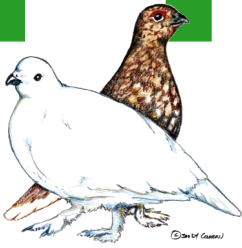


PTARMIGAN



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 2020

Volume 51, Issue 1

FCAS Presents

Kyle Battige, Aquatic Biologist, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

“Watson Lake Diversion Fish Passage—Removing Barriers and Letting the Fish Decide”

Thursday, January 9

Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Dr.

Social Time: 7 p.m.; Program 7:20 p.m.

The Cache la Poudre River is a hard working river that is imperative to the communities it flows through. From water delivery to recreation to providing critical habitat for both aquatic and terrestrial animals, the Cache la Poudre River is a critical resource to the northern Front Range. The river supports a diverse fish assemblage, but there are many challenges, both old and new, facing aquatic life. One such challenge are migration barriers, although water diversion structures are imperative to delivering water throughout the basin they often represent complete barriers and impede upstream fish movement. Habitat connectivity is important for a number of reasons with fish often moving to spawn, feed, or avoid unfavorable conditions like decreasing flows and high water temperatures. Colorado Parks and Wildlife



Watson Lake diversion fish passage structure:
by Kyle Battige

along with several other partners (Morning Fresh Dairy, Noosa Yoghurt, Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District, Trout Unlimited, and Poudre Heritage Alliance) constructed a fish passage structure at the Watson Lake Diversion Structure, reconnecting over two miles of river habitat. Preliminary results show successful fish passage and hopefully the completion of this structure will

provide momentum within the basin for additional passage projects.

Kyle Battige has been an aquatic biologist for Colorado Parks and Wildlife since 2012 and currently manages the aquatic resources of the Poudre River and North Platte River drainages within Colorado.

Join us at the Fort Collins Senior Center on Jan. 9—this program is free and the public is welcomed.

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 the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter, so if you'd like to keep receiving it, please support your local chapter and subscribe. See details on the last page of the newsletter or on our website at www.fortcollinsaudubon.org.

This month marks the start of my sixth year serving as President of FCAS. Throughout those years, I've been fortunate to work with outstanding volunteers serving on the FCAS Board of Directors. Together, we've been able to maintain our membership roles at a roughly steady level (with small fluctuations from month to month), increase our financial reserves by about 50 percent without raising membership dues, restart the FCAS educational grant program, host dozens of public lectures by national experts on a broad range of scientific and public policy topics, offer more than 100 field trips enjoyed by more than 1,000 people, and engage on numerous local and national issues to advocate for conservation.

Looking ahead, my highest priority for FCAS in 2020 is to increase our visibility and our contributions to the communities of northern Colorado. I'll be particularly focused on two things. First, I'm eager to do community outreach relating to the Cache la Poudre Urban River Corridor, for which we've sought designation as an Important Bird Area under a National Audubon Society program. Second, I've created an ad hoc committee looking at how FCAS can better engage young adults in our mission and our activities. I hope to receive concrete recommendations from that committee early in the year and begin implementing them as soon as possible. Something else to watch for in 2020 is that the Board will be asking members to approve changes to the FCAS constitution and bylaws that we think are necessary and



Poudre River bridge at Legacy Park.
Photo via Fort Collins Photo Works.

appropriate to streamline our operations and carry the organization into the future. It should be a busy year, but another good one.

FCAS Annual Membership Renewal

It is January and that means it is time to renew your annual membership. FCAS chapter memberships run for the calendar year from January through December. Dues are \$20 to receive the *Ptarmigan* electronically or \$30 for a printed copy through the mail.



Renew

Please use the form on the back page of the newsletter to renew by mail or renew at a program meeting. You also can renew online at our website: www.fortcollinsaudubon.org. Remember, your membership and contributions are tax deductible.

Your local chapter dues strengthen our efforts and make possible our programs, meetings, education, and advocacy for birds and wildlife habitat. Keep the *Ptarmigan* coming by renewing today.

If you renewed September–December 2019, your membership is good through January 2021. Thank you to all those who have already renewed. We appreciate your support!

