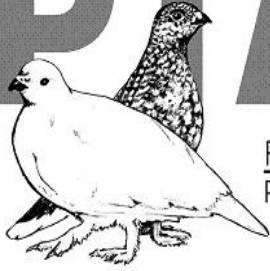


PTARMIGAN



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 2007

Volume 38, Issue 8

Hummingbirds

They're on their way back; time to get excited!

Hummingbirds—those tiny, iridescent-winged wonders that entertain us with their rapid backward flight, elaborate courtship displays, and feisty behavior around feeders—are soon to return for our bird watching pleasure. In anticipation of their return, it is an honor to have John Vanderpoel, owner of Peregrine Video Productions and producer of *Hummingbirds of North America*, speak to Fort Collins Audubon this month.

John Vanderpoel became interested in birds as a teenager in the Chicago area, fascinated by the 1966 spring warbler migration. In 1988, John accepted a position with Unisys to work in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico. He lived in the hills of Rio Rico and of course set up the obligatory hummingbird feeder. Soon, there were five feeders and swarms of Broad-billed, Black-



chinned, and the occasional Costa's hummingbird.

In 1994, while living in Niwot, Colorado, John started Peregrine Video Productions, which specializes in corporate, promotional, training, and wildlife videos. John's birding interest led him to extensive traveling and video recording of bird activity throughout the United States and Mexico. The *Advanced Birding Video Series*® with Jon L. Dunn consists of three highly acclaimed videos that are unmatched in their ability to help beginning and expert birders learn to identify hummingbirds and gulls of North America.

John is currently a member of the Colorado Field Ornithologists Rare Bird Records Committee. Please join us for this evening of entertainment and information.

THURSDAY EVENING PROGRAM — April 12, 2007
Ludlow Room, Fort Collins Lincoln Center, 417 W. Magnolia Street
Social Gathering: 7:00 p.m., Program: 7:30 p.m.

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





A P R – M A Y F I E L D T R I P S

All field trips are free of charge (unless otherwise noted) and open to the public. All experience levels are welcome. Participants should dress appropriately for the weather. Bring snacks or lunch, water, binoculars, and spotting scopes. Carpooling is encouraged. A \$3.00 (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.

A triple asterisk (*) within a field trip description indicates that the field trip will likely include Colorado Division of Wildlife-owned lands. Colorado state law requires all visitors to these lands to possess a Habitat Stamp while on the property. Purchase a stamp online, at a CDOW service center, or wherever hunting and fishing licenses are sold for \$5 with a previously purchased license, or \$10 if purchased separately. Visit <http://wildlife.state.co.us/ShopDOW/AppsAndLicenses/HabitatStamp/> for more information, including exceptions.**

4/08/07, Sunday. Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Sol Miller at eagleye1029@yahoo.com. Meet at 7:00 a.m. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the city of Fort Collins. All levels welcome.

4/15/07, Sunday. Fossil Creek Reservoir Bird Survey. Leader: Nick Komar at quetzal65@comcast.net or 970-416-7527. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for Larimer County. All levels welcome. Limited to 5 participants.

4/22/07, Sunday. Spring Migrants. Leader: Nancy Howard at neh9833@yahoo.com or 970-568-9736. 8:00 to late morning. Meet at Cottonwood Hollow parking area on east Prospect Street in Fort Collins. We will look for spring migrants and early nesters at several locations along the Poudre River corridor, including Cottonwood Hollow, ELC, and Prospect Ponds. This trip is geared more toward beginners but all levels are welcome. Limited to 8 participants.

4/28/07, Saturday. Shorebirds and Waterfowl. Leader: Rachel Hopper at r-hopper@comcast.net or 970-495-1751. 8:00 a.m. to mid-afternoon. We will focus on migrant shorebirds and waterfowl in Larimer County, traveling to several lakes and reservoirs in the area. We will also try to visit some productive spots in Weld County, including Milton Reservoir, which is private-access only. Meet at the Harmony Transfer Station at the northwest corner of Harmony and 125. Limited to 15 participants.

