

MARCH 2005

ptarmigan

Volume 36 Issue 6



Fort Collins Audubon Society

The mission of FCAS is to promote the appreciation, conservation and restoration of ecosystems — focusing on birds and other wildlife — through education, participation, stewardship and advocacy.

Bob Johnson's Photography: Peruvian Eco-Tour & Incan Ruins

Bob and Ginny Johnson took part in a June 2004 trip to Peru sponsored by Audubon Colorado. They visited several important natural and cultural sites, including the Tambopata River eco-tourism project, administered by a native Indian tribe on a tributary of the Amazon River; the major cities of Lima and Cuzco; and of course, Machu Picchu.

This famous Incan architectural masterpiece, never seen by the invading Spaniards, was abandoned by the Incas in the 1500's, and taken over by the jungle until its re-discovery in 1911 by Hiram Bingham. Bob and Ginny Johnson were among the travel group, and were able to take numerous photographs, which Bob will share with Fort Collins Audubon Society on March 10. In addition to showing pictures, he will include discussions of Peruvian culture, history, and geography.

Bob is a retired local orthopedic surgeon with a 40-year interest in travel and nature photography. He has previously presented a slide show to Fort Collins Audubon displaying his animal and bird photography experiences. Since that time Bob has become a fan of digital photography, and this presentation will be entirely digital.



Ginny and Bob have traveled extensively, with Bob recording travel and nature images on film or (now) digitally, and Ginny sketching and doing watercolor paintings. Their travels have covered six of the seven continents, with Antarctica still on their "wish list." Their next trip will be to San Miguel de Allende in Central Mexico during Easter Week, where they will photograph and paint the colorful religious processions in that area.

THURSDAY EVENING PROGRAM — March 10, 2005
Ludlow Room, Fort Collins Lincoln Center, 417 W. Magnolia Street
Social Gathering - 7:00 PM, Program - 7:30 PM

FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY PROGRAMS AND FIELD TRIPS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.
Visit our website at www.fortnet.org/Audubon



MARCH-APRIL 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 and binoculars and/or spotting scopes if you have them. Carpooling is encouraged. A \$2.00 (unless otherwise specified) contribution per passenger to the driver is suggested. Visit <http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon> for more information. Contact the field trip leader of the field trip you are interested in for signup and trip details or the Field Trip Coordinator, Gary Lefko, at lefkogt@greatpikespeakbirdingtrail.org or 970-897-2454.

3/5/2005 Saturday – Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Cole Wild at birdingwild1@yahoo.com or 970-310-3735. Fort Collin's newest natural area, Bobcat Ridge Natural Area, is projected to be open in 2006. Fort Collins Audubon performs a monthly bird census for the city. **Participation limited.**

3/5/2005 Saturday - Raptors. Leader: Phil Friedman, 970-493-2959 or phifri@frii.com. All levels welcome. We'll travel Larimer County in search of raptors.

3/6/2004 Sunday - Northern Colorado Gulls. Leader: Nick Komar at quetzal65@comcast.net. Join us as we travel northern Colorado in search of gulls. **Participation limited.**

3/20/2004 Sunday - Fossil Creek Reservoir Bird Survey. Leader: Nick Komar at quetzal65@comcast.net. Fort Collins Audubon performs a monthly bird census for the county. **Participation limited.**

4/2/2005 Saturday – Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Cole Wild at birdingwild1@yahoo.com or 970-310-3735. Fort Collin's newest natural area, Bobcat Ridge Natural Area, is projected to be open in 2006. Fort Collins Audubon performs a monthly bird census for the city. **Participation limited.**

4/9/2005 Saturday - Spring Migrants. Leader: Bill Miller at (970) 493-7693 or 5mcorp@verinet.com. Looking for early spring arrivals in Larimer County. **Participation limited.**

Better Living, Better Birding — Lynne Hull, Education Chair

What would you like to learn from FC Audubon? Beginning birding classes? Intermediate "improve your skills" workshops? More field trips aimed at specific skills? Where do you think the gaps are in what's available to you in Larimer County?

We hope to add to Beth Dillon's excellent beginning birding trip workshop and offer more skills workshops and classes if members feel there is a need. I also would like to do some writing, and have guest writers on linking life and lifestyles in Colorado with what's happening with our wildlife and birds. Any comments you have on what you'd like to have available, or feel is missing from the Fort Collins scene, would be greatly appreciated; contact ecoarthull@cs.com or call me at (970) 416-1881 between Feb. 22 and March 4th.

People working on building birding skills may want to check out Nick Komar's field trip on Gulls this month.

