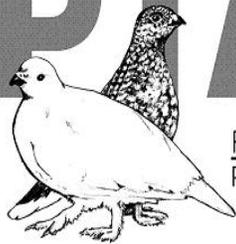


# PTARMIGAN

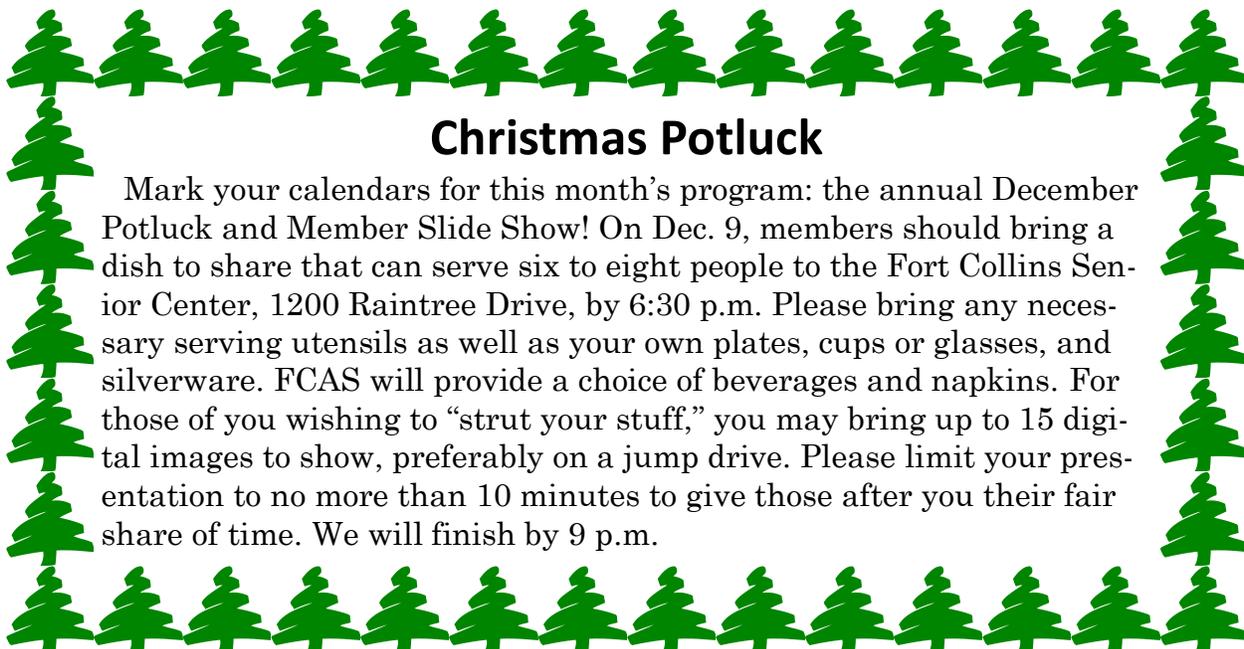


FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 271968 • Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968 • [www.fortnet.org/Audubon](http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon)

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

December 2010

Volume 41, Issue 9



## Christmas Potluck

Mark your calendars for this month's program: the annual December Potluck and Member Slide Show! On Dec. 9, members should bring a dish to share that can serve six to eight people to the Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Drive, by 6:30 p.m. Please bring any necessary serving utensils as well as your own plates, cups or glasses, and silverware. FCAS will provide a choice of beverages and napkins. For those of you wishing to "strut your stuff," you may bring up to 15 digital images to show, preferably on a jump drive. Please limit your presentation to no more than 10 minutes to give those after you their fair share of time. We will finish by 9 p.m.

