

# the Warbler



since 1969

## Join us for the 4th Annual HOO Tenanny

Saturday, September 27, 2014 10am-3pm ~ Audubon Center at Chatfield

**LIVE OWLS** - 10am & 1:00pm

Colorado owls presentation by Wild Wings Education

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\$7 adults, \$5 children (ages 3-12)

**SHARE THE VIEW IS HERE! ~ SEE PAGE 2  
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# FOURTH ANNUAL SHARE THE VIEW

## INTERNATIONAL DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

OCTOBER 15 THROUGH DECEMBER 1, 2014

### TIME TO GET OUT IN THE FIELD AND SHOOT YOUR SHARPEST PHOTOS!

Attention all photographers: The 2014 Share the View Contest begins October 15. Don't wait until the last minute. Act now to capture some award-winning shots. Keep your eye on the prize!

Updates to the contest website <http://denveraudubon.contestvenue.com/> are underway. They'll be completed prior to the start date and you'll be able to submit digital entries online.



### Contest Proceeds Benefit Denver Metro School Children



Photo by Elizabeth Boehm

Proceeds from Share the View support our ongoing education efforts in Denver Metro area schools. We serve over 2,500 students annually and are working to expand our programs even further to reach more children. We appreciate the help and support of all our members in promoting the contest and this worthy effort.

### TEN CASH PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED:

**One Grand Prize of \$1,000**

**Four first place prizes of \$250**

**Five second place prizes of \$100**

Entries will be accepted from **October 15 through December 1, 2014**

There will be additional recognition for Colorado photographers, including an evening event at The Wildlife Experience museum in early 2015.

Judging will take place in early December 2014.

### Help Us Reach Our Goal

Our goal this year is to have over 2,000 entries. Our judges will balance emphasis on creativity and originality with technical skill. Here's a rundown on the 2014 contest.

### We Want You!

We have many expert photographers in our group who are often tapped to make presentations around the state showcasing pictures from their travels. We hope our member photographers will respond to our call and enter the Share the View Competition.

### How You Can Help

Please help us spread the word by emailing friends, family and colleagues, posting on Facebook and Twitter, and making announcements at meetings or gatherings of photographers and birders. We really appreciate your support!

### Fired Up And Ready To Go!

Thanks to all of you for your support of last year's competition. We are determined to make the 2014 contest another huge success. Please join us by entering your photos or by promoting the competition as often and in as many places as



## Conservation Report by Polly Reetz

### Chatfield Record of Decision Issued; ASGD Considers Options

The Corps of Engineers' Record of Decision for the Chatfield project was issued May 29, 2014, with very little fanfare - the Corps put out a press release, the Denver Post carried a very small article, and no notification was sent to organizations like Audubon which were not proponents of the project but which had played a substantial role in evaluating the project. In late June and early July local papers like the Littleton Independent and the Columbine Courier carried more extensive coverage of the event.

We were not surprised, but very disappointed, that the Corps' continues to promote the MOST environmentally damaging alternative for additional water supply in the south metro area, for such a poor return on the ratepayers' investment. The Corps itself has said that the dependable water yield of the Chatfield project, as proposed, is "0." Ratepayers will be forking over \$184,000,000 for a very small, very unreliable water supply.

About half of the original proponents of the project have dropped out, and no new ones have yet joined. The State of Colorado has purchased much of the storage space given up by such entities as Aurora, Roxborough, Perry Park, and Hock Hocking; the State now "owns" about 5,000 acre-feet of storage space, out of the 20,600 the Reallocation would provide - that is, the State has 25% of the project - and 25% of the mitigation costs too. State funding comes from severance taxes, but this is still a far cry from a project that was supposed to use "no taxpayer dollars."

**According to Corps of Engineers' Project Manager Gwyn Jarrett, actual on-the-ground work on the project will not start for several years. Audubon members can use this time to write to the Governor and suggest that :**



Blue Jay by Dick Vogel

- We ought to be looking at projects that give more "bang for the buck" than Chatfield.
- We need to be smarter planners of our water supply - climate change will require some clear thinking - AND
- We need to preserve the natural beauty and biological diversity that support tourism and our Colorado quality of life.

Write to: The Honorable John Hickenlooper, Governor, Colorado State Capitol, 200 E. Colfax Ave., Denver CO 80202. For more information on what would be lost if the Chatfield project goes forward, see [www.savechatfield.org](http://www.savechatfield.org).

Meanwhile the ASGD Board and Conservation Committee are considering our options. One would be to wait and hope the project falls apart on its own, due to high costs and low water yield; another would be legal action. Stay tuned.

### State initiatives moving forward

The State of Colorado is in the process of formulating a State Water Plan (see the May/June Warbler) and revising the State Wildlife Action Plan, two initiatives that will have important consequences for wildlife in our State.