Trivia Question (win a prize at our next program meeting for your correct answer):

Can you name five mammal and/or amphibian species that are listed as endangered, threatened or a species of concern in Colorado? (Be prepared to tell us!)

2005 Fort Collins Audubon Canoe Trip

Join us June 10–12 (Friday–Sunday) for a canoe trip on the North Platte River in Wyoming from Saratoga to Interstate 80 (33 miles). The North Platte offers some of the most remote, beautiful scenery and varied river conditions of any river in the West. It gradually emerges from the mountains into a wide picturesque valley, flanked by the Snowy Range to the east and the Sierra Madre Mountains on the west. Bordered by large, spectacular bluffs and lined with cottonwood trees, the river flows through cattle country with its “Big Sky” western vistas. The river is a mixture of placid waters mingled with easy white-water sections. Wildlife is plentiful. In one afternoon, you may see deer, antelope, Great Blue Herons, pelicans, Canada Geese and Bald Eagles. The river is also one of the best trout streams in the West. Centennial Canoe Outfitters (<http://www.centennialcanoe.com>) will provide all safety equipment, river guides, canoes, and great food. Cost of the trip is \$285, of which \$50 is donated back to FCAS. You will need to bring a sleeping bag, tent, and basic personal supplies. The trip is limited to 23 participants, so sign up early to reserve your place. A deposit of \$100 per person must accompany your reservation request, and the balance is due by May 20. For further details, see our website (<http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon>). To register for the trip, contact Centennial Canoe Outfitters, 1-877-353-1850 (toll free) and be sure to refer to the Fort Collins Audubon trip.



A New Benefit for Members Of the Fort Collins Audubon Society



Rocky Mountain Field Seminars is committed to educating the public within the outdoor classrooms of Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado State Parks, and other public land partners. We offer excellent instructors, all highly qualified in their fields of expertise. Join us for an educational adventure you'll never forget! Choose from more than 85 single and multiple-day seminars on natural and cultural history, arts and photography.

New in 2005 – **As a Fort Collins Audubon Society Member, you are entitled to a 20% discount when registering for two seminars.** The discounted seminar may be for a companion or an additional seminar for yourself! Mention this offer when you register to receive your discount. To receive your complete catalog, please see Joel Hurmence at the next chapter meeting, or call the Field Seminars program at 800-748-7002. Seminars are also detailed and available for registration at www.rmna.org. (Note: Discount applies only to instructor portion of the course fee and not to travel, lodging, or film processing costs.)

Spring seminars include:

March 26 -A Day with a Naturalist
at the Denver Zoo, with Kevin J. Cook

April 30 -Fire on the Mountain: Rocky Mountain
National Park, with Scott Sticha

May 6-10 -Desert Sojourn: Utah's Colorado
Plateau, with John Emerick and Delia Malone

May 13 -Birding for Birdwatchers: Denver
Federal Center, with Kevin J. Cook

May 20 -Nature Through a Lens: Denver
Federal Center, with Allan Northcutt

May 21 -Staying Safe in the Presence of
Wildlife, with Kevin J. Cook

May 22 -Birding for Birders: Barr Lake
State Park, with Kevin J. Cook

Conservation Corner — Carol Fiore, Chair

Protecting IBAs will be the Conservation Committee's main focus—our campaign theme for 2005. When we work on conservation issues that protect clean air and water and seek to restore or preserve open spaces, we are helping to protect the beautiful birds we all love. Many of the areas we are seeking to safeguard are important bird habitats, or Important Bird Areas (IBAs).

Our conservation efforts started off a bit slowly in 2004, but by the end of the year, a real committee had been formed and regular meetings were being held. During 2004, the general membership was solicited to sign a petition supporting The Endangered Species Act. We offered our support to a neighborhood in Loveland concerned about rezoning next to Cattail Pond, where trumpeter swans have wintered. The Chair testified in Berthoud and filed a letter on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program. She also attended a lobbying workshop in February of 2004 and recently in 2005.

The committee mailed a letter endorsing H.R. 3324 and H.R. 3337 allowing ranchers with public grazing permits to voluntarily relinquish grazing rights in return for a one-time payment. The legislation would lead to the protection of 261 million acres of public lands. We also mailed comments on the Glade Reservoir Dam Project and the Forest Service roadless rule. Recently, a letter was mailed to the Colorado Wildlife Commission opposing the taking of peregrine falcon chicks from the wild by falconers.

