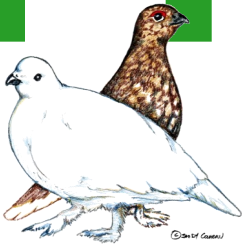


PTARMIGAN



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.

February 2023

Volume 55, Issue 2

FCAS Hosts

Ash Austin, University of Northern Colorado

"Red-Tailed Hawks and Growing Cities"

Thursday, February 9

Social time with Refreshments 7 p.m.; Announcements 7:20; Presentation 7:30

Door Prize Drawing (must be present to win)

Fort Collins Senior Center, 1200 Raintree Dr.

*****This program also will be accessible online using Zoom*****

Enter the following link at 7 p.m. to join the meeting virtually:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89982202979>

Worldwide, human population has increased from 1.6 billion to 7.7 billion people from 1900 to 2020. With an increase in human population comes an increase in impacts on surrounding environments. Increased waste material and the growth of construction have consequences for resident fauna. Many studies have identified trash and plastic materials that birds use in nests and for other purposes, and several bird species have been observed

using anthropogenic materials. Ash Austin, University of Northern Colorado, studies the relation of human



Red-tailed Hawk nest on St Elizabeth of Hungary Church. Photo by Ash Austin.

impact on terrestrial birds with, Red-tailed Hawks being his current and primary focus. This study aims to demonstrate how human created resources, such as waste materials and buildings, influence the nesting behaviors of terrestrial birds.

Join us in person at the Fort Collins Senior Center on Feb. 9. An additional presentation that evening will be introducing the recipients of the Alex Cringan scholarship: Talon Nightwalker, Director of Northern Colorado Wildlife Center, and Noelle Ma-

son, CSU Biology student. The two will give a short report on their projects.

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.

President's Corner

by John Shenot

FCAS wants to thank all our members, volunteers, and board members for making 2022 another successful year and helping us finish the year "in the black." We rely on your membership dues for about 30 percent of the annual revenue that keeps FCAS going, and I hope you have already renewed your membership for 2023.

We haven't raised our dues in more than 10 years. Our expenses have risen, but we've been able to keep membership dues affordable (while increasing our program offerings and services) through a combination of successful fundraising events and generous donations from individuals and organizations who contribute above and beyond their membership dues. We also rely on volunteers for everything we do, and we're grateful for merchandise donations from businesses like Wild Birds Unlimited.

I want to use this month's column to thank all the following who made cash donations in 2022, and humbly ask those who can afford it to consider a donation in 2023. Donations to our general fund would be much appreciated, but perhaps you might prefer to contribute to our Alex Cringan Memorial Fund, through which we offer modest scholarships to students for conservation-related research and projects. Our ability to offer scholarships each year is wholly dependent on contributions to the Cringan fund.

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www.fortcollinsaudubon.org

Visit us on Facebook:

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

Memorial Donations in 2022

By:

Alan Godwin

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Cristen & Jack Harden

Family of Elaine Coley

Elizabeth Pruessner

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Other Individual Donors in 2022

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Donations from Charitable Organizations in 2022

Hillard Family Foundation, a donor advised fund of the U.S. Charitable Trust; and Siegfried Kohen Charitable Giving Fund, a donor advised fund of Fidelity Charitable Donor Advised Funds.



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 Loveland West
Outdoor Gear
2665 W. Eisenhower
(970) 667-7375

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1200 N. College
(970) 221-0544



COP15 Launches Ambitious Global Framework for Biodiversity Conservation

At the end of 2022, government representatives from around the world convened in Montreal for the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) to finalize plans to protect global biodiversity and develop a more sustainable relationship between nature and humanity. Together, 196 countries adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, a

comprehensive plan with goals, measurable targets, and methods for monitoring progress. The framework includes strategies to mobilize funding for biodiversity protection from a

variety of sources, with a goal to globally raise \$200 billion per year by 2030.

Biodiversity loss, a related but distinct issue from climate change, is one of the great crises of our time. Habitat destruction and fragmentation, the spread of invasive species, overharvesting of natural resources, and pollution of air and water are among a suite of human-driven causes leading to the staggering decline of plant and animal populations and genetic diversity in our ecosystems. COP15 represents a global attempt to combine resources and strategize to tackle this problem before too much has been lost.

The Global Biodiversity Framework encompasses four overarching goals and 23 targets to be achieved by 2030. Goal A includes maintaining or improving habitat connectivity and resilience of all ecosystems, halting or greatly reducing human-caused extinction of all threatened species, and maintaining genetic diversity of populations to protect adaptive potential. Goal B envisions that biodiversity is sustainably used and managed by humans, and that ecosystem services (such as carbon cycling, flood protection, and natural resources) are valued, maintained, and restored. Goal C seeks to equitably share the knowledge and benefits of genetic

diversity, and particularly that traditional knowledge of genetic resources is protected. Finally, Goal D encourages the equitable distribution of technological and financial resources to support biodiversity conservation. The 23 targets include measures to: restore degraded ecosystems, protect natural areas, reduce pollution, mini-

mize over-consumption and waste, manage the spread of invasive species, and maximize green space in urban areas, among others.

