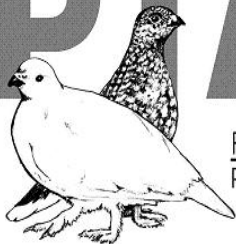


PTARMIGAN



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.

January 2011

Volume 42, Issue 1

The Role of Raptor Rehabilitation in Raptor Conservation

The Rocky Mountain Raptor Program (RMRP) provides an important resource to state and federal natural resource agencies through their activities in raptor rehabilitation. The types of injuries and the locations of the birds are important in tracking the health of regional populations and potential threats. The information RMRP collects from their patients helps the scientific community understand a variety of environmental threats from West Nile Virus to lead poisoning to electric shock injury. In coopera-



Ferruginous Hawk photo by
C. Lisa Winta.

tion with Colorado State University and other agencies, RMRP helps develop treatment regimes that advance avian medicine in areas such as fracture repair and treatment of head trauma.

At the FCAS January 13 event, several raptor species of special concern in Colorado will be discussed. You won't want to miss this educational program as well the opportunity to be "up close" with the live raptors that will be present for the evening! Join us at the Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Dr. at 7 p.m.

An Open Letter to Our Members: We Don't Want to Lose You!

FCAS has hemorrhaged financially over the past few years, primarily due to the cost of putting out a monthly newsletter to over 700 recipients and to reduced contribution levels. Very little of your dues paid to the National Audubon Society (NAS) are returned to chapters. The newsletter is FCAS's largest expense. We anticipate a \$2,100 shortfall between revenues and expenses for 2011. Consequently, FCAS can no longer continue to offer *Ptarmigan* subscriptions to people who join just NAS. In order to continue receiving the *Ptarmigan*, you must take out a FCAS chapter-only membership (\$20/year for the electronic version, or \$30/year for the printed version). This is the only way FCAS can afford to continue publishing the

Ptarmigan. We appreciate your support and look forward to seeing you at our monthly program meetings and on our field trips.

The Role of Raptor Rehabilitation in Raptor Conservation

Presented by RMRP Staff and
Raptor Educational Ambassadors
FCAS Thursday Evening Program

January 13, 2011

Fort Collins Senior Center-Multi-Use Room

1200 Raintree Drive

Social Gathering: 7:00 p.m.

Program: 7:30 p.m.

Elections and Board Member Vacancies

The sad thing about volunteer organizations is that they lose their leaders due to burnout or relocation. FCAS will elect officers and directors this month and we are still looking for members to fill the following positions:

Elected Position:

Director at Large (3): This has generally been a position in which someone new to the board can serve and find out how FCAS operates. The term is for one year.

Appointed Positions:

Field Trip Coordinator (1): The main responsibility is to contact field trip leaders to schedule a field trip each month. The Field Trip Coordinator schedules trips far enough in advance so that they can be listed in the preceding month's issue of the *Ptarmigan*. The coordinator does

not need to be an advanced birder in order to fulfill this role. Field trips, in addition to our programs, are FCAS's most important public outreach efforts. The term is for one year.

Public Relations (1): This individual submits announcements of upcoming program meetings and field trips to newspapers, radio stations, and any other outlets. Program announcements are fed to the PR person by the Program Chair and the Field Trip Coordinator; the PR person does not have to come up with them. Generally submission of the announcements is accomplished by email. The term is for one year.

Please contact Joann Thomas (jthomas91@aol.com) if you are willing to be nominated from the floor during January's elections for one of these positions.



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

Takhi Foals Update

We finally received an update from the managers of the Hustai National Park in Mongolia that they had received the \$250 dollars that FCAS sent to support the adoption and re-



Rlung Rta in foreground.

introduction of two Takhi foals, otherwise known as Przewalski's Horses. The two that FCAS adopted are named Sisi, after the daughter of a Mongolian family living in Fort Collins who lost her life in an auto-bicycle accident in 2009, and *Rlung Rta*, which is Tibetan for "wind horse."