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www.fortcollinsaudubon.org

Visit us on Facebook:

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



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"And now, I submit, it's your turn to become radical, whoever you are, wherever you live. That's because the climate threat is now truly radical, and time is almost up."—*Mike Tidwell, Washington Post*
 "You cannot be called an alarmist if there really is something to be alarmed about."—*Job One for Humanity*

The Urgency of Combating Global Climate Disruption

I first started this month's conservation article with the intent of illustrating that efforts to understand the warming of the earth began back in the days of the First Industrial Revolution (1800-1870). I did lots of research, using Google to find articles on various subjects, until I came across an article provided by Job One for Humanity, titled: "The Latest Facts on Run Away Global Warming, Climate Change, and Our Story." I hereby strongly urge you to look at https://www.joboneforhumanity.org/about2?gclid=Cj0KCQiArdLvBRCrARIsAGhB_sxCRCcz_M1ILVmMOEjH9OqAGL63RdhLlY5I219xgpoCUMwn0j9e48aAraNEALw_wcB. It is the best article

The Job One for Humanity Plan to End Global Warming



Effective, Practical, Prioritized

I've ever encountered with respect to providing information on climate change and its consequences. To tell the truth, after reading this material and with our current, world-wide, political climate and economic policies, I'm extremely concerned for our future generations.

It seems like, every day, new information is discovered and published with respect to the negative impacts of global climate disruption. And none of it is good. The leaders of the

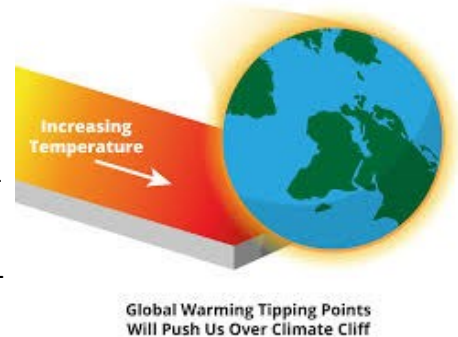
world seem paralyzed in the face of the facts. This was pointed out recently by the actions of 16-year-old Greta

Thunberg, the Swedish youth climate activist. At the 74th session of the U.N. General Assembly in 2019, Greta and 15 other young people filed a legal complaint against five countries (Germany,

France, Brazil, Argentina, and Turkey) that had signed the U.N.'s Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC). The 1989 CRC ensures the inalienable rights of children around the world. The United States and China, as the world's largest emitters of greenhouse gases, were not named because they haven't ratified the CRC.

Salient points brought out in the Job One article include: (1) disasters aggravated by global warming are growing more severe, occurring more often, and covering larger areas; (2) how bad global warming is going to get is not being adequately discussed in the media or by our politicians; (3) we are no longer able to avoid many of the catastrophic or irreversible consequences of global warming; and (4) actions to manage global warming are not working fast enough to prevent the collapse of biological, economic, or political systems.

I cannot emphasize strongly enough that you should read the article called out in the first paragraph.



FCAS Welcomes New and Renewing Members

Ellie Harrison

Kate Burgess

Will Buchman

Michelle Haefele & Michael Knowles

David Otis

Aimee Chlebnik

Peter Weckesser

Sandra L. Pitcaithley

Thomas J. Lynch

Jim Weis

Robert & Mary Gish

Ron Harden

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



Blue Jay
by Michele Black.



Monitoring the Elusive Black Swift

Just outside of Ouray, Colorado, there is a deep and jagged gash in the mountainside. This gash is home to Box Canyon Falls, to which some daring and entrepreneurial soul managed to build a walkway. Clinging to



Black Swift by Carrie Olson.

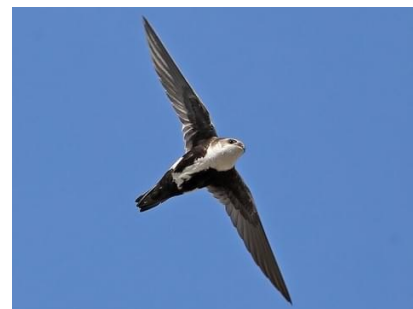
the glistening canyon walls, it provides nice views of the roiling water. However, the most extraordinary thing in this canyon is not the roaring waterfall, it's the little creature tucked against an inconspicuous ledge behind the stairs, whose large, jewel-black eyes pierce you through the