5/05/07, Saturday. Dixon Reservoir. Leader: Arvind Panjabi at arvind.panjabi@rmbo.org or 970-222-4717. 7:00 to 10:00 a.m. Meet at the Pineridge Natural Area parking lot. The woods at Dixon Reservoir are a hotspot along the northern Front Range for spring migrant landbirds seeking to rest and refuel during their northward journey. Migration will be kicking into high gear about this time and we should see and hear a wide diversity of migrants on this trip. All levels welcome. Limited to 12 participants.

5/06/07, Sunday. High Plains Environmental Center at Centerra. Leaders: Silja Knoll and Andy Hall at info@ncbirdcenter.org. 8:30 a.m. to 12:00. Meet in the parking lot of Rangeview One at 2725 Rocky Mountain Ave. (across from the Medical Center of the Rockies in Loveland). From 125 and Crossroads Blvd. (Exit 259), travel west to the roundabout at Rocky Mountain Ave. and exit the roundabout to the south. Coming from the west on Hwy 34, turn left (north) on Rocky Mountain Ave., just east of Target. We will walk the nature trails around two lakes looking for waterfowl, raptors, returning migrants, and other critters, including amphibians and reptiles. All levels welcome. RSVP is appreciated but not required. If you cannot find the parking lot the morning of the trip, contact Andy at 970-217-6668. For more info about the HPEC, see their web site at www.suburbitat.org/.

5/13/07, Sunday. Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Sol Miller at eagleye1029@yahoo.com. Meet at 7:00 a.m. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the city of Fort Collins. All levels welcome.

5/20/07, Sunday. Fossil Creek Reservoir Bird Survey. Leader: Nick Komar at quetzal65@comcast.net or 970-416-7527. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for Larimer County. All levels welcome. Limited to 5 participants.

5/26/07, Saturday. Loveland Foothills. Leader: Ron Harden at 970-667-3819. 8:00 a.m. to late morning. Meet in the front parking lot (along Hwy 34) of Big Thompson Elementary School at the intersection of Hwy 34 and the Masonville Road (CR 27). We will look for birds that nest in foothills/riparian/grassland habitat west and north of Loveland, including Chasteen's Grove, Sylvan Dale Ranch overlook, Greenridge Glade, Rock Cut Road, Eagle Cliff, and along the Buckhorn and Redstone drainages. We should be able to observe nesting Dippers and Golden Eagles. Most of our birding will be near our vehicles. Limited to 15 participants.

Welcome to our newest members!
We hope to see you at our
programs and field trips.



- | | | |
|------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Terry Cairns | Kathryn Cemak | Patricia Rendina |
| Craig L. Spooner | Katherine L. Belster | Barbara Mallot |
| Clifford J. Parr | Emily & Elwin Phillips | Britten Ream |
| Gayl Foshee | Vickie C. Wallace | M. Hanson |
| Jette Carlson | Karen Morrellsadd | Cindy Bushong |
| Joyce Hubka | Aqua Art | Thomas McDonald |
| Sallie Coonts | Lucia Adams | |

National Audubon is still updating their mailing lists. If your name or address is incorrect, please contact our membership chair at sktupper@earthlink.net to update your info. Thank you for your help and understanding while we work through these changes!!



Don't Throw Away That Empty Inkjet Cartridge!

Your copy of this month's *Ptarmigan* may include a mailer to recycle inkjet cartridges. Fort Collins Audubon is continuing a recycling and fundraising program with Empties4Cash.com. Here is how it works:

- The empty inkjet cartridges that we usually throw away as trash can be recycled and remanufactured.
- Use the postage-free mailer included with this newsletter, or pick up a mailer at the next Fort Collins Audubon program. Feel free to pass these along to anyone with cartridges to recycle!
- Send in your empty cartridges. Fort Collins Audubon gets paid up to \$4.00 for each empty inkjet cartridge that has a print head, regardless of the brand or type.
- Accepted are any inkjet cartridges that have print heads for all of the following brands of printers:
 - HP
 - Lexmark
 - Xerox
 - Compaq
 - Brother
 - Dell
 - Canon
 - Apple

No Epson print cartridges can be accepted since they are just ink tanks without a print head.

Want less paper mail?
Walk your environmental talk—Get your newsletter online!