"It is a curious situation that the sea, from which life first arose should now be threatened by the activities of one form of that life. But the sea, though changed in a sinister way, will continue to exist; the threat is rather to life itself."

-- Rachel Carson, (1907-1964) *"The Sea Around Us,"* 1951

"On the island where I live, it is possible to throw a stone from one side to the other. Our fears about sea level rise are very real. Our Cabinet has been exploring the possibility of buying land in a nearby country in case we become refugees of climate change."

-- Teleke Lauti, Minister for the Environment, Tuvalu

State Lottery Funds May Go Up For Grabs

In last month's *Ptarmigan*, an article by Ron Harden, chair of the Audubon Colorado Public Policy Committee (ACPPC), reported that on Nov. 4, Audubon Colorado honored five environmental heroes from the 2010 legislative session. The five saved Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) from raids by the state legislature who were looking for funds from any and all sources to help them provide a balanced state budget. Due to the efforts of the "fabulous five" (my nickname for them) the attempted raid on GOCO funds was unsuccessful.

The ACPPC is anticipating even stronger attempts during the upcoming legislative session to raid the constitutionally protected revenues derived from the Colorado Lottery.

The Colorado Lottery has a long history, dating back to 1976 when voters approved non-tax revenue for parks, open space, and wildlife; however, during the same year, the Colorado Supreme Court ruled it unconstitutional. In 1980 voters approved a constitutional lottery referendum for parks and open space.

In 1982 the Legislature diverted 50 percent of lottery monies for prisons and other capital expenditures, leaving 40 percent for local parks and the remaining 10 percent for state parks. State parks received just three cents of every lottery dollar and lost all of their general fund revenue as well. In 1986 legislation mandated that state parks' share of the lottery must be

spent for new parks, not just for operational expenses of existing parks.

In 1992, citizens placed on the ballot, and passed, Amendment 8 that specified all net proceeds must be spent for parks, wildlife, and open space: 50 percent to GOCO, 40 percent to the Local Conservation Trust Fund and 10 percent to state parks.

In 1993, opponents attempted to subject GOCO to the Taxpayers Bill Of Rights (TABOR). This meant that the budgets of GOCO, state parks, and local governments could not accept the lottery monies unless they cut something else out of their budgets. Fortunately, the net lottery proceeds were exempted from the spending limitations of TABOR.

The citizens of Colorado have voted three times to create a non-tax revenue stream specifically to fund

parks, wildlife, and open space. The lottery originally was created to do just that.

Currently, only part of lottery monies goes to GOCO. GOCO must be protected, but we must protect the rest of lottery revenues also, or we will see irreparable harm come to municipal and county programs as well as to state parks. It took 30 years to establish this funding mechanism.

Stay tuned, and be prepared to weigh in on this issue. Contact Bill Miller at 5mcorp@comcast.net if you wish to be added to an alert notification list.



Deer in Roxborough State Park by Bill Miller.



Return of the Bald Eagles

The migrating Bald Eagles have returned and often there is confusion about their residency. Don't we have Bald Eagles year round? Yes, we do. The Bald Eagles that nest along the Poudre River near Windsor are testimony to their residency. Then, what's all the excitement about "returning eagles?"

The Bald Eagles that return each year to roost on Fossil Creek Reservoir are from Canada. Why do they come? Food! While we have cold weather, the weather in Canada is much colder. With lakes and rivers frozen solid further north, the eagles are hard put to find areas in which to fish.

In addition to a less frozen landscape, we have longer days during which eagles can hunt for food. Fossil Creek is an ideal area. It is a veritable wildlife feast for eagles and includes fish and geese.

Fort Collins has recently assumed leadership in the management of Fossil Creek Regional Open Space and hosts Bald Eagle watches with Master Naturalists to educate and inform. Viewing

scopes and binoculars are available for everyone to use. On November 27, there was one returning eagle.

Last year there were 35 eagles vying for food at the reservoir. The most exciting anecdote from past years records the arrival of two coyotes who wrestled a dead goose from the grip of a feeding eagle. They trotted across the ice as the eagle flew and fussed.



