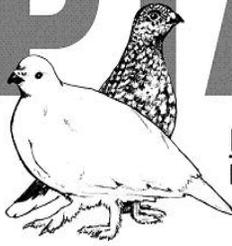


# PTARMIGAN



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.

April 2014

Volume 45, Issue 4

**Rick Harness, Wildlife Biologist, EDM International, Inc.**

**Presents**

**“Patagonia—Condors to Penguins”**

**Thursday, April 10**

**Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Dr.**

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

Raptor electrocutions continue to be a persistent problem both nationally and throughout the world. In some locations, electrocutions can affect populations. In September 2013, raptor electrocution data was collected from South American biologists on species that included the Chilean Eagle and the endangered Crowned Eagle. A workshop was then held in Patagonia, South America to address common

problems. Rick Harness will provide a brief synopsis of the problems and solutions, and offer a glimpse of Argentina from the western Patago-



**Magellanic Penguin by Rick Harness.**

nian mountains near Bariloche to the eastern coastal dunes of the Valdes Peninsula. Birds included in this presentation will run the gamut from Andean Condors in Nahuel Huapi National Park to Magellanic Penguins nesting at a World Heritage Site near Puerto Piramides during Southern Right Whale migration.

Join us at the Fort Collins Senior Center on April 10 at 7:30 p.m. for this interesting and informative presentation. There is no fee for the program and it is open to the public.



**Andean Condor by Rick Harness.**

**FCAS welcomes new National Audubon Society members** by sending complimentary copies of our newsletter for one month. 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* after the complimentary issue, 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](http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon)

## President's Corner

by Joann Thomas

On Thursday, March 13, Jenn Bolton, our lobbyist in Denver visited Fort Collins. She spent a couple of hours talking to the board at dinner and then spoke to the membership at the program meeting. What an eye opener!

For starters, she told us that this year was going to be an easy year because politically both parties are choosing to make no waves: the Democrats fearful that they will lose seats and the Republicans fearful that they won't gain seats.

Jenn described a typical year for a lobbyist. In July, she begins reading up on the possible issues that will be presented as bills to the assembled legislature. By September, the members themselves are meeting in small committees to formulate these bills. From then until January, when the legislature assembles, she spends her time staying touch with the issues and the people so that she is prepared for what will be presented in January.

She creates a list of possible bills that she then presents to Audubon Colorado Council, whose chair is our own Ron Harden. The Public Policy Committee then chooses which five bills (it often grows to 12 bills) are the most crucial either to ensure defeat or passage. Then her salaried work

begins. From January to May—yes, that's right; she is paid only for those five months—her days can be 20 hours long as she aggressively fights for the environment!

Jenn is one of a list of four lobbyists for Audu-

bun which represents the longest running lobby in Denver. She is dedicated and knowledgeable—following in the footsteps of her mother who was Audubon's previous lobbyist.

Thank you, Jenn Bolton, for your commitment to keep Colorado clean and green for the future!

## Lobbyist Link

### 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



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For other FCAS contacts visit [www.fortnet.org/audubon/leadership.htm](http://www.fortnet.org/audubon/leadership.htm)

### Wildscaping 101 Workshop

Learn how and why to provide habitat for songbirds and pollinators, while reducing irrigation needs and saving water.

**April 9, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.**

Sponsored by: Fort Collins Water and Utilities/Gardens at Spring Creek/FCAS



Midtown Arts Center  
3750 S. Mason Street, Fort Collins  
Contact Laurie D'Audney at (970) 221-6877  
to register for this free workshop.



## Conservation and Politics in the West

Western states will play a key role in politics this year, and conservation issues could heavily influence 2014 election results.

A recent poll conducted by the Colorado College State of the Rockies Project Conservation in the West<sup>1</sup> “explored voter attitudes in six Western



Photo courtesy of Colorado.edu

Arizona, and Montana were polled on such issues as land and water use, air quality, governance of conservation, oil and gas development, and public lands’ impact on the economy.

The results of the poll<sup>2</sup> indicate that developing energy and protecting public and private lands are key “vote motivating” issues, and “...that voters are far more likely to show support for candidates who seek to protect natural areas and public lands while proceeding with energy development.” Energy development, especially hydraulic fracturing (fracking), has come under intense review in Colorado and other parts of the West.