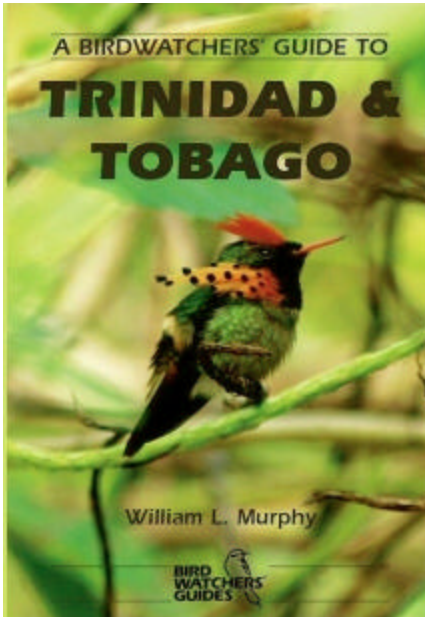


Would you like to reduce the amount of mail you receive? Use less paper? If you have access to the Internet, you can choose to receive e-mail notification when the *Ptarmigan* is available on the Fort Collins Audubon Society's website! The current issue of the newsletter is available online to members only, is available a week or two earlier than the paper copy, AND is in **COLOR!** If you'd like to receive an e-mail notification, please e-mail your **name and address as it appears on your newsletter's mailing label** and the e-mail address you wish to use to sktupper@earthlink.net. Please indicate whether you want just e-mail or if you would prefer both e-mail and the paper newsletter. We'd be happy to accommodate. Here's an opportunity to practice what we preach!

April newsletter distribution:	
	Paper: 643 (86%)
	E-mail: 106 (14%)
Do you really need the paper version?	

Trinidad & Tobago

A Trip Sponsored by the Fort Collins Audubon Society



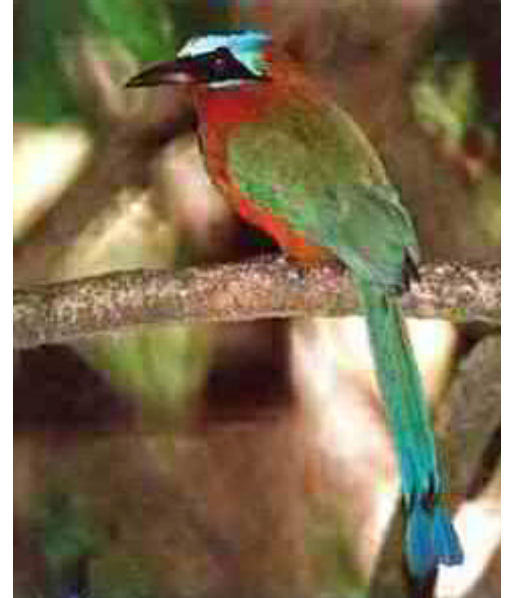
10 days
May 16–25, 2007

Led by expert birding guide
Bill Murphy

Author of
*A Birdwatchers' Guide to
Trinidad & Tobago*

Charter Member
T&T Rare Birds Committee

Visit
www.birderbill.us/May_07/



Trinidad and Tobago are lush, stunningly beautiful islands located just 10° above the Equator, adjacent to Venezuela. Blessed with a perfect climate and a unique blend of Amazonian and West Indian fauna and flora, this verdant two-island republic is universally acclaimed as the best place in the New World to first experience the splendor of tropical birds. Even persons with broad experience with Neotropical birds return to T&T because of the ease with which birds and other kinds of wildlife can be studied. Birds and butterflies resplendent in gaudy hues probe at arm's length at nectar and fruit feeders. A profusion of brightly colored flowers adds intense color to the tropical vistas, and every scene is a photo opportunity. Our accommodations are time-tested and birder-friendly. The food is sensational. Enjoying freshly picked fruit and locally grown coffee for breakfast is a luxurious experience. In Tobago we will enjoy two days and nights at the Cuffie River Nature Retreat, while in Trinidad we will enjoy six days and nights at the world-famous Asa Wright Nature Centre and Lodge.

