

PTARMIGAN



FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. Box 271968·Fort Collins,CO-80527-1968·www.fortcollinsaudubon.org

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

January 2016

Volume 47, Issue 1

FCAS Presents

Dr. Jennifer Barfield, CSU Professor

**“Bison in Your Backyard: Preserving an Icon
in Northern Colorado Public Spaces”**

Thursday, Jan. 14

Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Dr.

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

Dr. Jennifer Barfield will tell the story of the creation of the new Laramie Foothills Bison Conservation herd. A brief history of bison and the importance of the Yellowstone bison will be discussed as well as an explanation of the reproductive technologies being used to preserve these bison at Colorado State University. Ecological and social science associated with the new bison herd also will be highlighted.

Jennifer Barfield, originally from North Carolina, began her career in reproductive physiology at North Carolina State University where she received her bachelor's degree in animal science. She completed a PhD in conservation biology at the University of New Orleans and began



**Bison in Your Backyard:
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Northern Colorado
Public Spaces**

a postdoc at Colorado State University. She spent six months at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Animal Germplasm Program followed by two months at the New Bolton Center at the University of Pennsylvania before returning to CSU

as a faculty member in 2011. She is currently a special assistant professor in the department of Biomedical Sciences where her research focuses on assisted reproduction in bison, cattle, horses, and various exotic species. She also has co-founded a professional master's program in assisted reproductive technologies, which began in August 2013.

Join us on Jan. 14 at the Fort Collins Senior Center for this free program open to all.

President's Corner

by John Shenot

As I start my second year as FCAS President, my thoughts turn to transitions and New Year's resolutions.

This year we will see some significant changes on the FCAS board and committees. Most notably, Joann Thomas has chosen to step down from the board after eight years of exemplary service, including as our most recent ex-president. Joann has also chaired our education committee and has been tireless in representing FCAS at educational events, most of which serve people who are not (yet?) FCAS members, and that our members rarely hear about. Joann's leadership and enthusiasm will be missed; though she remains an FCAS member and an active volunteer. (Note: other changes to our leadership will be more apparent after the membership votes for a new slate of board members and officers at our January meeting.)

I'm making a number of New Year's resolutions, both personal and FCAS-related. In 2016, I resolve to follow through on FCAS' strategic priorities, which I described in a recent newsletter. In particular, I'm determined to beef up our fundraising and to finish the job of getting the Cache la Poudre Urban River Corridor designated as an "important bird area." On a more



personal level, I'm determined to improve my birding-by-ear skills in 2016. I also plan to learn to identify more tree species—something I should have learned long ago. And finally, I resolve to find and document the first Colorado record of a Brown Kiwi. What are *your* New Year's resolutions?

Chapter Elections

Each year we go through an election process to either add members to the chapter's Board of Directors (BoD) or to fill vacancies. Officers and directors-at-large are elected for one-year terms, except for the president who serves a two-year term. John Shenot is entering the second of his two-year term; a president-elect should be elected to serve during the John's second year. Committee chairpersons, and chairs of special and ad hoc committees are appointed by the president.

A nominating committee has been encouraging chapter members to either run for an elected officer or director position, or to serve as committee chairpersons or members. A list of board positions, candidates, and committee chair follows. Vacancies for 2016 are shown in italics.

Elected: President, John Shenot; Vice-President, Liz Pruessner; *President-Elect*; Secretary, Scott Cobble; Treasurer, John Waddell; Directors, Alan Godwin, Ron Hardin, Bill Miller, Hildy Morgan (*two director positions open*).

Appointed: Conservation, Barb Adams; *Education*, Field Trips, John Shenot; Finance, John Waddell; Membership, Liz Pruessner; Programs, Jessie Meschievitz; Publicity, Jessie Meschievitz; *Hospitality*; *Scholarship*; *Volunteer Coordinator*; ACC Delegate, Bill Miller; *ACC Alternate Delegate*.

Some members have stepped forward to serve
Elections continued on page 4.

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www.fortcollinsaudubon.org

Visit us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/FortCollinsAudubonSociety>



Go Green in 2016!

January is the month of new beginnings, offering opportunity to reflect on the past while shaping the future by purging out the old and welcoming in the new. This year, why not resolve to go green in 2016?

Traditional resolutions often focus on losing weight, exercising more, quitting smoking, spending less money, or spending more quality time with family and friends.



Photo from <http://mysidewalk.com>

Definitely all worthwhile resolutions, but this year, why not add a green resolution by pledging to practice more conservation-minded practices in your life?

