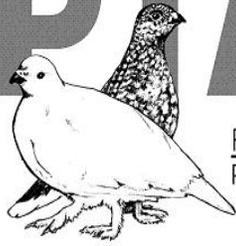


PTARMIGAN



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.

November 2013

Volume 44, Issue 8

“Guatemala - Tikal with Cayaya Birding and Quetzal Tours”

Ann Reichhardt and Sandy Winkler, Presenters

Judy Cannon, Bird Photos Contributor

Thursday, Nov. 14

Fort Collins Senior Center—1200 Raintree Dr.

Social Time: 7 p.m.; Program 7:30 p.m.

In February 2013, Ann Reichhardt, Judy Cannon, and Sandy Winkler took a birding tour to Guatemala organized through Nick Komar's Quetzal Tours. The tour was led by Claudia Avendano and Knut Eisermann of Cayaya Birding who are involved with bird research and habitat preservation efforts. This month's program offers splendid photos of birds seen on the Guatemalan tour.

Ann Reichhardt and her husband, John, began birding in 2008. After living in Estes Park for 32 years, they now are retired and live in Loveland, where they are active in many birding activities, including a Christmas bird count and the Quetzal birding tour to Guatemala. They have realized a surprisingly large number of their modest North American bird list comes from the numerous varieties of birds that make their way to Rocky Mountain National Park and Lake Estes.

Judy Cannon enjoys birding with her husband, Vince, and especially likes to photograph

birds. While working at Kodak, she was introduced to digital photography. She is now retired and can enjoy this hobby fully. At the time of this presentation, Judy and her husband are traveling to Ecuador on another birding tour.

Sandy Winkler became interested in birding while studying wildlife biology at CSU in 1980. She worked for several years as assistant director

of the Rocky Mountain Raptor Program where her love of raptors took flight. After a long hiatus to raise her two sons, she renewed her interest in birding during a wonderful birding trip to Guatemala.

Join us on Nov. 14 for this free program.

The next Quetzal tour in Guatemala is Dec. 7-15. Three seats remain available; contact Nick Komar at info@quetzal-tours.com or 970-449-3645 for information.



Groove-billed Ani by Judy Cannon.

President's Corner

by Joann Thomas

As I reflect on our October program meeting, I feel warm and fuzzy on this windy, wet, cold, cloudy day. Our membership is indeed generous. At the suggestion of one member, we voted to donate \$100 to the rebuilding of Sylvan Dale Ranch. Sylvan Dale owners have been very generous to Audubon by hosting several bird events in the past year. One FCAS member then suggested that we open the fund to individual donations from FCAS members, which we did. Check the newsletter and the website for more information.



When asked to vote on an administrator for handling the Alex Cringan scholarship fund, the membership voted for a board member to handle that task. A board member then suggested that we should develop a matching fund for donations to the scholarship fund to develop its future growth. Again watch the newsletter and website for more information.

After the meeting, I met a new Fort Collins resident who moved here to assist the Poudre School District with development. He is willing to help our scholarship

administrator identify needy areas within the school district that might benefit from our scholarship money.

October's program meeting was filled with activity and ideas from the terrific program on Rock and Canyon Wrens to the ideas for generous giving. Thank you, FCAS members!

Sylvan Dale Ranch

At our October program meeting, FCAS member Star Jorgensen began a grassroots movement requesting that FCAS give a donation to the fund that guests and friends of the Sylvan Dale Ranch have established. Members then voted to donate \$100 to the rebuild of the ranch which was devastated by the recent floods in Northern Colorado. Sylvan Dale Ranch has been a friend of Audubon for many years and recently made the grounds available to us for several birding trips.

To make an individual donation to the recovery fund, use www.sylvandale.com/blog/tag/donation/ and scroll down through story <http://www.youcaring.com/help-a-neighbor/sylvan-dale-ranch-recovery-fund/88307/>.



Flood damage to Sylvan Dale's Wagon Wheel Bunkhouse

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Hospitality Volunteer Needed!

FCAS needs a volunteer to help with refreshments for our program meetings from January through May 2014. We will supply funds for the refreshments. All that is required is to arrive in time to set up the refreshment table by 7 p.m. for the program meetings and then clean up after the meeting. Help out the chapter by volunteering and make everyone happy by serving goodies! Contact any board member at the next meeting or send an email to fortcollinsaudubon-membership@gmail.com to volunteer for this vital position.



“The long fight to save wild beauty represents democracy at its best. It requires citizens to practice the hardest of virtues—self-restraint. Why cannot I take as many trout as I want from a stream? Why cannot I bring home from the woods a rare wildflower? Because if I do, everybody in this democracy should be able to do the same. My act will be multiplied endlessly.”