COST \$2,495 from Port-of-Spain based on double occupancy; single supplement \$495

TOUR PRICE INCLUDES roundtrip inter-island airfare, airport transfers, baggage handling, breakfast, lunch, and dinner, afternoon tea and rum punch at the Asa Wright Nature Centre, expert tour leader and local guides on both islands, glass-bottomed boat to Little Tobago Island, bird checklist, audiotape *Bird Sounds of Trinidad & Tobago*, and hotel gratuities (gratuities to local guides and boatmen are at participant's discretion). Tour price does not include air fare from departure city to Port-of-Spain and return.

For a detailed itinerary and registration form, visit

www.birderbill.us/May_07/

Registration is limited to 10 participants. Only a couple spots are still open!

Volunteer Birders Sought for Soapstone and Red Mountain Studies



If you are one of the 95 people who enjoyed our March program on the Soapstone Natural Area, or if you are one of the hundreds who wish they could have attended, we have an exciting opportunity for you! Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory (RMBO) has partnered with the City of Fort Collins, Larimer County, and the Colorado Division of Wildlife to implement a bird inventory and monitoring program on Soapstone Ranch Natural Area and Red Mountain Open Space. Fort Collins Audubon has agreed to help find volunteers to assist RMBO staff with area searches (structured birding) and nest monitoring. The nest monitoring will consist of two separate techniques that include rope dragging and behavioral observation. RMBO needs volunteers who can spend at least one day a week on the properties. To volunteer or get additional information, please contact RMBO Monitoring Division Director David Hanni at david.hanni@rmbo.org or (970) 482-1707.

MORE HELP WANTED

FCAS is looking for volunteers to help at our backyard habitat garden tour on July 14th. Spend a few hours in a beautiful garden talking to people about birds and plants. We will train! E-mail to jthomas91@aol.com

Volunteer coordinator and recruiter needed! Will help train. E-mail to jhurmenca@hotmail.com

Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory needs an environmental educator to help with youth groups at a bird banding station during spring and summer. E-mail to shelly.morrell@rmbo.org

Upcoming Trips and Events

May 10, Swift Fox Saga — May Program Meeting. Bruce Gill, retired CDOW researcher, will talk about his research on the status and ecology of swift foxes on the Pawnee National Grassland. Join us for a photographic journey into the life of these shortgrass prairie denizens!

May 11–12, Birdathon! — Fort Collins Audubon's annual spring fundraiser. For details, see the FCAS website (<http://fortnet.org/Audubon/activities/birdathon/birdathon.htm>), the September 2006 Ptarmigan online (for last year's results), or page 6 of this newsletter.

May 16–25, Trinidad & Tobago Trip — Sponsored by Fort Collins Audubon and led by expert birding guide, Bill Murphy, presenter of our October 2006 program, author of *A Birdwatchers' Guide to Trinidad & Tobago*, and Charter Member of the T&T Rare Birds Committee. See the FCAS website (<http://fortnet.org/Audubon/activities/calendar.htm>) or this issue of the Ptarmigan for details.



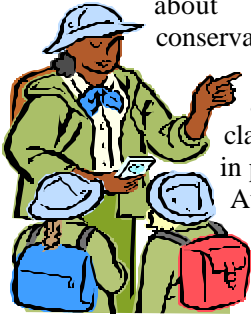
June 8–10, Yampa River Canoe Trip — Canoe the Yampa River, the last undammed tributary of the Colorado River system. See the FCAS website (<http://fortnet.org/Audubon/activities/calendar.htm>) or the December 2006 Ptarmigan online for details.

July 14, Backyard Habitat Garden Tour — A tour of local backyards and gardens that double as habitat for our bird populations. This is planned as a fundraiser for FCAS, as well as an enjoyable educational experience. Contact Lynne Hull at 970-416-1881 for more information.

August 27–31, San Juan Islands Sea Kayak Trip — Join us for a sea kayaking trip in the San Juan Islands, Washington. See the December 2006 Ptarmigan online or the FCAS website (<http://fortnet.org/Audubon/activities/calendar.htm>) for details.