While still encouraging energy production in their respective states, respondents clearly indicated they are more likely to vote for a candidate who would promote alternative or renewable energy. This view extended across party lines. However, when asked whether or not to reduce “red tape” associated with oil and gas development, there was a clear division along party lines. Republicans are more likely (73 percent) to favor a reduction of red tape whereas Democrats are less likely (33 percent).

Westerners may be diverse politically, but the poll’s results show they stand united on their love for the land. “More than half (52 percent) say that environmentally sensitive places on

public lands should be permanently protected when energy production is allowed.”

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responsible for balancing oil and gas drilling with the protection of millions of acres of public land as well as the fish and wildlife on those lands. In areas where there could be disputes “over the best use of the land,” the BLM is implementing a new tool called a Master Leasing Plan (MLP)<sup>3</sup>. Before drilling can be considered, an MLP would delineate areas “appropriate for oil and gas drilling and create protections where needed for

wildlife, water and historic sites.” Local governments and businesses, the public, and oil and



Photo courtesy of kunc.org

gas companies would be able to provide input in the design of each MLP. A majority of voters polled in each of the six states strongly support MLPs.

“Congressional candidates would be wise to consider their position on conservation and land-use issues carefully,” said Colorado College Economist and State of the Rockies Project Director Walter E. Hecox. “Westerners want their air, water, and land protected, and where a candidate stands on these issues could potentially sway votes.”

<sup>1</sup><http://www.coloradocollege.edu/newsevents/newsroom/conservation-issues-could-impact-2014-election-results-cc-poll-shows#.UydeFs7y0zd>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.coloradocollege.edu/other/stateoftherockies/conservationinthewest/topicreports/conservation-and-voting.dot>

<sup>3</sup><http://www.coloradocollege.edu/dotAsset/525b80a5-f29b-4587-a1c8-16d1dd0cff46.pdf>



It's the Little Things that Count!

We left Colorado in rain, snow, and fog—and returned a week later in rain, snow, and fog. Not that I don't love this state, but gee whiz, could we get a break? Returning from Florida in mid-March, we had great memories of our trip, the ocean, the birds, and the Scottish music. My brother told me they had seen their first Swallow-tailed Kite already; we saw two Wood Storks and two River Otters.

Those were the highlights. Lots of sun, warmth, moist salty air and then home. So I had to set out to see what was arriving here. Birds are singing wildly in my neighborhood with Flickers calling and rat-a-tat-tatting! They are already cleaning out the two condos in my almost completely dead crab apple tree. The House Finch males are brilliantly red as they call for mates. And, the House Wren that had so carefully nested on my front door wreath a year ago keeps flitting back and forth to the new wreath. I do not think she will be successful because my house is too active. Her success in nesting there last year was dependent on my being away for two weeks. No quiet times this year.

Scott Cobble accompanied me on a short impromptu birding trip this week. We spotted Wid-geon, Buffleheads, Common Mergansers, Mal-

lards, and some that we could not identify due to facing west into the sun and lack of binoculars. Hmm! Does "be prepared" ring a bell?

I have now put my backpack with binoculars and book into the car. Nothing is as frustrating to a birder as not being able to identify each bird. But, our misadventure gave us some ideas. We would agree on the small details that we could identify and check with the field guide on my iPhone. So we discovered lots were possible. For example, what is that bird that appears in the

bright western sun to be black and white, small, and diving? Well, we could see that the part of the body that was in the water was white: a Bufflehead!

I thought of the other little details that make a difference in identifying birds without binoculars and/or books. For example, the Downy Woodpecker has a shorter beak than the Hairy Woodpecker. The Western Grebe has black on its head that circles below the eye, while the Clark's Grebe has black that circles above the eye.

I do now have to get centered on the here and now. Florida dreams of oceans, warm breezes, great seafood, and family are great memories, but this is here and now and we have birds to identify!



Downy Woodpecker by Bill Miller.



Hairy Woodpecker by Bill Miller.