**State Water Plan:** By the end of July, each river basin Roundtable was to have published a draft "Basin Implementation Plan" or BIP. These plans look at the water situation in each basin and suggest future actions that could help us "fill the gap" between supply and demand for water while "supporting healthy watersheds and environment." The public is invited to submit comments, and we encourage Audubon members to take a look at the BIP and send comments to the Colorado Water Conservation Board on their website at [www.cwcb.state.co.us](http://www.cwcb.state.co.us).

*(Cont. next page)*

## Conservation Report *(cont.)*

### Here are some points to make (courtesy of Ken Neubecker of American Rivers and Roaring Fork Audubon):

- The consumptive needs for water (drinking water, industrial use, agricultural use) have been quantified, but the nonconsumptive needs, for wildlife and recreation, have not. The BIP should include quantitative analysis of these needs rather than just qualitative.
- Minimum instream flows, while good, are not adequate as a sole protection for environmental needs and values – they are too little, and too recent.
- Rivers and streams need to be seen as continuous systems, not isolated reaches.
- We must acknowledge that many of our streams are already dammed and diverted into a mere shadow of their original condition – we are NOT starting with healthy streams and must make allowances.
- Land use, growth and water supply must be considered together. Water suppliers say they have no control over this, but it's not true and is no excuse for wasteful and extravagant land use and development.
- High levels of conservation and efficiency must be employed before any new water project is considered.
- A new trans-mountain diversion must be the very last option on the list.

State Wildlife Action Plan: This lays out the priorities and policies for wildlife in Colorado. The first plan element, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, appeared in July. For the first time rare plants appeared on this list, as well as certain insects. The primary way to communicate information to Colorado Parks and Wildlife is via a website, <http://cpw.state.co.us/aboutus/Pages/StateWildlifeActionPlan.aspx>. This 10-year revision of Colorado's 2005 State Wildlife Action Plan will be taking place through September 2015.

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## Backyard Birds by Hugh Kingery

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May migration seems so long ago, but it produced some intriguing birds. Along Big Dry Creek Trail in Centennial, **Mary O'Connor**, in mid-May, saw a Lazuli Bunting, Western Tanagers, and for four days a Rose-breasted Grosbeak. On the fifth day she heard a “weird song,” then saw a White-eyed Vireo “eating in a verdant thicket. I caused a tizzy in the bird world because I have a ‘dumb’ phone without GPS.” She posted directions, which concluded by telling viewers to look in the hemlock.

**Joe Roller** demurred – no hemlock grows within 500 miles of Colorado – until Mary explained that she meant poison hemlock!

**Carol Vogel** has a friend who “moved an empty nest from her neighbor’s house to a wreath hanging from her own door because her neighbor is afraid of birds. I told her I did not think the birds would come back. She called to say that the nest has TWO EGGS! By June 7, it had five eggs. I think the birds are House Finches. I am surprised they tracked their nest down and laid eggs in it.”

In Elbert County, **Debbie Trujillo** “had a male Orchard Oriole come to the preserves I have out for the Bullock’s Orioles. Also, it was exciting to see that my Brown Thrasher is a pair! I wondered if he had a mate since he was sticking around so long. I had some big holes scratched in the dirt under the feeders and thought it was rabbits digging. Not...the holes are from the thrasher. He digs a pretty big hole and gets insects from underneath the dirt.”

In a Littleton townhouse complex with three ponds, **Deb Carstenson** followed a Wood Duck that “had a successful clutch of seven ducklings! The Wood Ducks have had terrible parenting skills in the past, abandoning their ducklings after a week. This mother has kept all seven safe.” She was leading them to look for insects when three Snowy Egrets flew close. The mother duck flattened her head and neck onto the water and quacked loudly at the egrets, which did not pursue the ducklings into the middle of the pond.



House Finch by Dick Vogel

“Our ponds have become a roosting area for cormorants with as many as 20 coming here at dusk. The sounds they make in the night can be incredible! They can sound like someone in dire distress and when they all get going, it’s an amazing cacophony.

“A Mallard was in the pond with nine just-hatched ducklings on June 28 when a Red-tailed Hawk swooped down and carried a duckling away to the ‘screams’ of the frantic female duck.”

**Bill Hinckley** (Highlands Ranch) took pictures of two Swainson’s Hawks on July 4 “working on our rabbit plague, need several more. . . . Watched for an hour June 26 as two American Kestrels dive-bombed a big Red-tail sitting in an upper crotch. They quit, and then two Cooper’s went at it, finally coming so close that the lady hawk took off in a snit.”

