

PTARMIGAN



F O R T C O L L I N S A U D U B O N S O C I E T Y

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

OCTOBER 2009

Volume 40 Issue 12

“Birder of the Year”

Connie Kogler

Connie Kogler, responding to a quiz question in *WildBird* magazine, “What was the most unusual bird in your back yard?”, became eligible and WON the Magazine’s **“Birder of the Year”** 2008 contest. The unusual bird—a Streak-backed Oriole, common to habitats 100 miles south of the Mexican border, but **rare** to those in Loveland, Colorado. The PRIZE—a birding trip for two to Costa Rica.

Connie has been feeding birds and building backyard habitats in her backyard for over 30 years. She had the privilege of hosting in her home, a flock of over 400 birders anxious to see for themselves the Streak-backed Oriole, fondly called by Connie, Pedro-Maria,” that spent 26 days in her Loveland, Colorado yard.

Join us Thursday evening, October 8th, at the Lincoln Center, when Connie will share with us photos and narration of her “first-time ever” birding experience outside the U.S. Social time begins at 7:00 p.m. followed by Connie’s slideshow at 7:30 p.m.



“Pedro-Maria” photo by Connie Kogler

THURSDAY EVENING PROGRAM

October 8, 2009

Social hour begins 7:00 p.m.

Presentation: 7:30 p.m.

Fort Collins Lincoln Center-Columbine Room
417 W Magnolia St, Fort Collins, CO

Fort Collins Audubon Society Programs and Field Trips are FREE and Open to the Public.

FCAS welcomes our new Public Relations Chair, Pat Hayward.

You may have encountered Pat guiding a Soapstone Prairie Natural Area tour for the city of Ft. Collins or as a volunteer at the Rocky Mountain Raptor Center. She works with Plant Select (plantselect.org), and now she will be coordinating all the publicity for our chapter. *Thanks, Pat!*



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www.fortnet.org/audubon/
leadership.htm

**Fort Collins Audubon Society
Welcomes New and Renewing Members:**

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Heman P Adams | Carole Hossan |
| Robert E Adel | Joel Hurmence |
| Rick Anderson | William Hurmence |
| Bruce Baker | Sue Kenney |
| Judith Ann Balice | Jessie L Meschievitz |
| Julie Barraza | William H Miller |
| Bonnie Barton | Connie A Murray |
| Ehud Benhur | Brian & Marlene Myres |
| Sarah M Bexell | Denise Ostmeyer |
| Philip R Bigsby | Elizabeth Pruessner |
| Karla Blinn | Judith D Putnam |
| Jana Borland | Eric Roll |
| Jacqueline A Boss | Scott Scharf |
| Robert F Brady | Lynette A Schump |
| Irene F Briggs | Robert M Schurman |
| Tom and Anne Butler | Mark Sears |
| Larry & Margie Caswell | Mary Lou Selch |
| Jon S Cobble | James L Shafer |
| Ruth Dick | Leslye Sherman |
| Beth Dillon S | usan Shriner |
| Nate Donovan | Anne Stewart |
| Kate Dwire | Kimberly Tamkun |
| Libby Edwards | Joann M Thomas |
| James Gano | Barbara J Turnbull |
| Alan Godwin | Karen and Raymond Ungerer |
| Vince Griesemer | Matthew Webb |
| Nancy Hallerman | Robert W Wright |
| Richard Harness | Suzanne Yehle |
| Debra K Holman | |

Thank You for Your Support!

**WANTED: Board Members, Committee Members
Fort Collins Audubon Needs You!**

FCAS will be electing Board members in January, as well as recruiting for various committees. We need your help! Consider serving on the Board, serving on the Nominating Committee, or suggesting people you know are willing to be involved - including yourself. Please contact Ruth Grant - 225-0673 or rabgrant@aol.com.