Eco-resolutions such as reducing energy consumption, using less water, and recycling are great ways to help conserve and protect the environment. Replace standard, incandescent light bulbs with Energy Star-rated bulbs. Outdoors, use solar or low-voltage lighting to illuminate walk paths. They're not only more efficient, but are aesthetically pleasing while attracting fewer insects. Run washing machines and dishwashers only when full, preferably during non-peak hours. Take shorter showers instead of baths and don't allow water to flow freely when brushing teeth or washing dishes. Invest in Energy Star-rated appliances when replacing old ones, use programmable thermostats for heating and cooling, and make use of the 300-plus days of sun in Colorado to help heat your home during winter months. And don't forget to reduce, reuse, and recycle—the 3 R's of helping the environment.

Another way to go green in 2016 is to add the practice of "eating green." No, I'm not referring to eating only broccoli and celery stalks. If you eat out more often than not, why not commit to making more home-cooked meals? You'll not only

save time and money, you'll be reducing your carbon footprint while having the health benefit of controlling how much fat, sodium, and junk food you consume. And don't forget to BYO bag lunch to work or school. Choosing to eat green might even have the added benefit of helping you lose weight, if that's one of your other resolutions!



Photo from <http://tweakyourbiz.com>

Want to do something really good for the environment and help wildlife? Plant trees and/or xeriscape. The U.S. Department of Energy (<http://www1.eere.energy.gov/library/pdfs/16632.pdf>) points out that "...landscaping may be your best long-term investment for reducing heating and cooling costs." Trees provide oxygen, help clean pollutants from the air, prevent soil erosion, and provide habitat for many species of mammals and birds. In addition, "...a well-designed landscape...will reduce consumption of water, pesticides, and fuel for landscaping and lawn maintenance, and help control noise and air pollution." Xeriscaping, which originated in Colorado, uses water-efficient species of plants which are often native to the area. For more information on xeriscaping in northern Colorado, contact the Colorado State Extension office (<http://www.ext.colostate.edu/ptlk/1907.html>).

This year make a resolution to go green in 2016! You'll not only reap the benefits of healthier living, but you'll help preserve precious resources while protecting the environment. Who knows, by resolving to go green, this might be the year you keep all your resolutions!

Thanks New and Renewing Members

Cheri Orwig
Elizabeth Pruessner
Doug Swartz

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.



Birding in the Internet Age

It's a cliché that bad news travels fast, but these days bird news travels even faster. How is it that some folks know almost immediately if a rare bird has been sighted in Loveland? The answer, of course, is the Internet. In this column, I'll explain two Internet resources that can help you stay abreast of bird sightings in Colorado.

COBirds is a free email list established in 1995 for the discussion of Colorado birds. COBirds is managed by Colorado Field Ornithologists. People post messages on COBirds by joining a Google group and

sending email to the group. The group currently has more than 1,400 members who use COBirds primarily to spread the word on interesting or rare bird observations in Colorado. Anyone can apply to join the group. Best of all, anyone can view the messages posted on COBirds without even becoming a member. You only need to become a member to post your own messages. If you want to check out COBirds, go to the Colorado Field Ornithologists' website at <http://cobirds.org/> and follow the link to the COBirds Google Group. You'll be able to find information



One local rarity shared through social media: the American Woodcock, at Bobcat Ridge. Photo by Nick Komar.

there on how to become a member. It's free!

eBird (<http://ebird.org>) is an online platform for submitting and viewing bird observations from anywhere in the world. It was created in 2002 by

the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society and is becoming one of the largest and fastest growing biodiversity data resources in existence. A birder simply enters when, where, and how they went birding, then fills out a checklist of all the birds seen and heard during the outing. Like COBirds, anyone can view the data available on eBird, but you must create an account if

you want to enter your own observations into the system. It is also free. One thing that sets eBird apart from COBirds and other internet social media platforms is that it is a database. Many people, including me, use eBird as a way to manage their life lists. But more importantly, the observations entered into the system are archived in a secure data facility and are available to researchers around the world. Every checklist submitted to eBird enriches our understanding of the distribution and abundance of bird species.

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on committees: Harry Rose, finance; Carol Hossan, education; Helmut Retzer, conservation and/or education; and Lynne Hull, liaison between the FCAS board and the community.

If you are interested in serving, or know of someone interested, please let any of the three nominating committee members know: Lynne Hull, 970-416-1881, Lynne.Hull@eco-art.org; Bill Miller, 970-493-7693, 5mcorp@comcast.net; and Liz Pruessner, 970-484-4371, lizpru@colostate.edu.

