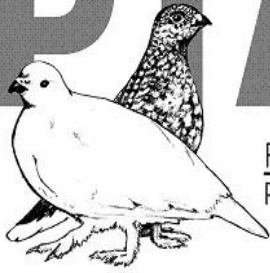


PTARMIGAN



FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY
P.O. Box 271968 • Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968 • www.fortnet.org/Audubon

Promoting the appreciation, conservation, and restoration of ecosystems,
focusing on birds and other wildlife, through education, participation, stewardship, and advocacy.

April 2006

Volume 37, Issue 8

Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness *A Multimedia Slideshow Documentary*

“Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness” is a multimedia slideshow documenting citizen efforts to designate public lands in southern Utah's spectacular canyon country as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. This 20-minute journey through redrock splendor invigorates and motivates viewers to participate in the movement to protect these unique lands.

“Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness” was made possible through the generous donation of photos, music, and words from concerned Utahans who wish to pass this heritage onto future generations, including a special reading by Pulitzer Prize winning author Wallace Stegner from his famous Wilderness Letter.

In conjunction with a 30-minute presentation on the current status of the Utah wilderness movement by Bob Brister, Interregional Outreach Coordinator of the

Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, this inspirational and informational event is a must see for citizens wishing to become personally involved to make the difference in this tremendous American public lands conservation effort.

Bob has served with the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance for the past five years. Bob worked the previous five years in public lands conservation advocacy with the National Wildlife Federation, the Southwest Forest Alliance, and the Sierra Nevada Forest Protection Campaign.



LOVELAND PROGRAM

7:00 PM, Friday, April 7, 2006

Gertrude B. Scott Room

Loveland Public Library, 300 N Adams Ave

FORT COLLINS PROGRAM

7:30 PM, Thursday, April 13, 2006

Ludlow Room

Fort Collins Lincoln Center, 417 W Magnolia St

FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY PROGRAMS AND FIELD TRIPS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Visit our website at www.fortnet.org/Audubon or call 970-490-BIRD.

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recycled paper





APRIL – MAY FIELD TRIPS

All field trips are free of charge and open to the public. All experience levels are welcome. Attendees should dress appropriately for the weather. Bring snacks, water, binoculars, and spotting scopes (if you have them). Carpooling is encouraged. A \$2.00 (unless otherwise specified) contribution per passenger to the driver is suggested. Visit www.fortnet.org/Audubon for more information. For all field trips and surveys, please contact the trip leader for signup and trip details, or contact the Field Trip Coordinator, Joe Martin, at joe3eagles@msn.com or 970-412-2481.

4/9/2006 Sunday. Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Sol Miller at eagleeye1029@yahoo.com. Meet at 7:00 AM. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the city. All levels welcomed. Contact leader for signup and details.

4/15/2006 Saturday. Habitat Public Artworks and Early Migrants at the ELC. Leaders: Lynne Hull and Ed Levering. Contact Lynne at 970-416-1881 or ecoarthull@cs.com. Meet at 8:00 AM. Tour [Lynne's](#) new habitat public artworks and look for early migrants at the Environmental Learning Center.

4/16/2006 Sunday. Fossil Creek Reservoir Bird Survey. Leader: Nick Komar at quetzal65@comcast.net or 970-416-7527. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the county. All levels welcomed. Participation limited to five plus leader. Contact leader for signup and details.

4/29/2006 Saturday. Prairie Dog Town and Country at Cathy Fromme Prairie. Contact Zoë Shark at 970-416-2480 for directions and to register. Join a City of Fort Collins Master Naturalist at Cathy Fromme Prairie Natural Area for a new look at prairie dogs. Discover how prairie dogs are like people, learn to identify their calls, and find out why they are a "keystone species." Families are welcome. Join us from 11:30 AM to 12:15 PM, at the Taft Hill entrance of Cathy Fromme Prairie Natural Area.

5/6/2006 Saturday. Migrating Birds along Poudre River and Dixon Reservoir. Leader: Phil Friedman at 970-493-2959 or phifri@frii.com to register. See and hear many species at these two premier Fort Collins spring migration areas. This is a great spring morning for all outdoor lovers, but will be focused toward beginning birders. Meeting time is approximately 7:00 AM. Group size is limited.