Greeley Pipeline Threatens Habitat by Carol Jones

Part of the “selected” route for the city of Greeley’s new 30-mile long, 60-inch diameter water pipeline will cut through thick vegetation and decades old 50-foot plus high cottonwoods that fill a narrow corridor near Bellvue. Constructing the pipeline also will destroy a nationally registered historic railroad that runs alongside the Poudre River and a prime riparian habitat.

Much of the pipeline, which replaces an aged one, is already constructed, built in the unusual manner of permitting and constructing in sections instead of as one continuous pipeline. But Greeley ran into roadblocks over the last section—the one with the historic railroad.

Landowners of the selected property had never heard of the pipeline until spring 2007, four years after the project began, when one landowner confronted a trespassing surveyor who claimed that Greeley was looking at 18 different pipeline routes through northern Larimer County. By fall 2007, Greeley chose its route; still, property owners were not contacted. In October 2007, the neighbors heard about, but were not notified of, a meeting at which Greeley made its pitch for the proposed route. Despite presenting Greeley officials with a petition asking them to consider other routes, the city persisted. In June 2009, Greeley presented the landowners with eminent domain papers to gain access for surveying and testing. The city

claims the route they chose is the least disruptive of considered routes.

In an effort to help classify the area as important habitat, Audubon member Nick Komar spent two mornings in early summer identifying birds. Of the 50 birds he listed, Nick identified three species unusual to the area during the breeding season:

- 1) A male black-chinned hummingbird was observed on both dates. A probable female was seen, but not definitively identified, and no nest or young were identified.

— continued on page 4



Railway & Vegetation photo by George Burnette



“Point of Rocks” photo by George Burnette



Greeley Pipeline Threatens Habitat

continued from page 3

- 2) An ovenbird was observed on one of the dates, but probably represented a wandering, non-breeder.
- 3) A male rose-breasted grosbeak was observed tending two fledglings. According to the 1998 *Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas*, only one previous breeding record exists for Larimer County and only five statewide.

The fate of the corridor, the habitat, and the railroad is yet to be determined. The landowners did settle with the city to allow surveying under strict conditions. Upcoming environmental studies and federal rules about historic resources will be critical in the upcoming permitting process. The hope is that Greeley will rethink its route.

Carol Jones, a freelance writer/editor and long-time member of Audubon, is the new editor of Ptarmigan.



Rose Breasted Grosbeak *photo by Nick Komar*

Bird list for proposed Greeley Pipeline site at Brinks property in LaPorte

- 1) American White Pelican
- 2) Great Blue Heron
- 3) Mallard
- 4) Red-breasted Merganser
- 5) Turkey Vulture
- 6) Red-tailed Hawk
- 7) American Kestrel
- 8) Rock Pigeon
- 9) Eurasian Collared-Dove
- 10) Mourning Dove
- 11) Great Horned Owl
- 12) Black-chinned Hummingbird**
- 13) Broad-tailed Hummingbird
- 14) Belted Kingfisher
- 15) Downy Woodpecker
- 16) Hairy Woodpecker
- 17) Northern Flicker
- 18) Western Wood-Pewee
- 19) Cordilleran Flycatcher
- 20) Eastern Kingbird
- 21) Violet-green Swallow
- 22) Northern Rough-winged Swallow
- 23) Cliff Swallow
- 24) Barn Swallow
- 25) Blue Jay
- 26) Black-billed Magpie
- 27) Black-capped Chickadee
- 28) Red-breasted Nuthatch
- 29) White-breasted Nuthatch
- 30) House Wren
- 31) American Robin
- 32) Gray Catbird



Black Chinned Hummingbird *photo by Nick Komar*

- 33) European Starling
- 34) Warbling Vireo
- 35) Yellow Warbler
- 36) Ovenbird**
- 37) Yellow-breasted Chat
- 38) Rose-breasted Grosbeak**
- 39) Black-headed Grosbeak
- 40) Lazuli Bunting
- 41) Spotted Towhee
- 42) Song Sparrow
- 43) Red-winged Blackbird
- 44) Western Meadowlark
- 45) Common Grackle
- 46) Brown-headed Cowbird
- 47) Bullock's Oriole
- 48) House Finch
- 49) Lesser Goldfinch
- 50) American Goldfinch