Educator and Youth Scholarships Offered for 2007

Are you a teacher who would benefit from more knowledge about birds, other wildlife, nature, or conservation? Do you have a child or know a student who is interested in those topics and would benefit from some outside classes? Could you or they use a little help in paying for such a class? The Fort Collins Audubon Society Scholarship Program was designed to help! We are once again offering scholarships for wildlife and nature-related courses offered by science and environmental education providers.



Child and Youth Scholarships provide assistance for young people, ages 8 to 18, who desire to attend a summer camp, workshop, or class that focuses on environmental study. Applicants must reside in Larimer County or the surrounding area. Funding assistance covers the tuition fee, and may also support costs for transportation and necessary equipment or supplies. Selection of applicants is based on merit and level of interest.

Educator Scholarships provide assistance for teachers in public or private schools in Larimer County or the surrounding area who desire to attend a workshop or class that focuses on environmental study or environmental education. Funding assistance covers the tuition fee, and may also support costs for transportation and necessary equipment or supplies. Selection of applicants is based on merit, level of interest, and anticipated value of the experience.

Awards are given for up to \$250. Applications for a portion of the total cost of a class are encouraged.

Courses are eligible for scholarships if they are provided by an established, reputable organization or agency and provide quality wildlife, environmental, or conservation education.

For a partial list of eligible workshop and camp providers, please see the FCAS website.



Click on "Scholarship Fund." The applications and other relevant information are there as well.

Applications are due April 27, 2007. Selection of the recipients will be done by a committee of Audubon Board Members and other interested chapter members. Awards will be announced by May 11.

Winners of the scholarships are asked to provide a report on their experience for publication in the Ptarmigan and/or on the FCAS website.

If you know of a teacher or student who would like to apply, please pass this information on to them! The scholarships will also be publicized in the Poudre and Thompson School districts, and via a press release.

Other questions can be directed to Lisa Evans at Lceski@comcast.net.

Birdathon! May 11-12, 2007

Spring migration is upon us and the Birdathon can't be far behind! The Birdathon is Fort Collins Audubon's annual spring fundraiser. It is also a great birding and social get together that is an exciting 24-hour search for birds. It is a great way



to help raise money for Fort Collins Audubon, too! **Teams are forming now!** Pledges will support our newsletter, programs, scholarships, and conservation efforts. For more information, contact FCAS Birdathon Coordinator **Heman Adams at 484-8634**.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail address: _____

I want to participate on a Birdathon Team!

I want to be a **Team Leader** (plan the route, lead counters, count birds, and raise pledges)!

(or)

I want to be a **Team Member** (count birds, and raise pledges)!

I want to make a pledge!

I want to be a **Business Pledge Partner**
(or) **Individual Pledge Partner**

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

(or)

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 amount:

\$1.00 per species
(or)

Other amount per species: (specify)
\$ _____

**Send to: Fort Collins Audubon Society,
P.O. Box 271968, Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968**



Conservation Corner — Bill Miller, Conservation Chair

SPECIAL SAGE-GROUSE MONITORING RENDEZVOUS: JUNE 21-25, 2007 **Audubon Colorado's Annual State Rendezvous To Be Held During the Same Period**

NOTE: The following article was provided by the Audubon Colorado office. The 11 Audubon chapters in Colorado have collectively been donating their annual National Audubon Society collaborative funds to support monitoring efforts on behalf of the Gunnison Sage-Grouse. Audubon Colorado's first priorities have been established to (1) support recovery efforts for the Gunnison Sage-Grouse and (2) support conservation for grassland species in general. To that end, this year's Chapter Rendezvous will kick off some collaborative efforts in support of the Gunnison Sage-Grouse.

Please mark your calendar and plan to join Audubon members from around the state for a brand new event: the Gunnison Sage-Grouse (GUSG) Monitoring Rendezvous. All chapter members are invited and encouraged to attend. The gathering will take place from Thursday, June 21, through Monday, June 25, but individuals may join us for any combination of days that fits their schedules. Audubon volunteers will gather in Gunnison to work with federal biologists and faculty from Western State College to help monitor the condition of BLM riparian habitats that are used by GUSG during the early summer. This is an exciting opportunity to make a serious on-the-ground contribution to GUSG conservation in Colorado.