-- Edwin Way Teale, Pulitzer Prize winning naturalist and photographer, in his *Circle of the Seasons* - 1953

Endangered Species Act

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) will celebrate its 40th birthday next December. The ESA was signed into law on Dec. 28, 1973, by President Richard Nixon to protect critically imperiled species from extinction as a result of “economic growth and development untempered by adequate concern and conservation.”

Starting in the early 1900s, the near extinction of bison and the disappearance of the passenger pigeon helped drive wildlife conservation. Ornithologist George Bird Grinnell wrote conservation articles that appeared in the magazine, *Field and Stream*. The efforts of Grinnell and other such early writers and speakers introduced the public to a new concept: extinction.

Hunting for plumes and meat for the table was one part of the problem. Early naturalists were killing birds and other wildlife for study, personal collections, and museum pieces. Habitat loss resulted from growing communities and farmland. Increased use of pesticides as well as the introduction of non-native species also had negative consequences for wildlife.

The Whooping Crane received early widespread attention. After being pushed to the brink of extinction by 1941 by unregulated hunting and loss of habitat to just 21 wild and two captive birds, conservation efforts led to a limited recovery. In 1957, the Whooping Crane was featured on a U.S. 3-cent postage stamp supporting wildlife conservation. As of 2011, there are an estimated 437 birds in the wild and more than 165 in captivity.



Whooping Crane from Wikimedia Commons.

The first federal law to regulate commercial animal markets was the Lacey Act of 1900 that prohibited interstate commerce of illegally-killed animals, animal parts, fish, and plants. It was followed by the Migratory Bird conservation Act of 1929, a 1937 treaty prohibiting the hunting of right and gray whales, and the 1940 Bald Eagle Protection Act.



Congress passed the Land and Water Conservation Fund in 1964, which provided funds and matching grants to federal, state, and local governments for acquiring land, water, and easements for all Americans.

In 1966, Congress passed the Endangered Species Preservation Act, which authorized the listing of endangered domestic fish and wildlife, allowed the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to buy habitat, and directed federal land agencies to preserve habitat. In March 1967, the first list of 78 endangered species was issued.

However, listed animals were not effectively protected, so the program was expanded by the Endangered Species Conservation Act of 1969 to provide additional protection to species in danger of “worldwide extinction” by prohibiting their import and sale in the United States.

Ultimately, Congress passed the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to protect species and “the ecosystems upon which they depend.”

Although problems continue in the fight to protect species, several have increased population since being placed on the list, including Bald Eagle, Whooping Crane, Kirtland’s Warbler, and Peregrine Falcon.



Life as a Painted Bunting

It is a windy, wet, cold, cloudy day outside. I make no beans about it—I prefer to be a fair weather birder. That does not mean that I never go afield in bad weather, but I prefer not. The day we birded at 13,500 feet in the cloud forest of the Ecuadoran Andes was windy, wet, cold, and cloudy—but, hey, it was the Andes!

Reminiscing about past wonderful birding experiences on nasty weather days makes me feel warm and sunny. This morning, as I was making the bed with my many quilted pillows, I thought of my first and only Painted Bunting. I discovered it in the Avery Island swamp of Louisiana and shared the experience with my lifelong best friend, Vondelle.

While living in Houston, I studied birds with John Tveten a retired Exxon engineer who passionately practiced his avocation of bird photography. Vondelle flew to Houston where we planned a car trip following the Gulf Coast from Galveston to New Orleans. Determined to stay as close to the water as possible we sometimes faced roads covered with sand and, in some cases, had to drive on the beach with no visible road.

Several years after we accomplished our feat, a hurricane wiped out any possibility of passage. Our trip now would be impossible without an air boat and dune buggy. Needless to say, I had several life birds on that trip, including a Purple Gallinule. My friend, who was not a birder, says she remembers how adventurous we were plowing through the sand and she remembers the special bird we saw on Avery Island.

After seeing John Tveten’s photo of the Painted

Bunting, I knew that it was a target bird for me. It was so colorful. What I did not know was how beautifully it sang! So, as we wound our way driving through the swamp on Avery Island and pausing to look around, we heard a sweet melodious bird song. I searched trying to find where it was, and there on the top of a piece of tall swamp grass bobbed this stunningly beautiful

bird. Having just studied it in Peterson’s bird guide, I knew it was mine—my bird—the Painted Bunting.

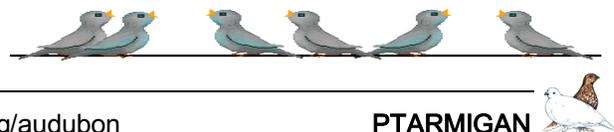
Vondelle whispered, “We can stay here as long as you want.” I hardly heard her; I was so completely entranced by this wonder of nature. Color and sound combined to assault the senses as I tried to burn this experience into my memory. We sat, not

moving, listening and looking, until the bird tired of its bobbing perch and flew away.