Education Corner "Mental Snapshots"

by Joann Thomas

It's good to be back!!! New editor, newsletter, Audubon programs... Having been a teacher all of my life, I feel the urges of beginnings in September. But, a look back at the summer brings a smile to my face. Not the knee surgery, no definitely not that. It still hurts; a constant reminder of human frailty. But, physical therapy and workouts hopefully will prevail.

What brings the smiles are the memories of the sea kayak trip sponsored by Audubon. If you've never floated and paddled a sea kayak, you must try. It is an experience that I never thought I'd have in my life. But, here I am with the joyful memories of three days in gentle companionship with fellow Auduboners and my daughter and granddaughter. Without their vigilant assistance, I could never have accomplished the feat. But then, who needs knees floating in the river either in the kayak or in the life vest.

The sea kayak is an amazingly stable two seater. My shipmate, John Waddell, made the steering and paddling easy. And the riffles we went through were easily managed due to the river depth dropping with the end of summer. At day's end, we would walk upstream and float down river back to the campsite. That was a chilling adventure; but, after the chill wore off, it was refreshing and invigorating and wondrous and I could not even feel my knee!

Floating from Fruita to Westwater, we saw every imaginable type of floating device. Everyone waved in the camaraderie of the river...even if you are on the "groover" when they float by. And the wildlife...we watched for one evening a family

of Blue Grosbeaks. The male sat singing on a limb with a huge grasshopper in his mouth. Difficult to imagine singing with a mouthful of food. Then, we found the nest and the female waiting with young in a nearby tree. What a treat! And we were camped right beneath the scene.



Blue Grosbeak
photo by Gary Woods

Next day, we found adult and young Bald Eagles. The young were making begging calls for food while the adults look as if they wished the teenagers would just make the leap for independence. But, the most special occurrence was the discovery of a bear. Our guide, Mike, with 20 years experience, had never seen a bear right along the river. We saw it twice; once, on the gravel bar, and then again, in the shrubs along the river.

Centennial Canoe Outfitters, Inc. donates a percentage of the annual three day August trip to Audubon. Joel Hurmence, our past president, was the prime arranger for this venture. He was unfortunately unable to make the trip this year due to his mother's passing. We missed him!

I look forward to painfree trip next year! I would not miss it. And I hope you won't either. See you on the river!

Upcoming Field Trips for October

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.

October 3, Saturday. Eastern Plains Reservoirs. 7:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Leader: Eric DeFonso. Meeting place TBA. This trip will focus on the numerous productive reservoirs east of the Fort Collins area, like Timnath Reservoir, Lower Latham, Loloff, and possibly Jackson. We will look for late passage migrants like shorebirds, but also other aquatic varieties like waterfowl as well as landbirds associated with the wooded and wet areas near the reservoirs. My trips are all about enjoyment and learning more about birds, regardless of your amount of experience. All levels welcome and encouraged to join! To sign up or get more information, contact Eric DeFonso by email at yoeric@yahoo.com or by phone at (970)-472-1761.

October 11, Sunday. Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Denise Bretting (dbretting@swloveland.com, work: 669-1185, or home: 669-8095). Meet at 7:00 am. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the city of Fort Collins. All levels welcomed and encouraged!

October 22, Thursday. High Plains Environmental Center.
7:00 a.m. Go on a great, relaxing nature walk with friends at the High Plains Environmental Center and its two outstanding reservoirs and restored natural areas near Loveland. Address: 2915 Rocky Mountain Avenue, Loveland, CO 80538. Directions from I-25 North: Right (west) off I-25 at Hwy 34 (exit 257B) heading west. Right (north) at first signal light (Rocky Mountain Avenue) Continue on Rocky Mountain Avenue through FOUR roundabouts. (Medical Center of the Rockies will be on your right.) Left at the first left turn after FOURTH roundabout into office complex. Park in parking lot on right side. For further information, contact Joann Thomas at 970/482-7125 or email at jthomas91@aol.com.