FCAS Welcomes New and Renewing Members

- Sarah Allely
- Donald Beaver
- Charles Calisher
- Larry & Margie Caswell
- Gary Ellingson
- Ray & Joan Glabach
- Robert Gobeille
- David Hartley
- Melannie Hartman

- Jane Hawk
- Lynne Hull
- Ken Jackson
- Sue Kenney
- Nicholas Komar
- Carole Machala
- Marcia & Ron Maeda
- Jessie Meschievitz
- Kerry Miller

- Lynn Morales
- Larry Moskowitz
- Patricia R. Nelson
- Jana Palermo
- Phil Phelan
- Donald & Liz Phillips
- Helmut Retzer
- Jim Shafer
- Linda Stangel



## Upcoming Field Trips

All field trips are free of charge (unless otherwise noted) and open to the public. All experience levels are welcome. Bring snacks or lunch, water, binoculars, and spotting scopes. Visit [www.fortnet.org/Audubon](http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon) for more information and updates. RSVP is recommended.

**April 13, Sunday, Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey.** Leader: Denise Bretting, [dbretting@swloveland.com](mailto: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. Future Surveys at Bobcat Ridge: Sunday, May 11 (7 a.m.); Sunday, June 8 (6:30a.m.).

**April 19, Saturday, All A-Bird to Douglas Reservoir State Wildlife Area.** Leader: John Shenot, [johnshenot@gmail.com](mailto:johnshenot@gmail.com),

970-682-2551. This reservoir attracts an interesting mix of species and more than its share of local rarities. We'll look for ducks, raptors, sparrows, and other early migrants. Meet at 7 a.m. at the parking area on the



Red Crossbill by Cole Wild.

south end of the reservoir. Carpool if possible.

**May 16, Friday, Soapstone Prairie Natural Area.** Leader: Aran Meyer, City of Fort Collins Biologist. Reservation required; space is limited to 12 people. To reserve a space on this special trip, contact John Shenot, [johnshenot@gmail.com](mailto:johnshenot@gmail.com), 970-682-2551. Trip will begin on-site at 9 a.m. and end at approximately 2 p.m. Additional details will be provided to those who make a reservation.

**May 17, Saturday, Gateway Natural Area.** Leader: Bob Righter, [rorighte@earthlink.net](mailto:rorighte@earthlink.net), 303-908-1667. This trip will begin at 8 a.m. at the parking area just past the tollbooth. Note that Gateway is a fee area (\$5/vehicle) and consider carpooling. Bring a lunch and expect to walk at least a mile.

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## Andes of Ecuador Excursion, August 2-10, 2014

This August, join fellow Auduboners in Ecuador's Andean peaks and cloud forests. Quetzal Tours is offering an eight-day, relaxed birding adventure to Ecuador, led by the bilingual Ecuadorian birding guide, Xavier Muñoz. This unique experience at a low price (just \$2200 per person) also serves as a fundraiser for FCAS as a portion of the proceeds will be donated to FCAS.

Locations to visit include Mindo, Nanegalito, Papallacta Pass, and Guacamayos Pass. Birding highlights will include brightly colored tanagers, hummingbirds, and quetzals, many of which can be seen at close range for breathtaking photography.

Ecuador has the highest biodiversity in the world, hosting more bird species than any other country! The tour is limited to six customers in order to guarantee a quality, personalized experience. Add-on guided birding excursions to the Amazonian rainforests or the Galapagos Islands also can be arranged for those who can stay longer. For information or reservations, contact Nick Komar at [info@quetzal-tours.com](mailto:info@quetzal-tours.com) or 970-449-3645.



Giant Antipitta  
by Nick Komar.

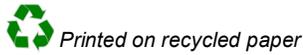
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## Highlights of Recent Field Trips \_\_\_\_\_ by John Shenot

The only FCAS field trip since our last newsletter was the monthly survey at Bobcat Ridge on March 16. Twelve avid birders were greeted at the parking lot by a singing Canyon Wren. In addition to that beautiful song, other highlights of the day included great weather, a visit from an early migrant (Mountain Bluebird), and sightings of several Bobcat Ridge regulars: Bushtits, Clark's Nutcrackers, Red Crossbills, Pygmy Nuthatches, and Golden Eagles.



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: \_\_\_\_\_

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

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Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

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