mist. This creature is the Black Swift, and this is one of the only places in the world where you'll see one eye-to-eye. It's impossible not to feel like you're in the presence of something otherworldly when in the presence of a Black Swift. These graphite-grey birds spend their days jetting over the highest peaks after insects, and their nights in the shadows of montane waterfalls, seemingly oblivious to the damp and noise. Their nesting habits are similarly reclusive, which all add up to make seeing them, let alone studying them, extremely difficult. Until recently, scientists did not even know where they wintered. However, we do know one thing: their populations are suffering. It is estimated that Black Swift populations have dropped by 90 percent in

North America since the 1970s.

In 1997, the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies joined forces with the U.S. Forest Service to monitor and catalogue these elusive birds as they nested in Colorado. Today, aided by top-notch technology and an intrepid team of brave souls, Bird Conservancy research biologist Rob Sparks continues and expands upon this research. By scaling waterfalls in the fading light of dusk, and attaching GPS transmitters to roosting and nesting birds,

Sparks is answering some of the crucial questions about Black Swift movement ecology. While much of the data is still being analyzed, preliminary results show that Black Swifts travel an average of 160 km (about 99 miles) per day at an average



Black Swift from allaboutbirds.org

elevation of 10,200 feet, which is far higher than most birds. His research also has shed light on the long unanswered question of where Black Swifts spend the winter, showing a clear path to the lowland rainforests of Brazil. Information like this is crucial to conservation efforts for these birds.

To learn more about this project, visit <https://birdconservancy.org/black-swifts-new-horizons/>. There is also a link on the page that allows you to donate and support this research and the future of the Black Swift. They sound stranger than fiction, but if we continue to research and conserve this amazing species, hopefully they never will be.

FCAS Pocket Guide to Local Birds

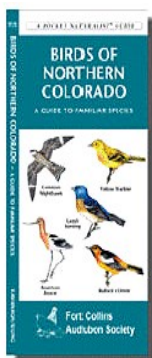
Is available at the following retailers who support our organization with the sales:

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



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. Inquire with the FCAS field trip coordinator (Sirena Brownlee) or the trip leader named below to borrow binoculars. Changes to dates, meeting times or locations, and trip leaders are occasionally unavoidable (check the FCAS Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/FortCollinsAudubonSociety> for cancellations due to inclement weather). Contact the listed trip leader prior to the day of the trip or visit fortcollinsaudubon.org for more information and updates. RSVP strongly encouraged.

Saturday, Jan. 11, Running Deer Natural Area.

Leader: Robert Beauchamp, tyrannusb@gmail.com. We will explore a few marshes and ponds during this 1.5-2-mile saunter through the natural area. All levels are welcome and a spotting scope will be available. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot.

Sunday, Jan. 12, Bobcat Ridge Natural Area

Bird Survey. Leader: Denise Bretting, dbretting@swloveland.com, 970-669-1185 or 669-8095. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the City of Fort Collins on the second Sunday of each month. All levels are welcome. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot.



Young birders at Bobcat Ridge.
From fcgov.com



White-tailed Ptarmigan by Ron Harden.



Sharp-shinned Hawk at lunch by Ron Harden.



Snowy moose by Ron Harden.



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



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Membership Application

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

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | New or renewing FCAS Chapter Member
Receive the FCAS <i>Ptarmigan</i> by email | \$ 20 | Name:_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | New or renewing FCAS Chapter Member
Receive the FCAS <i>Ptarmigan</i> by mail | \$ 30 | Address:_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Lifetime FCAS Chapter Member
Receive FCAS <i>Ptarmigan</i> by mail or email | \$750 | City:_____ State:_____ Zip:_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Additional support for FCAS programs | \$____ | Phone:_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Additional support for Alex Cringan Fund
(natural history education grants) | \$____ | Email:_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | New NAS member
Receive the NAS <i>Audubon</i> by mail | \$ 20 | May we send you FCAS email alerts if updates occur for field trips, programs, etc.? Yes or No |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Renewing NAS member
Receive the NAS <i>Audubon</i> by mail | \$ 35 | May we contact you for volunteer activities such as helping at 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.