Thanks to the hard work of committee member Todd Ringler, a letter was mailed to the National Park Service backing a proposal for reintroduction of wolves to control overgrazing by elk in Rocky Mountain National Park. In next month's *Ptarmigan*, Dr. Ringler will be writing an article describing the logic behind our decision and just how this solution helps birds. Be assured that our decisions are put before the FCAS Board and that our primary concern is always the protection of the birds.

The majority of the Conservation Committee meetings will be held before the regular program meetings so that more of our membership will have the opportunity to stop by and see what we are working on. We want to hear what you have to say. We are representing YOU, after all! Can't make the meeting, but still want an issue discussed? Call or email the Chair to have your concerns put on the agenda. We need your help in letter writing campaigns, education, attending meetings in various forums, signing petitions, or just telling friends and neighbors what we're doing.

At the February meeting we discussed a recently mailed letter concerning possible changes to Forest Service regulations regarding instream flows, new forest planning rules by the Bush administration, a proposal to build an RV park near the wetlands at the base of the north dam at Horsetooth Reservoir, and a development at the intersection of Hwy 402 and I-25.

The Conservation Committee would like to thank our former President Bill Miller for all the hard work he has done on behalf of conservation over the years. He was a committee of one for years. It is because of Bill that the organization now has a thriving Conservation Committee. Come be a part of it!

Audubon Colorado Centennial Birdathon, April 17-24

To honor National Audubon Society's Centennial Year, Audubon Colorado is hosting a Centennial Birdathon trip to Texas. It is a fundraiser for Audubon Colorado and chapters that choose to participate. Up to 30 participants will collectively recruit 100 sponsors—one for each year of the Society's existence. All of the funds raised by a participant recruited by our chapter will go to our chapter, and funds from participants recruited by Audubon Colorado will go to Audubon Colorado.

The Audubon Colorado Centennial Birdathon will begin in Houston on April 18th for two days of birding around High Island where the spring fallout of migrating warblers is legendary. We will then go by bus to Austin for the endangered golden-cheeked warblers and black-capped vireos before heading to the lower Rio Grande Valley. This Valley is consistently ranked in the top five places for birders because of its diversity and the presence of over 30 species that can't be found anywhere else in the U.S. We will then bus on April 23rd to the coastal town of Rockport, near Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, to catch the last of the migrating Whooping Cranes on April 24th before returning to Houston. Experts at each stop along the way will help us find the maximum number of species.

Audubon Colorado is handling all arrangements during the birdathon, including travel, lodging and food. Each participant must pay the \$1600 trip cost, their own transportation costs to Houston, and must bring pledges of at least \$300 upfront. Each participant will be responsible for recruiting his or her own sponsors. If you are interested in being a participant or becoming a sponsor, please contact Joel Hurmence (970) 481-2124 or jhurmence@hotmail.com.



Fort Collins Audubon Society
 PO Box 271968
 Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968

NON PROFIT
 ORGANIZATION
 US Postage PAID
 Fort Collins, CO
 Permit Number 184

FCAS CHAPTER CONTACTS

President: Joel Hurmence
 970-481-2124
jhurmence@hotmail.com

Conservation: Carol Fiore
 970-461-8760
rockyzoo@earthlink.net

Membership: Kate Bolster
 970-377-9281
katebolster@netscape.net

Field Trips: Gary Lefko
 970-897-2454
lefkogt@greatpikespeakbirdingtrail.org

Birdathon: Phil Friedman
 970-493-2959
phifri@frii.com

Address Changes: John Waddell
 970-226-5917
jwaddell@lamar.colostate.edu

Audubon Society Membership Application

Support FCAS by paying your National Audubon Society (NAS) and/or Chapter (FCAS) dues through your chapter:

- ? **New Member (NAS & FCAS)** \$20
 (Receive *Audubon* magazine and *Ptarmigan*)
- ? **Renewing Member (NAS & FCAS)** \$35
 (Receive *Audubon* magazine and *Ptarmigan*)
- ? **FCAS Chapter Member only** \$15
 (Receive *Ptarmigan* only)
- ? **FCAS may share my name with NAS**

? **Additional donation to FCAS of:** \$ _____
Total enclosed: \$ _____

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____
 Zip: _____ Tel: No.: _____
 E-mail address: _____

? **I prefer to receive the Ptarmigan via the FCAS website, www.fortnet.org/Audubon. Please e-mail me when posted.**

Please make your check payable to FCAS and send along with this form to:

FCAS
PO Box 271968
Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968

FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY PROGRAMS AND FIELD TRIPS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.
 Visit our website at www.fortnet.org/Audubon