**Joy Schieving**, south Denver June 17: an “Eastern Screech-Owl (juvenile) in the bird bath. Several trips between trees & bird bath. Stayed about 30 min. at about 10 a.m.”

**Sara Mosca**, BowMar, had a family of Great Horned Owls in her backyard. “At one point we saw four babies and one or two adults. We came to know they were there because they attacked one of our cats that normally doesn’t go outside but snuck out one morning only to become an owl treat.

When we took her to the vet because of a long and very deep scratch on one side of her body and a large hole on the other side that required staples and stitches; they informed us that she had been attacked by a wild animal.



Mallard by Dick Vogel



Great-Horned Owl by Sara Mosca

## Backyard Birds (cont.)

“Within a few days we were finding mutilated rabbits on our patio each day along with owl pellets (they were huge and full of awful parts). Once we looked up we were amazed to see all of these little faces staring at us. When the larger ones would fly their wingspan was impressive. They seem to have moved on now and while they were fascinating, I am glad as we have a small dog and cats and the mess each day on our patio was disgusting.”

**Barb Shissler** listed her May yard birds: “First, the Townsend's Solitaire returned for a quick drink in our bird bath. Since then, we have had short visits from a Green-tailed Towhee, a Lazuli Bunting, and a Western Tanager.”

The mid-May snowstorm brought some odd sightings. In Larkspur,



Chipping Sparrow by Dick Vogel

**Kay Chambers** reported a male Lark Bunting. **Karen Metz**, in Franktown, saw her first yard-Lincoln's Sparrow, 60-some Chipping Sparrows, and an Ovenbird. “Unlike the Chippies, the Ovenbird isn't scared away when I open the basement door to toss small mealworms along the warm foundation of the house. It's as if s/he knows my intention – and is also eating sunflower chips that I've generously scattered under the deck.”

Karen also sees Red Crossbills, a “species hasn't been here for a while, nor in Castlewood Canyon. The ponderosa pine cone crop had been in decline, but seems to be on at least a slightly upward climb this spring.”

**Tom and Elizabeth Parchman**, in Wheat Ridge, “sporadically started seeing Bushtits during the winter. This summer we saw them singly in the spring for the first time. June 3, we saw babies begging for food from adults in our back yard!”

**Dick Anderson** (Centennial, May 20): “About two weeks ago I noted a female Downy Woodpecker creating a nest cavity in our neighbor's crab apple tree. She worked diligently much of the day. A day or two later the male took over excavating. He dutifully worked on the cavity for several days. Later

that week there was a remarkable change of possession.

“A pair of Red-breasted Nuthatches began inspecting the Downy cavity. I think of it as a cavity built on speculation and then purchased by the Red-breasted Nuthatches. For the past several days the nuthatches have been busy cleaning up and making the cavity suitable for themselves. Haven't see the Downies around the yard much lately, can only assume that the female found more suitable cavity somewhere in the neighborhood.”

About 15 hummingbird messages came in, all from Douglas County. The reports ranged from complaints about fewer hummers to exclamations about many. **Linda Williams** (Highlands Ranch), e.g., “Rufous: Arrived with the holiday...what a splash of color! Happy Fourth of July!”

July 8: “Elvis, our male Broad-tailed hummer, showed a female everything in our area--the feeders and all the flowers. It was so enjoyable to witness! It's the first female hummer we've seen since June 2nd. Maybe our females arrived a little later this year? At least we should have some babies this summer.”



Broad-Tailed Hummingbird by Dick Vogel

moth activity gets busier and busier each twilight and pre-dawn. It was fun to watch two moths intimidate a male Broad-tailed at a *Salvia guarantica* 15 minutes before sunrise today.”



Downy Woodpecker by Dick Vogel

(Cont. next page)

## Backyard Birds *(cont.)*

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**Tom Redd** in Highlands Ranch July 11 watched a “male Calliope in our back yard to go with the Broadtails we have. I thought this morning that I saw a female Rufous.”

By July 18 in Roxborough, **Jill Holden** crowed, “I have seen Broad-tailed, Rufous, Calliope, and Black-chinned today and they all seem very thirsty.” Her hummers got off to a slow start, perhaps because she “transitioned to feeders on the windows that are up high to where the bears can't get to them. They seem leery of being by the windows where they may be close to us. When I do see one come it will take a quick dip with its bill, and then dive out of sight. They probably also see the cat inside by a neighbor's window sometimes and so maybe associate windows with being potentially dangerous.”

June 28, **Lynn Baumeister** (Parker): “We've had fewer than usual at the feeder and in the garden. During the last snowstorm, I was surprised to see a hummer at the feeder. I thought they would do their hibernation/torpor thing.”