Bald Eagle courtesy of Ft. Collins Natural Areas Program.

Last year two coyotes were seen scavenging under the trees where the eagles sat and consumed fish they'd taken from the areas free from ice on the reservoir. Wildlife experiences and education are always available at the eagle watches at Fossil Creek.

This year on January 15 and February 12, I will be wearing my hat as a Master Naturalist and hosting an eagle watch at Fossil Creek. Join me from 9 to 11 a.m. and learn all about eagles, including why Benjamin Franklin considered the eagle a bird of "bad moral character."

Welcome New and Renewing Members

Christina Andre	Nicholas Komar
Robert Babbs	Ljane M. Low
Bruce Baker	Dave McKean
Julie Barraza	Jesse L. Meschievitz
Ehud Ben-Hur	Arla C. Meyer
Sandy & Miriam Buckland	Connie A. Murray
Vince Cadarette	Dan & Linda O'Brien
Christine Chapman	John Reichhardt
James DeMartini	Robert Righter
Scott M. Farquhar	Rich Roberts
Mary K. France	Judith Sanborn
Thomas A. France	Mary Lou Selch
Lili Francuz	Claudia Strijek
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Godwin	Daniel R. Voss
Edith Israel	John W. Waddell
Gina Janett	Sandra Werkmeister
Sue Ann Kamal	

Thank you for your membership! Your support makes our programs and conservation efforts possible and helps us achieve our mission of connecting people to the natural world.

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

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

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

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

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

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



Winter Bird Classes with Kevin Cook

Enrich your connection to birds, maximize personal accomplishment, and help build the FCAS Scholarship fund by taking birding classes with Kevin Cook. In past years, FCAS has funded teacher education during summers and provided transportation and classes for children at the Environmental Learning Center. It's a win-win deal for us all! Sign up for a class today.

Class 1: Acquiring and Developing Birding Skills

Jan 12: Knowing the Possibilities. Pedagogical premise: you cannot easily identify what you do not know exists.

Jan 19: Information Resources. Pedagogical premise: information can either overwhelm you or become your best friend.

Jan 26: Optical Equipment. Pedagogical premise: your birding experiences will be limited by the kind of equipment you use and how you use the equipment you have.

Feb 2: Going Afield. Pedagogical premise: personal behaviors can either enrich or sabotage birding.

Class 2: Applying Birding Skills

Feb 9: Bird Finding. Pedagogical premise: serendipity has its place, but birding is more gratifying when birds are pursued purposefully and found deliberately.

Feb 16: Bird Identification. Pedagogical premise: identification is a process not an act.

Feb 23: Birding a Place. Pedagogical premise: different kinds of places support different groups of bird species, so any given kind of place requires place-specific birding techniques.

Mar 2: Birding a Group. Pedagogical premise: looking for all birds in a particular group enhances both the motivation to learn and the dedication to spend time afield.

Class Details

1) All classes will be at JAX Outdoor, 1200 N. College, Fort Collins.

2) All class sessions run 6 to 8 p.m. (Sack suppers are always welcome!)

3) Cost varies according to participation: \$8 per session, \$30 per class if all four sessions are paid for at the same time, or \$55

for both classes if all eight sessions are paid for at the same time.

4) A portion of each registration fee is donated to the FCAS's education scholarship fund.

5) To register and reserve a place in any session of either class, call Kevin Cook at 223-8392 during afternoons or evenings.

6) Walk-ins are welcome on a space-available basis.

7) A general class syllabus and specific session syllabi is available the first week of January.



Kevin Cook (foreground) by Joann Thomas.

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. Please include your name and mailing address in the email.



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.



Denver Museum Calls for Contributors to Ornithology Collections

The Denver Museum of Nature and Science has a world-class collection of ornithological materials. Zoological specimens number about 52,000 and include birds, eggs, and nests. Most are from the Rocky Mountains and Great Plains region and were collected before 1950. The [ornithology](#) archival collection includes field journals and bird lists spanning the late 1800s to the present and compiled by most of the important figures in Rocky Mountain ornithology. Archives also include records of the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO) and the Evergreen Audubon, photographs, artwork, films, and publications.