5/7/2006 Sunday. Fort Collins Area Raptors. 9 AM to 1 PM. Leader: Eric DeFonso at 970-472-1761 or eric_defonso@yahoo.com We will look for resident and spring migrant hawks, eagles, falcons, and owls. We'll also discuss some basic raptor biology and identification tips. Stops will include local prairie-dog colonies, known nesting sites, and riparian areas. Limited to 8 people.

5/14/2006 Sunday. Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Sol Miller at eagleeye1029@yahoo.com. Meet at 7:00 AM. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the city. All levels welcomed. Contact leader for signup and details.

5/21/2006 Sunday. Fossil Creek Reservoir Bird Survey. Leader: Nick Komar at quetzal65@comcast.net or 970-416-7527. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the county. All levels welcomed. Participation limited to five plus leader. Contact leader for signup and details.

Occasionally, new field trips may be announced or details may be finalized between issues of the *Ptarmigan*. Please visit our website and click on "Field Trips," or call the FCAS message center at 490-BIRD to check for updated field trip information.

If you are interested in becoming a field trip leader, or just want more information about it, please call Joe Martin at 970-412-2481 or joe3eagles@msn.com. You can commit to as much, or as little, as you are comfortable with. If you want to lead a trip about prairie ecosystems, wildflowers, wildfire dynamics, or whatever, go for it! The field trip is your oyster.

2006 Fort Collins Audubon Birdathon

Friday and Saturday, May 12–13, 2006

Spring migration has begun and the Birdathon is right around the corner! The Birdathon is Fort Collins Audubon’s annual spring fundraiser. It is also a great birding and social get-together that is an enjoyable—if exhausting—24-hour search for birds. It is a great way to help raise money for Fort Collins Audubon, too!

Pledges are needed to support our newsletter, programs, scholarships, and conservation efforts.

Birdathon teams will be formed in late April or early May. Prior to the Birdathon, team members obtain pledges based on the total number of species the team lists. On Birdathon day, team members will search for as many species as can be seen or heard in 24 hours.

Participate in any of four different ways:

- (1) **Team Leader** - lead a Birdathon team near and far in Larimer and Weld counties;
- (2) **Team Member** - participate on a team and help spot birds and, of course, obtain pledges;
- (3) **Pledge** - provide a pledge to a team member);
- and (4) **Business Pledge Partner** - provide a pledge to a team member or a team.

For more information, contact Birdathon Coordinator, Phil Friedman, at 970-493-2959 or phifri@frii.com

Birdathon Matching Funds

Your pledge will mean even more: A Fort Collins couple—members of Fort Collins Audubon—has promised to match all donations received for the 2006 Birdathon!

Welcome to our newest members!

We look forward to seeing you at our meetings!

Nancy L. Cobb	L. M. Gerber	Joanne M. Rankin
Mr. and Mrs. Ross Cunniff	Emilie L. Herrmann	Harold L. and Nancy Reade
Chris Davies	Karl Krahnke	Elda Schmidt
Dave Ellis	Michelle McKim	Rosanne Tibbitts
Robert A. Geller	Jessie L. Meschievitz	Alan Trask

Birdathon Donation Form

I want to support Fort Collins Audubon by making a pledge for the Birdathon. I am pledging as a

Business Individual

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

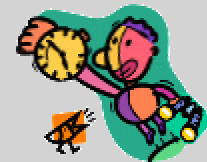
E-mail address: _____

I want to pledge as follows: (choose one)

I want to pledge a fixed amount for the Birdathon: (specify) \$ _____

I want to provide incentive by pledging an amount for each species identified by the winning team! I understand that the number of species is usually between 120 and 170. (specify an amount below)

Amount per species: (specify) \$ _____



For more information, contact Birdathon Coordinator, Phil Friedman, at 493-2959 or phifri@frii.com

Please send this form to Fort Collins Audubon Society, PO Box 271968, Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968. You will be contacted by the Birdathon Coordinator. You may also donate to FCAS online at our website, www.fortnet.org/Audubon

Thanks for Supporting Fort Collins Audubon!