The idea for the Monitoring Rendezvous grew out of the GUSG Chapter Collaborative Project that all the chapters in the state are participating in. BLM staff need to maintain healthy habitats on public lands in the Gunnison Basin, which is a Globally Important Bird Area for the largest population of GUSG. But it is difficult for BLM biologists to thoroughly cover all of the land, and they are welcoming our offer to help them in this important work. On each day during the five-day period, we will assemble 2- or 3-person teams to work for 3 or 4 hours in different BLM riparian areas. Participants will be provided with maps and data sheets and will be trained to use a GPS unit and to take basic vegetation measurements of habitat quality. BLM staff are especially interested in our observations of birds and other wildlife, and in our comments—as birders—on the general condition of the land as habitat for GUSG and other birds. Participants who have digital cameras will be encouraged to make photo documentation of the habitats. And since this is the period of brood-rearing for GUSG, there's always the possibility that you may see a grouse hen and her chicks. This will be a truly unique and rewarding wildlife experience.

Beginning on Friday evening (6/22), Audubon Colorado will also kick off its 4th annual State Rendezvous in Gunnison, with a reception and speakers on the Western State campus. During the day on Saturday, the monitoring activities will continue. Then on Saturday afternoon and evening, we will round out the State Rendezvous with special presentations and opportunities for discussion among chapter members from around the state. Throughout the two-day State Rendezvous and the overlapping five-day Monitoring Rendezvous, we will also provide plenty of opportunities for birdwatching in the Gunnison area. Evening programs on sage-grouse, related habitat issues, the local ranching community, and other topics of interest to Audubon members will be presented throughout the Rendezvous.

While we are giving participants the opportunity to be in the field for up to five days, we want to make it clear that the amount of field study you do is completely optional. Just one day in the field will bring enormous benefits. And if field study is not an option for you, we still hope you will join us for the State Rendezvous activities and any of the evening programs and bird walks.

Please check www.auduboncolorado.org for details about speakers and programs, as well as registration forms and lodging information as it becomes available. There are numerous motel and camping choices in the Gunnison area, so think about planning a family vacation around the Rendezvous this year. It's going to be a lot of fun for all. Call 303-415-0130 or e-mail Audubon Colorado at rstromp@audubon.org for more information.

CONSERVATION FORUM UPDATE

On March 10, 2007, I attended the quarterly meeting of the *Conservation Forum*, an outgrowth of the monthly Environmental Round Table (ERT) meetings of the past few years, which is a mechanism for the conservation community and CDOW staff to share ideas and concerns for the well-being of Colorado's wildlife and wildlife habitat. Previously, a steering committee had identified numerous issues and prioritized them. Two or three of these issues will be the main topics of discussion at each quarterly *Forum* meeting. It was felt that issues could be dealt with more effectively by allotting more time for thorough discussion than at the more frequent but shorter monthly ERT meetings. The two major topics of this quarterly meeting were Energy Development in Colorado and Roadless Areas / Off-Highway-Vehicle (OHV) issues.

Colorado is being overwhelmed by oil and gas development, and coal-bed methane projects. Dennis Buechler of the Colorado Wildlife Federation (CWF) gave a presentation on proposed Mitigation Guidelines for Oil and Gas Development. To date, 63 organizations have signed on to the guidelines. It is hoped that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC), as well as the oil and gas industry in general, will apply these guidelines to minimize impacts to air and water quality and fish and wildlife resources before and during oil and gas development. See www.coloradowildlife.org/advocacy/guidelinesoilgas.asp

Ken Strom, Director of Bird Conservation for Audubon Colorado, gave a presentation on wind energy and its impacts on birds. Surprisingly, the major impacts to birds are no longer caused by birds flying through turbine blades. Habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, the construction of tall objects on a prairie where none existed before, and long-term human intrusion upon the landscape are now the main issues, discussed in the following Pawnee article on the next page.

Cont'd on next page

Then, *Forum* participants discussed what Colorado should do with respect to inventoried roadless areas. The *Forum* will support a recommendation to Governor Ritter that Colorado endorse the roadless areas as identified under President Clinton's roadless area plan.