## Christmas Bird Counts

For this year's 111<sup>th</sup> Christmas Bird Count, FCAS is sponsoring two counts: The Fort Collins CBC will be conducted on Saturday, Dec. 18 and the Loveland CBC will be conducted on Saturday, Jan. 1, 2011. The compilers for the two counts are Tom Hall and Connie Kogler, respectively. Contact Tom at [redbear44@msn.com](mailto:redbear44@msn.com) and/or Connie at



Northern Pygmy-Owl by  
Nick Komar.

[zblueheron@gmail.com](mailto:zblueheron@gmail.com) to participate in either (or both) counts.

Participants are requested to chip in \$5, which is sent to National Audubon to help defray the expenses of publishing the data. After representatives of each team turn in their data, compilers hold "compiling parties," complete with dinner and a good time for all.



## Audubon Colorado Recognizes Legislative Heroes by Ron Harden

On November 4, Audubon Colorado honored five environmental heroes from the 2010 state legislative session who saved Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) from a damaging attack. GOCO has helped preserve Colorado's parks, rivers, trails, and open spaces since 1992, and is 100 percent funded through the Colorado lottery. The heroes are Jen Bolten, Audubon Colorado lobbyist; Ruth Wright, previous senator and current AC Public Policy Committee member; Jo Evan, previous Audubon lobbyist; Rick Daily, author of the constitutional amendment that directed all Colorado lottery proceeds for parks, wildlife, and open space; and Rep. Dicky Lee



Hollingsworth, environmental leader in the House.

During the 2010 session, a bill was introduced that would have diverted lottery monies to weed control districts. While noxious weed control is a desirable objective, the diversion would have set a dangerous precedent by reducing GOCO's only funding source. Fortunately Jen Bolton recognized the threat, rallied the other honorees, and the bill was successfully neutralized.

Fifty percent of lottery proceeds—up to \$35 million—are distributed to GOCO, 40 percent goes to local conservation trust funds, and 10 percent goes to state parks. Colorado citizens have voted three times to specifically designate lottery proceeds for parks, wildlife, and open space. Unfortunately this funding has been attacked several times by anti-environment legislators wanting to divert funds, despite statistics showing that every dollar used by the current lottery money recipients returns five dollars to the state. Attacks on lottery dollars' designation are expected again during the 2011 legislature sessions. Be prepared to voice your support for protecting GOCO's, local conservation trusts', and state parks' lottery funding.

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### Update Your Email Address!

Hey FCAS Members! Are you missing your electronic copy of the Ptarmigan? It could be a problem with your email address. Help us keep your information current by sending your email address to [fortcollinsaudubon-membership@gmail.com](mailto:fortcollinsaudubon-membership@gmail.com). Please include your name and mailing address in the email.



“In America today you can murder land for private profit. You can leave the corpse for all to see, and nobody calls the cops.”

— Paul Brooks, *The Pursuit of Wilderness*, 1971

“Climate change poses clear, catastrophic threats. We may not agree on the extent, but we certainly can't afford the risk of inaction.

— Speech by Rupert Murdoch, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of News Corporation, to his employees, New York, United States, 2007

### Ocean acidification threatens coral reefs

MIAMI — Increasing acidification of the world's oceans could threaten the ability of the world's corals to maintain and create ocean reefs, U.S. researchers say. Particularly worrying to researchers is that acidification, which happens as increasing levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide dissolve in the ocean and form acid, could interfere with coral egg fertilization and larval development, halving the amount of coral produced worldwide by 2050, ScienceNews.org reported.

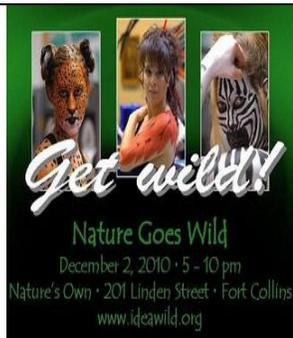


content reflecting conditions expected later this century, a 13 percent drop in successful fertilizing of eggs occurred, Rebecca Albright of the University of Miami says. With carbon dioxide emission growing since the industrial revolution, global seawater has dropped from about 8.2 on the pH scale to between about 8.05 and 8.1, about a 30 percent increase in acidity. While seawater is still basic, and not yet acidic, the change in pH has been enough to have biological effects, researchers say.