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FCAS Birding Classes with Kevin Cook

Fort Collins Audubon is pleased to present two of Kevin Cook's popular birding classes for May 2006.

Birding for Beginners

When: Wednesdays, 6:30 to 8:30 PM, May 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31, 2006.

Where: Conference room of JAX Outdoor, 1200 N College Ave., Fort Collins.

Cost: \$7 per session for FCAS members or \$32 if all sessions paid for at once; \$8 per session for nonmembers or \$38 if all sessions paid for at once.

This class focuses on “how-to”: how to find birds, how to identify them once you do find them, and how to remember them once you do identify



them. It is also skills-based, emphasizing how to develop good, productive skills and how to avoid developing bad, unproductive birding habits. Frequently encountered and easy-to-find local birds will be featured as instructional examples. Two field trips will be scheduled to augment this class. The purpose of the field trips will be to apply the material learned in the classroom to real situations with real birds in the field.

Birding after the Beginning

When: Thursdays, 6:30 to 8:30 PM, May 4, 11, 18, 25, and June 1, 2006.

Where: Conference room of JAX Outdoor, 1200 N. College Ave., Fort Collins.

Cost: \$7 per session for FCAS members or \$32 if all sessions paid for at once; \$8 per session for nonmembers or \$38 if all sessions paid for at once.

This class focuses on refining birding skills so that you can find birds deliberately and consistently. Specific elements of this class will include assembling a personal birding library, using field guides more effectively, apportioning birding time more productively, developing observation skills, keeping meaningful notes, and most importantly, how to enrich the pleasure derived from your birding time without feeling like it is becoming another work-demanding chore. Participants will be asked to compile a list of particularly desired species, and this list will be used to demonstrate the material—principles and skills—covered. Two field trips will be scheduled to augment this class. The purpose of the field trips

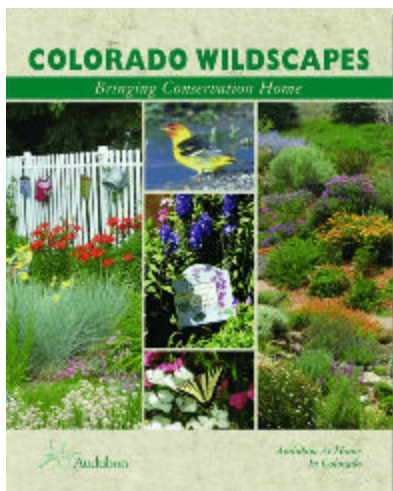
will be to apply the material learned in the classroom to real situations with real birds in the field.

To Register

Call Kevin Cook at 970-223-8392 afternoons or evenings for full details and to register.

About Kevin Cook

Kevin Cook has worked as a writer-naturalist based in Fort Collins, Colorado, since 1980. While earning a bachelor of arts degree in biology (1978) and a master of science degree in wildlife biology (1989), he served with the National Park Service and did consulting for the Colorado Division of Wildlife. Since beginning his writing as a college student in 1975, he has published 6,000 newspaper and magazine articles, contributed to several books, and edited nearly 1,000 technical articles about wildlife for scientific publication. Besides writing, he conducts seminars, teaches classes, and leads tours, all based on wildlife or natural history themes. Though birds are his specialty group, he studies all wildlife and uses his writing and teaching to help people enjoy the natural world more by better understanding it.



Colorado Wildscapes

It's that time of year—gardening season is about to begin. Find out how to make your garden more attractive to wildlife! Fort Collins Audubon is offering copies of the book *Colorado Wildscapes: Bringing Conservation Home*, published by Audubon at Home in Colorado. This habitat gardening guide helps you:

- Select native plant species and remove invasive ones
- Create a diversity of habitats to attract wildlife year-round
- Conserve water by choosing waterwise plant selections
- Reduce pesticide use to create a healthy yard for people and wildlife

“Wildscaping is a fun and exciting way to truly bring conservation home. When you turn your yard into a wildscape, you're drawing on the wisdom of wild places.” **Price for Fort Collins Audubon Members: \$10** (list price \$12.95). To purchase your copy, contact Joel Hurmence (970) 481-2124, jhurmence@hotmail.com or attend our next program meeting.