These materials are accessible to birders, banders, scientists, educators, and anyone with an interest in ornithology. Selected archival materials are in the process of being digitized and

made accessible electronically. All issues of DFO's *Lark Bunting* newsletter with meeting records and field reports will be available this way soon.



1925 glass negative of Gray Jay nest and eggs. Courtesy of Denver Museum of Nature and Science.

The Museum wants you to use this material, and it would like you to contribute to it as well. Do you have bird lists, scrapbooks, photos, or other material you could donate? You need not be a famous ornithologist to have records that would prove useful to an understanding of Colorado birds, habitats, and birders. The Museum also invites you to donate any salvaged birds you find which have locality data.

To access or contribute to the ornithology collections at

DMNS, contact either:

Jeff Stephenson, Zoology Collections Manager,

jeff.stephenson@dmns.org or 303-370-8319; or

Kris Haglund, Archivist, kris.haglund@dmns.org or 303-370-8353.

FCAS Volunteer Opportunities

January 29, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Bath Nursery Bird Days. Spend a couple of hours meeting and greeting people. Talk to them about FCAS, help identify backyard birds, and promote the Great Backyard Bird Count on February 18-21.

February 12, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., ReSource Center on North College. Help children build bird houses from materials at the ReSource Center with the Nature and Children's Network.

February 26, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., High Plains Landscape Workshop. This very popular annual event provides FCAS with a great opportunity to promote membership and to sell our publications. Donate a couple of hours of your time.

March 26, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Putnam School Science Carnival. We will host an educational exhibit for this well-attended annual event. It's lots of fun to work with the kids and help them learn about birds.



Liz Pruessner volunteers during the Putnam School Science Fair (Joann Thomas photo).

Changes in Chapter Membership Policy

Because of our limited human resources, we are trying to simplify our membership renewal process. If you took out a chapter membership in the months of September through December of 2010, your renewal date will be January of 2012. All other chapter memberships are due for renewal in January of 2011.



A Gallery of Colorado Raptors

With raptors the theme of this month's FCAS program, it seems a good time to be on the watch for these magnificent birds. Here are a few to get you started! **All photos by Nick Komar.**



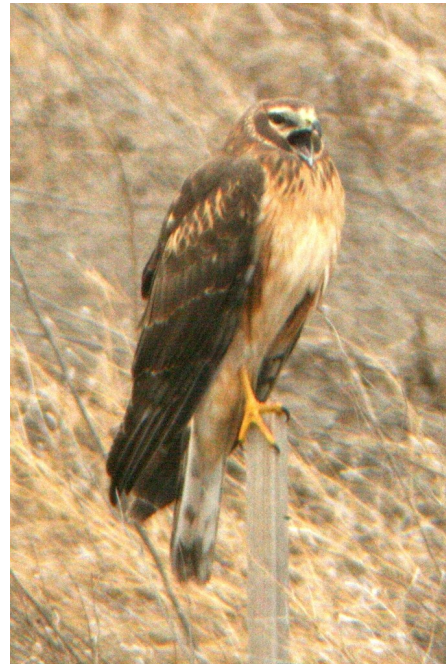
American Kestrel male



Red-tailed Hawk (Harlan's light phase)



Red-tailed Hawk




Northern Harrier female





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Membership Application

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)

☐ **New or Renewing FCAS Chapter Member** \$30
(Receive the *Ptarmigan* by postal mail)

☐ **Additional Support for FCAS's Mission** \$_____

☐ **New NAS Member** \$20
(Receive *Audubon* magazine by postal mail)

☐ **Renewing NAS Member** \$35
(Receive *Audubon* magazine by postal mail)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Total Enclosed \$_____

Please make checks payable to FCAS and mail with this form to:
Fort Collins Audubon Society, P.O. Box 271968, Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968
Membership applications may be completed online at: www.fortnet.org/Audubon