We also had a brief presentation on the negative impacts of OHVs. Hopefully, by sitting down with OHV organizations (the responsible users) we can get a handle on the irresponsible users. Because the USFS and BLM have so few law enforcement personnel, an initiative is proposed to authorize district wildlife managers, state park personnel, and sheriff's deputies to write tickets, assessing fines on illegal and/or irresponsible OHV use.

The *Forum* will have two co-chairs, one appointed by the CDOW (Tom Nesler) and the other elected from among the conservation groups. Wendy Kefover-Ring, Executive Director of SINAPU, was elected to be the other co-chair, and can serve up to two one-year terms.

Forum participants also adopted the draft *Conservation Forum* charter, and selected dates for the next three quarterly meetings. Gary Miller, an FCAS member, recently retired from the CDOW, has become a member of our Conservation Committee and will be our principal delegate to the *Conservation Forum*.

PROGRESS ON THE PAWNEE

On Sunday, March 4, 2007, nine volunteers from Fort Collins Audubon, Denver Audubon, and Platte & Prairie Audubon met at the USFS Pawnee National Grasslands office in Greeley for some raptor monitoring training. The training was not on raptor identification but rather to become familiar with the locations of raptor nests on several pieces of federal land and to learn the associated record keeping details.

This is all brought about because of the potential future expansion of the Cedar Creek Wind Farm onto some of the federal lands along the escarpment near where the first 300 wind turbines are currently under construction. It is hoped that volunteers will not only be able to assist USFS personnel in the monitoring on federal lands but also that they will be able to measure raptor usage of the rest of the escarpment where the wind farm is currently being constructed on private lands.

The impact of this project is HUGE! Temporary two-lane roads used for construction traffic have been scraped out through pasture and dry-land wheat fields. Holes approximately 80 feet square have been excavated, in which the concrete turbine bases are poured. The turbines will be mounted approximately 250 feet in the air, on tubular masts, and the three-bladed rotor discs will be approximately 300 feet in diameter. Turbines will be electrically connected by means of underground cables. All of this means habitat destruction during the construction phase. Following re-vegetation, there will still be service roads by which the company will manage and maintain the turbines. And then there is the above-ground power line that is currently being constructed that will carry the wind-generated electric power to a distribution center north of Denver.

Pronghorn, raptors, Sharp-tailed Grouse, migrating birds, and other grassland species that may be displaced from traditional breeding territories are at risk. There is evidence to support the idea that many bird species will be displaced from the area of the wind farm because of their instinctive response to tall objects that might represent raptor perches. There will also be long-term impacts of the service roads and human traffic on them as maintenance personnel service the turbines.

There is virtually nothing that can be done to stop the placement of wind turbine farms as our nation turns to alternative renewable energy sources, but we can try to minimize the negative impacts of those placements.

FCAS is currently involved in three projects on the Pawnee—raptor monitoring, a wildlife structure inventory, and soon-to-commence prairie dog inventories. To that end, we strongly encourage you to volunteer for any one of these projects. Now that we are moving into spring, the grasslands will be greening up. It's a wonderful time of year to be out on the Pawnee. It needs help from all sources, including volunteer efforts.

To get involved, contact Bill Miller at (970) 493-7693 or 5mcorp@comcast.net.

Here today ...

*A Soapbox article by Phil Cafaro
recently published in the Fort Collins Coloradoan*

Last summer, half a dozen members of the Fort Collins Audubon Society set out to find out how many bird species breed along the Poudre River. Over a week in mid-June, we headed at dawn to the city properties clustered along the river, including Prospect Ponds, Lee Martinez Park and the Environmental Learning Center. We were searching for signs of breeding activity: singing, nest building, food carrying, territorial displays, and the gold standard of proof: nestlings or fledglings.

Sometimes, particularly when they are competing to see who can find the most species, bird watchers rush from one bird or one site to another. But since we were looking for breeding evidence, we had to slow down and watch more carefully than usual.

We saw wrens and kingbirds carrying food for their young. We saw finches and vireos defending territory. We saw osprey, red-tail hawks and—for the first time ever in Larimer County—American redstarts building nests. We saw cowbirds

mating (don't blink, or you'll miss it).