CONSERVATION CORNER—Bill Miller, Acting Conservation Chair

CHIDINGS OF THE TIMES

The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.
—Edmund Burke (1729–1797)

I have grave concerns for the future of the natural world, given the current political climate. We are witnessing the most egregious attacks on the environment ever experienced, for the purposes of increasing short-term profits of a few at the long-term expense of every living organism on the planet. Legislation has been proposed at the Federal level to attack the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, the Endangered Species Act, forest health, and **OUR** public lands.

Wait a minute! What was that last term —“**OUR** public lands”? There are two parts to these words (our and public), so please bear with me for a little history.

The history of public lands in the U.S. is complex and dates back to the time following the War of Independence, when the 13 colonies ceded lands to the Federal Government. The Land Ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 provided for the survey and settlement of those lands. As the U.S. acquired additional lands from Spain, France, and other countries, Congress directed that they be explored, surveyed, and made available for settlement, and, in 1812, Congress established the General Land Office in the Department of the Treasury to oversee the disposition of these federal lands. A plethora of laws and other actions followed, including the Homestead Act of 1872, the Mining Law of 1872, and the creation of Yellowstone National Park in 1872 by President Ulysses S. Grant, who declared that it would forever be "dedicated and set apart as a public park or pleasuring ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people."

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, a shift in federal land management priorities was marked by the creation of the first national parks, forests, and wildlife refuges. By withdrawing these lands from settlement, Congress signaled a shift in policy. Instead of using public lands to promote settlement, **Congress recognized that they should be held in public ownership because of their other resource values.** In 1891, the Forest Reserve Act was enacted, allowing forested public domain lands to be set aside by presidential proclamation in order to reduce destructive logging and preserve watersheds. In 1905, the U.S. Forest Service was established with the unique mission to sustain healthy, diverse, and productive forests and grasslands for present and future generations. In 1946, the Grazing Service was merged with the General Land Office to form the Bureau of Land Management. The BLM's current mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. In 1976, Congress enacted the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, in which Congress recognized the value of the remaining public lands by declaring that they would remain in public ownership. Congress also gave us the term "multiple use" management, defined as "management of the public lands and their various resource values so that they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people."

A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.
—Greek Proverb

Now, let's return to the expression, “**OUR** public lands.” For over a century, our government has recognized and protected the values of lands that were set aside as part of the public domain. I think the logical connection can be made, by the history and manner in which much of the land of our country was acquired, that we must agree that such lands are, indeed, “public” which, according to my dictionary, can mean, “of, belonging to, or concerning the people as a whole.”

The other part of the expression is “**OUR**.” The word **OUR** implies that public lands belong to you, me, and every legal citizen of this nation. If this is true then, as owners of **OUR** public lands, we should have the last say as to how they are managed, utilized, or disposed of. We should not be experiencing the unilateral efforts of our current administration to undo the efforts and actions of the past century to protect **OUR** heritage and **OUR** legacy to future generations. Processes for us (the owners) to participate in the decision-making of how public lands are managed, utilized, and disposed of, are generally available through participation in hearings and/or sending in written comments to the appropriate public land management agencies.

I am angry that there are those who would attempt to sell off **MY** lands or otherwise damage them beyond nature's ability to repair them within a lifetime. The underlying motivations behind these efforts have been publicly described by many writers and columnists, and simply boil down to greed. Greed on the part of corporations and those in the top 5% of income levels. Greed, at the expense of you and me—the true owners of **OUR** public lands. I say enough is enough.

As an American taxpayer and part-owner of **OUR** public lands, I try to live up to my responsibilities by becoming as fully informed as possible on issues, sharing that information with others, and voting my conscience each opportunity I have. What I don't understand is why so many of my fellow citizens remain silent on these issues that affect their heritage and legacy. Is it because the issues are too complex? Is it because there isn't enough time in the day to attend to everything else, leaving no time for civic involvement? Or is it apathy?

