Littleton, CO 80128  
303.973.9530  
Fax: 303.973.1038  
[www.denveraudubon.org](http://www.denveraudubon.org)

## New Friends

Andre Breton  
Andrew Mackie  
April Sciacca  
Cheryl Hosterman  
David Reilly  
David Shaver  
Gina Holler  
Jane Haddock  
Jenni Peters  
Jo'el Roth  
Mary Mahaffey  
Matt Lohrentz  
Phillip Gerkin  
Sharon Cobb  
Sue Jhung

## Staff

Karl Brummert  
Executive Director  
[kbrummert@denveraudubon.org](mailto:kbrummert@denveraudubon.org)

Suzy Hiskey  
School Programs Coordinator  
[shiskey@denveraudubon.org](mailto:shiskey@denveraudubon.org)

Emily Hertz  
Audubon Center Coordinator  
[ehertz@denveraudubon.org](mailto:ehertz@denveraudubon.org)

Rhonda Shank  
Office Manager  
[info@denveraudubon.org](mailto:info@denveraudubon.org)

## Volunteers

### Spring Event

Cheryl Chessick  
Laurie Duke  
Kate Frost  
Bridget Milnes  
Arlene Raskin  
Carolyn Roark  
Lori Sharp  
Barbara Shissler  
Harriet Stratton  
Peggy Wait

## Officers & Directors

Arlene Raskin, President  
Ann Bonnell, 2nd Vice President  
Treasurer - Vacant  
Doris Cruze, Acting Secretary  
Julie Dorosz  
Mackenzie Goldthwait  
Doug Kibbe  
Michael Kiessig  
Carl Norbeck  
Harriet Stratton



## Audubon Center Volunteers/ School Programs

Dorothy Biggs, Kate Frost, Dick Anderson,  
Angela Grun, Polly Reetz,  
Mary Keithler, Urling Kingery, Tina Jones,  
Diane Hutten. Jeanne McCune,  
Steve Townsend, Kristen Libberton, Brian Hoffman,  
Ginger & Jack Sawatzki & Barb Masoner

## Office Help

Bridget Milnes, Carl Norbeck, Phil Reynolds,  
Carolyn Roark, Ginger Sawatzki, Esther Weiner  
Lindsay Earl, Christine Tunnell

## Field Trips & Classes

Dick Anderson, Tom Bush, Laurie Duke,  
Kate Frost, Tina Jones, Kris Koff, Marilyn Rhodes,  
Barbara Shissler, Cindy Valentine, Mary Keithler

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

## Website/Media

Dick Anderson,  
Mary Urban

## Warbler design & layout

Mary Urban