All told, we counted 3,489 birds and 138 different species, including 30 confirmed, 10 probable and 28 possible breeding species. Since our time was limited and our standards for identifying breeding evidence high, the total number of breeding bird species probably exceeds that suggested by the figures above. Future studies will tell.

It's fun, in the middle of winter, to remember all that life and activity, and to

Cont'd on next page

Better Living, Better Birding

Lynne Hull

We are hearing a lot about climate change these days, finally, and the implications for birds are enormous. Many predict the loss of as many as half our bird species if the worst scenario comes to pass. It's hard to feel optimistic in the face of the changes we would have to instigate to combat the situation. How many of us can give up driving, yesterday? Can we as a community feed ourselves if we can't import food?

What's your "Carbon Footprint"—can you become "Carbon Neutral"? These are current buzzwords for what we personally CAN do with lifestyle changes to help the situation. Some suggestions from an article in the March/April issue of *Natural Home* magazine include: Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs. Use a clothesline instead of a gas or electric dryer (we have the climate for that one!). Turn your heat down 2 degrees in winter and cooling up 2 degrees in summer. Turn off electronic devices—stereo, computer, TV—when not actively in use. Unplug electronics, rechargers, and other devices from the wall, which are "always on," especially if you are leaving for a few days. Insulate and weatherize your home and buy energy star appliances when buying new. Don't miss out on the current federal tax credits if you need storm doors, windows, and insulation! Support local farmers markets and local businesses, buy locally grown foods, and buy organic foods (direct impact on birds from herbicides and pesticides of conventionally grown foods). Eat less beef.

Buy recycled paper products, avoid heavily packaged products, disconnect from catalogs you don't want, most of which are made from virgin forest wood (another direct impact on birds). Some of the most popular mail-order companies are destroying Canada's boreal forest, an important nesting ground.

Plant a tree to make up for the paper you do use. Locally, *Trees, Water & People* has a new program, "100% Replanted." On the website www.ReplantTrees.org, you can figure out your average personal paper use, or a more detailed business use, and pledge/pay a modest fee to have TWP plant trees for you, thus replanting the forests and rebalancing the climate. It's fun, easy, inexpensive, and local—a winner all around!



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realize that in a few months it will all begin again. New generations of birds, and fish, and foxes, for new generations of birdwatchers, fishermen and fisherwomen, and other wildlife enthusiasts. Yet it is melancholy to think that the future is not as secure as it seems.

Take away the water, dry up the wetlands and decrease the water flows, and the profusion of life that currently exists along our river will wither away. That is exactly what the proposed Glade Reservoir will do.

Current water flows in the Poudre River are a small fraction of historical flows; the river already runs dry in several stretches below the canyon during parts of the year. Glade Reservoir, if it is built, will take yet

more water out of the river above Fort Collins and ship it to other parts of northern Colorado. This will further diminish the flow of the Poudre River through the city—including peak flows during late spring and summer, a crucial time for many animal species trying to raise their young (go to www.savethepoudre.org for an analysis of how Glade would affect stream flows).

Less water in the river will be bad for the birds—and bad for those of us who love to see them. Less water in the river will be bad for the fish—and for fishermen and women. Less water in the river will be bad for the cottonwoods and peach-leaf willows along the riverbanks—and for everyone who likes walking in their shade.

Fort Collins residents have shown great

foresight and spent a lot of money securing parks and natural areas along the Poudre River. Properly managed, they can provide important habitat for wildlife and recreational opportunities for nature lovers of all sorts, in perpetuity. But, that all depends on having enough water in the river.

Building Glade Reservoir will degrade the ecological health of the Poudre River and harm our quality of life here in Fort Collins—all so that developers can squeeze a few more tens of thousands of houses into communities that would probably be better off without them. Don't let it happen. Stop Glade Reservoir. Save your river—before it's too late.



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- Receive regular news posts on FCAS events
- Get timely monthly meeting reminders
- Hear of volunteer opportunities as they arise



Go to www.fortnet.org/Audubon/fcaudubon.htm to learn more and to subscribe to the *fcaudubon* e-mail news service.

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 \$ _____

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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**

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