Rufous Hummingbird by Dick Vogel

By June 29, **Randy Nelson** (Parker): “We seem to be having a typical nesting season for hummers. Broad-tailed are nesting in the nearby cottonwood riparian area as usual, and in our backyard maple tree for the first time since we moved here 10 years ago.

“The first nesting attempt in our maple failed, apparently due to very high winds one night which may have expelled the two eggs out of the nest, which is still present but abandoned by the female. Yesterday I spotted a new nest being built just a few feet lower in a similar limb of the maple. Not sure if this is the same female who lost her eggs, but we are cautiously hoping that this nesting is successful after such a disappointing event. The pair of Black-chinned still come around on a daily basis and visit our deck flowers and feeders. I'm not sure where they are nesting.”

**Bill Hinckley:** “Our hummingbird feeder has attracted hummers, orioles, and a scrub-jay.”

Karen: “Inclement weather, such as during heavy rain and after hail, is an important time to help nesting hummingbirds. Where I live they seem to nest somewhat colonially and some of them take their off-nest breaks at common times. In recent days, I'd often seen nine come together to the nectar feeders.

“This evening (June 8) I realized that nineteen (19) female hummingbirds were at the feeders along my back deck. That's what I consider a remarkable nesting population and I know that at least two Black-chinned females are here this nesting season as well as the more expected Broad-tailed.”

Randy issued a hail analysis. “We dodged all of the severe hail last summer but not this year. The freak storm that blew across Parker a week ago caught us off guard as it “exploded” suddenly out of the outflow of a prior storm to the east of us (according to a local television meteorologist). Needless to say I panicked but got most of the potted hummer flowers under cover before a total loss. Marble and quarter hail is a bit painful to people too.



Black-Chinned Hummingbird by Dick Vogel

“This was our fourth severe hail-storm in the last eight years here. A specialty hail weather website has historical damage reports for the last ten years and our zip code (80138) has the most damage reports for the entire area, along with 80016 in Aurora/Centennial. It's been very stressful over the years to watch the flowers and trees get defoliated during the brief hummingbird/bird nesting/fledging season. House/car damage is not fun either but not as disheartening as the plant damage and danger to bird life.”

**Your contributions write this column. (I'd like to hear from more folks in urban and suburban Denver.) Send a note or post card to P.O. Box 584, Franktown 80116, or Email me: ouzels8@aol.com.**

# Leave a Legacy

## *Educate Generations - Protect Birds and Habitats into the Future Include ASGD in Your Will and Other Gift Planning Options*

The Audubon Society of Greater Denver offers an opportunity for you to make a gift or bequest to leave a legacy and a lasting impact. The goal of planned giving is to help you plan your estate and charitable giving in a way that benefits you, your family and ASGD. We invite friends who share a commitment to educating all ages about birds, other wildlife, and habitats to consider making a personal investment in the future of our programs. There are several ways you can make these planned gifts to charity and enjoy tax and income benefits:

- **Specific, Residuary and Contingent Bequests**
- **Retirement Accounts and Pension Plans**
- **Insurance**
- **Securities**
- **Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT)**
- **Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA)**

Please consult with your financial planner and attorney to assure you receive the best financial advantages and that your intentions are carried out fully.

We would be glad to discuss any planned giving option with you – in confidence and without obligation. For more information, please call 303-973-9530 or e-mail Karl Brummert, Executive Director, at [kbrummert@denveraudubon.org](mailto:kbrummert@denveraudubon.org)

## *Please Let Us Know*

We often receive bequests from people whom we have never had the opportunity to thank. If you include Audubon Society of Greater Denver in your estate plans, please let us know. We value the opportunity to express our gratitude in person to let you know that your gift is greatly appreciated now and for future generations of people and birds to come. Those people who have notified us of their intention to make a bequest to the Audubon Society of Greater Denver are invited to our Legacy Circle. Legacy Circle special events and activities highlighting the work we accomplish together will keep you connected to the “legacy” that you have planned for us.

## **Legal Designation: If you wish to name Audubon Society of Greater Denver in your will or estate plan, we should be legally designated**

*as: “Audubon Society of Greater Denver, a nonprofit organization (Tax ID #23-7063701), with its principal business headquarters address of 9308 S. Wadsworth Blvd, Littleton, CO 80128.”*

**Date of Incorporation: September 30, 1969**



## Volunteers, Donors, New Members and Officers

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### Your volunteer hours are very important to us!

Your volunteer hours are very important to us as we use them to raise money through grants and the SCFD. Please record your hours on Volgistics or email Rhonda Shank with your completed hours as soon as possible. Thanks!

Margi Grund  
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#### Gardening/Maintenance

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

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[info@denveraudubon.org](mailto:info@denveraudubon.org)  
Karl Brummert  
Executive Director  
Emily Hertz  
School Programs Coordinator  
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