Conservation Corner

by Bill Miller

AUDUBON'S GLOBAL WARMING CAMPAIGN

National Audubon Society has embarked upon national effort to encourage the participation of Americans in the war against Global Warming / Global Climate Change / Global Climate Disruption. In a fact sheet published by NAS it is pointed out that Americans' annual per capita emissions of greenhouse gases is 5.6 tons – more than double the amount produced by western Europeans.

We can all make choices that will greatly reduce our global warming impact. Initially you may pay more up front but you can realize significant energy savings within a few years, if not sooner. Following are some areas in which we can all reduce our impact on the earth's climate.

1. REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE!

- Choose reusable products instead of disposable ones
- Buy products with minimal packaging – buy in bulk or the economy size when it makes sense for you.
- Recycle paper, plastics, newspapers, glass and metals. *Recycling half of your household waste could result in a CO2 reduction of 2400 lb/year*



2. CONSERVE WATER

- Reduce energy consumption by using less hot water. Run the dishwasher only when it is full, and use the air dry option.
- Wash clothes in cold or warm water – never hot. *CO2 reduction = 500 lb/year*
- When its time, replace your washing machine with a new, high efficiency front-loader.
- Install low-flow shower heads. *CO2 reduction = 350 lb/year*



3. TAME THE FRIDGE MONSTER

- New refrigerators use about 50% less energy than those made 10-15 years ago. Look for the Energy Star label to ensure you're getting a high efficiency model.
- Clean the condenser coil regularly to improve the efficiency of the refrigerator by a third.

4. HOME HEATING AND COOLING

- Turn up the thermostat in the summer and turn it down in the winter to reduce cooling and heating costs. Set your thermostat 2 degrees lower in the winter and higher in the summer. *CO2 reduction = 2000 lb/year*
- Install a programmable thermostat to adjust temperatures at night.

"So today, we dumped another 70 million tons of global-warming pollution into the thin shell of atmosphere surrounding our planet, as if it were an open sewer. And tomorrow, we will dump a slightly larger amount, with the cumulative concentrations now trapping more and more heat from the sun. As a result, the earth has a fever. And the fever is rising. The experts have told us it is not a passing affliction that will heal by itself. We asked for a second opinion. And a third. And a fourth. And the consistent conclusion, restated with increasing alarm, is that something basic is wrong. We are what is wrong, and we must make it right."

-- Al Gore, Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech, Oslo, Norway, 10 Dec 2007

Q: How do you convince people that they have something to give?

A: I tell them that they don't need to know everything to start out with because they're never going to anyway. I don't think I'd inspire them if I were unhappy and gloomy. But when you're working on something important, you stop worrying about your own problems. And when people see me having such a good time with all this, it makes them want to do the same. If you don't get involved, you're missing something.

-- Hazel Wolf
- 100 yr old enviro from Seattle

NOTE: Hazel Wolf took her first public stand in 1911 at age 13. She was in the eighth grade and wanted to play basketball. "Girls don't play basketball", her principal curtly responded. "Of course we don't", Hazel responded. "We don't have balls or hoops." Taken back, the principal agreed to help.