If just 10% of the American public were to voice their concerns, we could stop the attacks on spaceship earth. That is because politicians treat every comment that reaches them as representing ten other people with similar opinions. And that is why I encourage each of you to spend just 20 minutes a week becoming informed and sending your opinion to just one politician per week. By telephone, by e-mail, by written letter, or in person. It isn't hard, and there are others, including yours truly, who are willing to help you to become informed.

I hope you will read the TAKE ACTION section on the following page.

TAKE ACTION

DEFINITION: *Apathy—a lack of interest; listless condition; unconcern; indifference.*

To TAKE ACTION, you need to become informed. Here are two ways to become more informed on issues:

(1) Subscribe to CO-GENERAL, a listserv owned and maintained by Audubon Colorado. CO-GENERAL rapidly disseminates information to subscribers on issues of national and/or state interest.

To subscribe to CO-GENERAL, follow these steps:

- (1) Send an e-mail to listserv@list.audubon.org
- (2) Leave the Subject Line blank.
- (3) In the message area ,write “subscribe CO-GENERAL”

In a few minutes you should receive a message indicating that your new subscription has been accepted. There will be some instructions provided in other e-mails soon to follow. To post a message to CO-GENERAL, send your message to co-general@list.audubon.org

(2) A second way to become more informed is to join FCAS chapter’s Yahoo Groups listserv. You may subscribe to FCAS Yahoo! Group by sending an e-mail to the list moderator at fcaudubon@yahoo.com. This is a way to become informed on our programs, field trips, and other activities, including legislative alerts. Often, things come up that can’t be put into the Ptarmigan in a timely fashion. Legislative alerts will provide you with background information on issues, and also tell you how to contact the appropriate legislator.

Further details of chapter activities can be found on our web site at www.fortnet.org/Audubon, or by calling 970-490-BIRD .



Kudos and Raspberries



Excerpted from the Denver Post, March 8, 2006

Raspberries to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, which, despite a recommendation from its field office to defer a decision, has nominated for oil and gas leasing a large portion of a 20,000-acre area east of Rangely, where 189 black-footed ferrets have been released since 2001. The prospect of northwestern Colorado's rampant oil and gas drilling moving into the territory of North America's most endangered mammal has rattled wildlife biologists who have worked for five years to reintroduce black-footed ferrets to the state.

NOTE: This isn't a done deal, yet.

T-shirts for International Migratory Bird Day 2006

International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) celebrates the incredible journeys of migratory birds between their breeding grounds in North America and their wintering grounds in Mexico, Central, and South America. The event, which takes place on the second Saturday in May each year, encourages bird conservation and increases awareness of birds through hikes, bird watching, information about birds and migration, public events, and a variety of other education programs. Fort Collins Audubon is again offering T-shirts for IMBD. The 2006 art is printed on the back of a cotton, pre-shrunk, natural green shirt with the words “The Boreal Forest: Bird Nursery of the North” above. The Partners in Flight logo and IMBD 2006 are printed on the front left. The Fort Collins Audubon logo is reproduced on the left sleeve. The cost is \$15 for adult sizes, S, M, L, and XL. Contact Phil Friedman at 493-2959 or phifri@frii.com or come to the next program meeting.



Assault On Birds, Assault On The Environment Lynne Hull, Education Chair

Two recent articles in the Rocky Mountain News/Denver Post Sunday joint edition thoughtfully examined attempts in Congress to change the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Featured in the February 26th edition of "Perspective," one article is by Lawrence J. MacDonnell, attorney and former director of the Natural Resources Law Center at CU law school. He discusses the conservation aspects of the ESA, questions whether the Pombo Bill in the House of Representatives would allow for species recovery, writes of the extensive list and serious underfunding for "species at risk" and "species of concern," applauds Pombo's suggestion that private landowners be compensated for longer-term management of their land for species recovery, and brings forward the interesting suggestion that States and Tribes be given more control in identifying and assisting species at risk within their state's borders by developing their own plans. MacDonnell suggests that states would be attracted to this because they could move more actively to recover and de-list species within their borders, re-establish primacy of management of wildlife in their jurisdictions, and obtain federal funding to develop and implement these plans.