Source: Gizmorama, Wednesday, Nov. 10, 2010.

### Nature Goes Wild

I recently received a message from our friend, Wally Van Sickle, founder of IDEA WILD, an organization that raises money and donations of equipment for projects around the world that support biodiversity. Nature's Own, 201 Linden St., Fort Collins, is hosting a fund-raising event for IDEA WILD on December 2 from 5 to 10 p.m. Nature's Own will donate 100 percent of its proceeds to IDEA WILD. Music, free food, and a fabulous selection of wine and New Belgium beers will complement your holiday shopping. I encourage you to visit their Web site at <http://www.ideawild.org>



### Welcome New National Members

FCAS welcomes new National Audubon Society members by sending complementary copies of our newsletter. We invite you to join us at our monthly programs on the second Thursday of the month to find out more about FCAS. National dues do not cover the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter, so if you'd like to keep receiving the *Ptarmigan* please consider joining the local chapter. See the details on the last page of the newsletter or on our Web site:

[www.fortnet.org/Audubon](http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon).



# Turkey Talk

Turkey trot. Turkey talk. Benjamin Franklin was passionate about his choice of the turkey for our national bird. He thought that the Bald Eagle was a bird of "bad moral character," while the Apache Indians refused to use any part of the turkey in their clothing or head dresses because they thought the turkey was cowardly.



What is this bird? Some version of it has been around for 10 million years. Native to northern Mexico and the Eastern U.S., the turkey was a favorite food of the Indians

who first greeted Europeans on the shores of the Atlantic. Their name for the bird sounded like "kirkee," which may have led to the English word, turkey.

The domesticated turkey consumed by 90 percent of Americas on Thanksgiving and 60 percent on Christmas bears little resemblance to the wild turkey. The white domesticated turkey is bred for its large breast meat, the largest one ever weighing in at 86 pounds. These domesticated birds cannot fly with their enlarged breasts. The wild turkey, however, can fly for short distances at 55 mph.

Wild turkeys are woodland birds that suffered near-extinction in the early 1900s due to the rapid deforestation of the east coast. As they do not migrate, flocks were moved across the country until they now occupy 49 of our 50 states. Alaska is the only turkey-less state.

While the females are brown and grey to blend with the forest floor where they nest, the males are flamboyantly feathered. When excited they can erect every one of their 3,500 feathers. Their

heads are covered with a crinkled skin that is colored red, white, and blue. This head skin turns bright red when the bird is excited. The shaggy skin hanging on the neck is called the wattle and is inflated when the bird is excited. There is also a group of feathers on the breast called the beard.

I am as full of turkey trivia as a stuffed turkey. For example: Sesame Street's Big Bird's costume is composed of 4,000 turkey feathers dyed yellow. I may spend the holidays spouting turkey trivia to everyone's moaning! Happy Holidays!

## Birds and Glass

Between 100 million and a billion birds die each year due to collisions with windows and other glass in buildings. These deaths are a significant factor in the dwindling number of wild birds in America. The good news is that you can help prevent some of these deaths.

Birds can't see glass. They often fly into windows because they see the things reflected in the glass, such as trees and sky or they see an apparent passage through a building when two windows are opposite each other.

To reduce this tragic loss of life, glass must be made visible to birds. To learn how to do this, go to <http://flap.org/prevent.htm>.