FCAS welcomes new National Audubon Society members by sending one complimentary copy of our newsletter. Join us at our monthly programs on the second Thursday of the month to find out more about FCAS. National dues do not cover costs, so to keep receiving the *Ptarmigan*, please join FCAS. See details on the last page of this newsletter or at www.fortcollinsaudubon.org.



Upcoming Field Trips

All field trips are free (unless otherwise noted) and open to the public. All experience levels are welcome. Bring snacks or lunch, water, binoculars, and spotting scopes. Visit www.fortcollinsaudubon.org for more information and updates. RSVP is recommended.

Jan. 10, Sunday, Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Denise Bretting, dbretting@swloveland.com, work: 970-669-1185, home: 970-669-8095. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the City of Fort Collins. All levels are welcome. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot. Call for any change.



Identifying “white-cheeked geese” can be challenging: the Cackling Goose on the left has a shorter bill, shorter neck, and darker breast and is smaller than the Canada Goose on the right. Photo by John Shenot.

Jan. 23, Saturday, Cache la Poudre Urban River Corridor. Leader: John Shenot, johnshenot@gmail.com, 970-682-2551. One of FCAS’ goals for 2016 is to earn an “important bird area” designation for the Cache la Poudre Urban River Corridor. This trip offers an opportunity to learn about that effort while looking for winter birds. Meet at 1 p.m. in Lee Martinez Park at the north end of N. Sherwood Street, by the ball field and tennis courts. We’ll walk the river corridor and see if we can find any unusual winter birds, or common birds doing unusual things. This field trip will be followed by an optional social hour at an Old Town drinking establishment.

Future Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Surveys: See details above for this recurring, monthly survey. Dates and times for future surveys are: Feb. 14, Sunday, 7:30 a.m.; March 13, Sunday, 7:30 a.m.; April 10, Sunday, 7 a.m.; May 7, Saturday, 6:30 a.m.; and June 12, Sunday, 6:30 a.m.



Recap of 2015 Field Trips

What a year we had! FCAS sponsored 24 field trips in 2015, led by more than a dozen different volunteers. We averaged nine participants per field trip. In addition to these local outings, FCAS also promoted international birding excursions to Jamaica and Brazil, for which we received a donation from Quetzal Tours. While every bird outing has its highlights, some of the 2015 field trip moments stand out in my own memory:

1. Seeing all 28 Jamaican endemic species on a Quetzal Tours excursion in January.
2. Getting close-up looks at an Eastern Screech-owl found by Austin Hess on his April field trip at the CSU Environmental Learning Center.
3. Being able to say, with a straight face, “it’s just another Red Crossbill” on the Sunrise Ranch trip led by Michael Costello in May.
4. Showing a Northern Shrike to three school-age birders at Douglas Reservoir in November.

FCAS thanks all of our volunteer trip leaders and Quetzal Tours for their support. We hope to see many of you again on our 2016 field trips!

FCAS Annual Membership Renewal

It is January and that means it is time to renew your annual membership! Please use the form on the back page of the newsletter to renew by mail or at a program meeting, or renew online at www.fortcollinsaudubon.org. Dues are \$20.00 to receive the *Ptarmigan* electronically or \$30.00 for a printed copy through the mail. Membership and contributions are tax deductible. If you renewed September—December, your membership is good through January 2017.

Your local chapter dues make possible our programs, meetings, education, and advocacy for birds and wildlife habitat. Thank you to all those who have already renewed! We appreciate your support!

Happy New Year!

Fort Collins Audubon Society
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Membership Application

Join Fort Collins Audubon Society (FCAS), National Audubon Society (NAS), or both.

- New or renewing FCAS Chapter Member \$ 20 Name: _____
Receive the FCAS *Ptarmigan* by email
- New or renewing FCAS Chapter Member \$ 30 Address: _____
Receive the FCAS *Ptarmigan* by mail
- Lifetime FCAS Chapter Member \$750 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Receive FCAS *Ptarmigan* by mail or email
- Additional support for FCAS programs \$ ___ Phone: _____
- Additional support for Alex Cringan Fund \$ ___ Email: _____
(natural history education grants)
- New NAS member \$ 20 May we send you FCAS email alerts if updates occur for field
Receive the NAS *Audubon* by mail trips, programs, etc.? Yes or No
- Renewing NAS member \$ 35 May we contact you for volunteer activities such as helping at
Receive the NAS *Audubon* by mail events or contacting legislators on important issues? Yes or No

Total 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 31 extend throughout the following year. Applications can be
completed at www.fortcollinsaudubon.org.