Who is better prepared for this work, and are states or federal entities a better choice for the citizens and the species? What would happen in areas like the greater Yellowstone, where grizzly bears and wolves range over three states?

The second article is by nationally recognized CSU professors Phil Cafaro and Barry R. Noon, with internationally respected environmental ethicist Holmes Rolston, III. It is derived from a statement circulated and signed by 65 CSU faculty members and sent to Congress asking that senators and representatives oppose any legislation that would "lessen the protection of species and the eco-systems on which they depend." The law, they agree, "can be improved, but not at the cost of diminishing our commitment to conservation." The group feels the bill proposed and co-sponsored by Senator Wayne Allard would render protections "ineffective." They offer the statistic that only 1% of species declared endangered have been lost, but 10% of species waiting to be listed have disappeared. The economic argument, that endangered species prevent economic development and interfere with the rights of private landowners, is countered with science pointing out that biological diversity is the source of food, fiber, and medical essentials; that in Colorado, biodiversity contributes significantly to the recreation economy and to the enjoyment of residents and visitors alike. Further is the common good: functioning ecosystems with a full range of biodiversity supply nutrient recycling—cleaning air, water, wastes, and helping keep climate in balance. The writers also feel that human beings have an ethical obligation to conserve the earth's species, an idea backed by the huge percentage of the American public who support the ESA. To change course after decades of protection to favor individual, corporate, or government agencies for short-term economic gain disregards our responsibility to future generations of our species as well as others.

As of this writing, the fate of the Endangered Species Act is still up in the air, and there may still be time to contact your senators in support of wildlife species. If the Senate votes in favor of the Allard bill and it is combined with the Pombo bill already passed in the House, the act may become a ghost of the species we will lose. My question is, if at least 75% of Americans believe in the Endangered Species Act, how can Congress feel they can change and weaken the act? Sharpen your pens, limber your keyboard and phone-pad fingers! Make those calls, write those letters!

Also, see a related article, in the March–April National Audubon, on Bush administration and congressional attacks on the National Environmental Policy Act and public land degradation by grazing.

Call for Bird Surveys at Soapstone Ranch Natural Area

As you may already know, FCAS conducts monthly bird surveys at Fossil Creek Reservoir and Bobcat Ridge Natural Area. The City of Fort Collins Natural Areas has now approached FCAS for help with bird surveys at Soapstone Ranch Natural Area. The FCAS surveys at Soapstone would involve a bird census conducted twice a month each in spring and fall, with emphasis on nesting raptors. Specific plans and survey logistics are being developed now. If you are interested in being part of a core group of FCAS volunteers for this project, contact Joel Hurmence at 970-481-2124 or jhurmence@hotmail.com.

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For other FCAS contacts visit
www.fortnet.org/audubon/leadership.htm



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Membership Application

Join the Fort Collins Audubon Society (FCAS) directly, or automatically become a member by joining the National Audubon Society (NAS). *Choose one below:*

- New or Renewing Member of FCAS** (annual dues) **\$15**
 (Receive the *Ptarmigan* newsletter)
 FCAS may share my name with NAS
- New Member of NAS & Chapter** **\$20**
 (Receive *Audubon* magazine and *Ptarmigan*)
- Renewing Member of NAS & Chapter** **\$35**
 (Receive *Audubon* magazine and *Ptarmigan*)

Did you know? Less than \$1 of your NAS dues is left for FCAS funds. FCAS serves NAS members through its own fundraising efforts. We appreciate your financial support!

Additional donation to FCAS \$ _____
Total enclosed \$ _____

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

- I prefer to receive the *Ptarmigan* via the FCAS website. Please e-mail me when posted.**

Please make your check payable to **FCAS** and send along with this form to: **Fort Collins Audubon Society, PO Box 271968, Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968**

**FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY PROGRAMS AND
 FIELD TRIPS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.**
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