## FCAS Pocket Guide to Local Birds

Is available at the following retailers who support our organization with the sales:

Wild Birds Unlimited  
3636 S. College Ave  
Ste. C  
(970) 225-2557

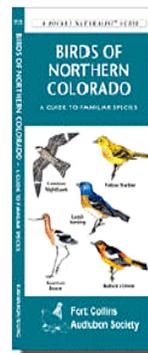
Bath Garden  
Center & Nursery  
2000 E. Prospect  
(970) 484-5022

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

Jax Farm & Ranch  
1000 N. Hwy. 287  
(970) 484-2221

Ranch-Way Feeds  
546 Willow St.  
(970) 482-1662

The Matter Book-  
Store/Bean Cycle  
Coffee  
144 N. College  
(970) 472-4284



# Wanted: A Few Good Volunteers

by Joann Thomas

We have a tentative slate of FCAS officers for 2011 that is as slim as our current budget. As a long-time volunteer coordinator, I know that both money and volunteers come in waves. It's often feast or famine, and it appears FCAS is experiencing famine. We need a few good volunteers to help those of us on the board who are doing double duty.

In the spring this year, I was invited to speak to CSU's Biology Club where I met 18 students with impressive credentials and plenty of enthusiasm. They asked that I speak on the availability of jobs with the Audubon Society. In researching the subject, I found little job opportunity to speak of, but instead found a rich history of the society and the life of James John Audubon.

In doing the research I discovered a new dedication for the passion that is the Audubon Society's legacy. I've always been proud of representing Audubon when I give talks and programs. I'm often touched by the respect that people convey when they discover that I'm from Audubon.

I invite you to share my passion. FCAS has board members who have given their best and

are ready to retire. We need a new treasurer, a field trip coordinator, a volunteer coordinator, a publicity person, and five directors. The treasurer will be trained; the field trip coordinator does not have to be an expert birder, just willing to organize the trip leaders and present a schedule every month. The other positions involve mostly people building and attending meetings.

Our present slate is: President, Bill Miller; Vice-President, Joann Thomas; Secretary, Scott Cobble; Treasurer, John Waddell (until a new treasurer trainee volunteers); Finance, Heman Adams (until a new finance person volunteers); Conservation, Barbara Case; Education, Joann Thomas; Membership, Liz Pruessner; Publicity, Karl Krahnke (part-time until a volunteer appears); Director, Ron Harden; Hospitality, Pat

Adams (who celebrates her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in December); Volunteer Coordinator, Vacant.

I deeply and sincerely hope that some of you who read this will feel stirred to join us in building a Fort Collins Audubon Society for the future. Thank you!



Volunteer Aria Marco and long-time FCAS treasurer John Waddell at the Gardens at Spring Creek Festival. FCAS depends upon and deeply appreciates such volunteers.

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## Extinction of vertebrates examined

From: "Gizmorama" Monday, Nov.1, 2010

NAGOYA, Japan — Twenty percent of the world's vertebrate creatures are threatened with extinction, mostly from human damage to habitats, a conservation summit in Japan heard.

A report from an international team of 174 scientists from 38 countries at the U.N. Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya says losses are due largely to human encroachment on habitat, over-fishing and over-hunting. The report also cited the impact of invasive species in habitats where natural inhabitants have evolved no defenses against the invaders.

Researchers examined 25,780 vertebrate spe-

cies using the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's seven categories for a species' status from "least concern" to "extinct," and found that 52 species of birds, mammals and amphibians move one category closer to extinction each year, with the biggest losses in the tropics. But researchers say that conservation efforts have proved successful in stopping some of the declines and have brought other species a step close to recovery. Ana Rodrigues, a scientist with the Center for Functional and Evolutionary Ecology in Paris, says. "Our results show that conservation efforts are not wasted."





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Join Fort Collins Audubon Society (FCAS), National Audubon Society (NAS), or both. Check all applicable::

**New or renewing FCAS Chapter Member** \$20 (Receive the *Ptarmigan* by email) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Additional Support for FCAS's Mission** \$\_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

**New NAS Member** \$20 (Receive *Audubon* magazine by postal mail) Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Renewing NAS Member** \$35 (Receive *Audubon* magazine by postal mail) Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Enclosed** \$\_\_\_\_\_

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