- Upgrade the insulation in your house.
- Seal up windows, close vents, and clean filters.
- Avoid using the air conditioner on all but the very hottest days. Ceiling fans are quite effective in making you feel comfortable.
- Set your hot water heater at 120 degrees to save energy. *CO2 reduction(for each 10-degree adjustment) = 500 lb/year*
- Wrap your hot water heater in an insulating blanket. *CO2 reduction = up to 1000 lb/year*



Conservation Corner

continued

5. CHANGE YOUR LIGHT BULBS



Replace all incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent lights (CFLs). Replacing one 60-watt incandescent bulb with a CFL will save you \$30 in energy costs over the life of the bulb. CFLs last 9 times longer than incandescent bulbs, use two-thirds less energy, and give off 70% less heat. It is estimated that if every household replaced just one regular light bulb with a CFL it would eliminated 90 billion pounds of greenhouse gases, the same as taking 7.5 million cars off the road. *My wife and I have realized approximately a 23% reduction in our monthly electric bill by replacing all regular light bulbs with CFLs.*

6. THINK BEFORE YOU DRIVE

- Consider less driving by taking public transportation, walking, bicycling, or carpooling when possible.
- Drive a more energy-efficient vehicle.
- Observe the speed limit, and drive at a consistent speed.
- Keep your vehicle tuned up.
- Keep tires properly inflated.

Every gallon of gasoline saved not only helps your budget, it also keeps 20 pounds of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere.



7. PLANT A TREE

- Leafy trees around your house provide windbreaks and summer shade.
- The average tree removes 330 pounds of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere each year.
- The average tree absorbs ten pounds of pollutants from the air each year, including four pounds of ground level ozone and three pounds of particulates.

8. BUY LOCAL

- As much as possible, buy local produce and other goods. This reduces the amount of fuel used to move goods to market and reduced the energy used for refrigeration.
- Whenever possible select organic produce. Pesticides to kill pests also kill the organisms that keep carbon dioxide in the soil.

9. CUT EMISSIONS IN YOUR YARD



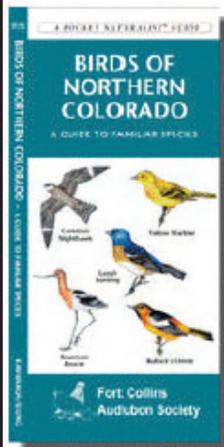
- Keep your gasoline-powered mower well tuned, or
- Replace your gas-powered mower with a manual push mower (you know you need the exercise) or a cordless electric mower.
- Reduce the amount of grass to be mowed by planting native species of ground covers, plants, wildflowers, shrubs and trees for shade, CO2 absorption and improved air quality.
- Water less.
- Mulch gardens with pesticide-free grass clippings. Make your yard organic and eliminate chemical inputs of pesticides and fertilizers.
- Reduce the use of nitrogen-based fertilizers which release nitrous oxide, a potent greenhouse gas.

10. STAND TALL



Your individual actions add up! To reduce global warming pollution we need stoing federal leadership. That will happen only if you act! You can do a lot to press local and state governments, and Congress to curb global warming. Stay informed, write letters and make telephone calls to our elected leaders. Raise the issue at meetings, and support candidates who will take aggressive and far-sighted actions necessary to curb global warming. Sign up for Audubon's E-Activist list at <http://www.audubonaction.org/audubon>

FCAS Pocket Guide to Local Birds
is available at the following retailers,
who are supporting our organization with the sales:



Wild Birds Unlimited
248 E Monroe Drive
(970) 225-2557

Jax Outdoor Gear
1200 N College
(970) 221-0544

Jax Farm and Ranch
1000 N Highway 287
(970) 484-2221

Ranch-Way Feeds
546 Willow Street
(970) 482-1662

**The Matter Bookstore/
Bean Cycle Coffee**
144 N College Avenue
(970) 472-4284

**Bath Garden Center
& Nursery**
2000 E Prospect Rd
(970) 484-5022



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SAVE the TREES for the BIRDS

Ptarmigan Goes Paperless

Beginning January 2010, the Fort Collins Audubon Society will offer the Ptarmigan monthly newsletter primarily ONLINE.

A monthly e-mail announcement will be sent out when the newsletter is posted on the website.

Please let us know your preference by one of the following:

EMAIL: FortCollinsAudubonMembership@gmail.com

PHONE: 970-490-2473

MAIL: send this form to FCAS PO Box 271968, Ft.Collins, CO 80527-1968

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