Yes, the memory of the bird fades, but the memory of the experience has never faded. I was a beginning birder entranced by a bird almost too beautiful to imagine and too sweet sounding to believe. This year I received a phone call from Vondelle. She and her husband Bill were almost to Fort Collins and wanted to visit. It had been many years since we saw one another in person, and as we sat around the fire in my back yard, reminiscing about our pasts together, she recalled our great adventure on roads now nonexistent and the beautiful bird we watched and heard. “What was it called?” she asked. “Painted Bunting,” I replied, and I felt a piece of my life come full circle.



Painted Bunting from All About Birds.



Costa Rica Birding Adventure

FCAS invites our membership to join Quetzal Tours in a birding adventure to Costa Rica, April 5-14, 2014. The tour will visit La Selva Biological Station, the Talamanca Mountains, Carará Na-



Turquoise Cotinga by Noel Ureña.

tional Park, and the Tarcola River, led by master birding guide Noel Ureña. Expect to see over 300 bird species including plenty of quetzals and macaws! The tour is limited to eight persons, and will raise funds for FCAS. Request a detailed itinerary and register for the tour with Quetzal Tours (contact Nick Komar at info@quetzal-tours.com or call 970-449-3645).

FCAS Welcomes New and Renewing Members

Robert Beauchamp
William J Henderson
Nathan Hoeme
Charles Kopp
Carol Skadsem
Daniel R Voss

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 welcomes new National Audubon Society members with one complimentary copy of our newsletter. Join us on the second Thursday of each month to find out more about FCAS. National dues do not cover the cost of producing the newsletter, so to keep receiving the *Ptarmigan*, please support your local chapter and subscribe to the newsletter. See the details on the last page of the newsletter or on our website at www.fortnet.org/Audubon.



Upcoming Field Trips

Nov. 10, Sunday, Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Denise Bretting, dbretting@swloveland.com, work: 970-669-1185, home: 970-669-8095. Call for any change. Meet at 7 a.m. in the parking lot. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the City of Fort Collins. All levels are welcome.

Nov. 23, Saturday, "All A-Bird" for Geese and Ducks. Leader: John Shenot, johnshenot@gmail.com, 970-682-2551. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the north end of the Harmony Road Transfer Center parking area to carpool, or call John on Friday to learn the site of the first stop and meet us there. Exact locations will be decided on trip day to maximize chances for success.

Dec. 7-15, Guatemala Birding Adventure. Three spots still available. Contact Nick Komar, quetzal65@comcast.net. Quetzal Tours donates to FCAS for each person who signs up.

Christmas Bird Counts

The 114th annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count will take place Dec. 14 to January 5, 2014. The Fort Collins count is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 14 and will be coordinated by Tom Hall (redbear44@msn.com). The Loveland count will be on Wednesday, Jan. 1 and coordinated by Nick Komar (quetzal65@comcast.net). Details on the Rawhide count were not available when this article was written but will be provided in the next issue of the *Ptarmigan*. Mark the dates now and contact Tom or Nick if you want to participate in these special events!

FCAS Pocket Guide to Local Birds

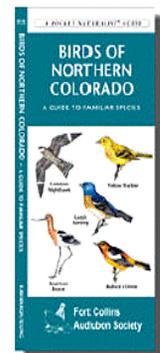
Is available at the following retailers who support our organization with the sales:

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

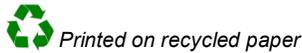
Jax Mercantile
950 E. Eisenhower
Loveland
(970) 776-4540

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

Jax Farm & Ranch
1000 N. Hwy. 287
(970) 481-2221



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



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 FCAS *Ptarmigan* by email

- New or Renewing FCAS Chapter Member** \$30
 Receive the FCAS *Ptarmigan* by mail

- Lifetime FCAS Chapter Member** \$750
 Receive the FCAS *Ptarmigan* by email
 or receive the FCAS *Ptarmigan* by mail

- Additional Support for Alex Cringan**
Fund natural history education grants \$_____

- New NAS Member**
 Receive the NAS *Audubon* by mail \$20

- Renewing NAS Member**
 Receive the NAS *Audubon* by mail \$35

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____

Phone # _____

Email: _____

May we send you FCAS email alerts if updates occur for field trips, programs etc.?
Yes or **No**

May we contact you if volunteer opportunities occur from helping at events to contacting legislators on important environmental issues?
Yes or **No**

Total Amount Enclosed: \$_____

Please make your tax-exempt check payable to **FCAS** and mail with this form to **FCAS, P.O. Box 271968, Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968**. Your cancelled check is your receipt. All renewals are due in January. New memberships begun after August 31st extend through the following year. Applications can be completed at www.fortnet.org/Audubon