Now that the framework has been established, nations are expected to implement these strategies through policies and actions, both domestically and internationally. Prior to the next COP in 2024, all countries are to prepare biodiversity strategies and finance plans specific to their own nations. Many countries already have tools in place to mitigate biodiversity loss, such as the Endangered Species Act in the United States. However, the ambitious targets outlined by the Global Biodiversity Framework will require more intention and action from all parties.

Humans are a part of nature, and the preservation of biodiversity is necessary for the survival of our own species. Finding solutions for widespread emergencies requires widespread action, and COP15 was an important step in the right direction. However, it will take more than world leaders to do the work necessary to achieve the framework's vision. As global citizens, it is our duty to support policies that protect our environment and contribute to conservation initiatives in our own communities.



COP15 conference in Montreal. Photo by Kate Burgess.

Past Field Trips Highlights

January 13, Red Fox Meadows Natural Area. John Shenot reported seeing 24 species of birds throughout the natural area. These included Evening Grosbeaks, Cassin's Finches, and Steller's Jays. Definitely an area to check out.

Evening Grosbeak
by Farrell Steiner.



The Amazing American Dipper

At first glance, the American Dipper is a rather drab yet comical bird. Of its scientific name, *Cinclus mexicanus*, *Cinclus* denotes it is a passerine bird of a large division that includes songbirds. Passerine is an adjective relating to or denoting birds of a large order distinguished by feet that are adapted for perching, including all songbirds. To watch a gray dipper do “the dip” is like watching a cartoon bird bopping to imaginary music, and I wonder what soundtrack a dipper would choose. The reason the dipper dips is not established. One author surmised the dip demonstrates how fit and strong a male dipper is compared to male rivals. Another author thought that dipping is a mode of general communication. One author wrote: “Dipping may be a mode of visual communication among American Dippers in their very noisy environment.”

The dipper is medium gray, which helps it blend in with the river rocks it often perches on while waiting to snag a tasty insect or small fish. The dipper also can walk underwater to hunt for prey, making it a multi-talented stalker. When underwater, the dipper shows a thin line of white feathers on each eyelid that create a white flash when the bird blinks. This nictating membrane acts as an extra eyelid and allows the

dipper to see when under water.

The dipper is drawn to water; it flies above and along a stream rather than flying over land. When the dipper is under water, it uses its wings to swim while hunting for food. Extremely soft, dense plumage protects the dipper from becoming cold and wet during its underwater searches for prey. The dipper has a green gland ten times larger than any other songbird; the green gland provides the oil to waterproof its feathers. Another marvel is the dipper’s ability to fly straight into the air from underwater!

While wandering along a stream at Sylvandale Ranch near Loveland on Thanksgiving Day, I noticed a flock of ado-

lescent Wild Turkeys heading down a slope to hide. I next observed several dippers along the edges of a stream; they were roughly equidistant from each other. Both sexes look the same, so I did not know whether

the birds were mates or all males or all females or a mixing of both. Juveniles are similar to adults, but have a pinkish bill and are a paler gray. Another unknown to me is the call dippers make. According to a reference book, calls are a shrill loud “zzeip!” Various references state that both sexes call all year, but I have yet to hear the siren song of the amazing American Dipper.



American Dipper by Larry Lechner.



American Dipper by Carole Hossan.

Upcoming Field Trips

To register for any trip, go to Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/123106328705>), Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/fcaudubon/>), or fortcollinsaudubon.org. Registration will be posted one week before the scheduled trip. Attendance is limited to 12 individuals.

Feb. 12, Sunday, Bobcat Ridge Survey. Leader: Denise Bretting, dbretting@swloveland.com or 970-402-1292. The survey looks at bird populations and helps local scientists better understand bird dynamics. The little more than four-mile hike covers moderate to flat terrain. No registration required and there is no participation limit, but please email or text Denise that you plan to attend. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in the Bobcat Ridge parking lot.

Feb. 17–20, The Great Backyard Bird Count. Leader: Yourself. Please participate in this amazing event. Visit <https://www.birdcount.org/> to get started.

Feb. 26, Sunday, Horsetooth Mountain Open Space. Leader: Nolan Bunting, nbunting@rams.colostate.edu, 907-299-4625. Mountain birds such as Pygmy Nuthatch, Common Raven, and Steller’s Jay are found throughout the area. The hiking trail is difficult, but provides good views of Horsetooth Rock. The hike is moderately difficult and may require ice cleats. The entrance fee is \$10 per vehicle. Meet in the parking lot at 7 a.m.; however, the trip leader will be looking for owls before sunrise, including Northern Pygmy Owls.



FCAS Welcomes New and Renewing Members

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.

Jill Band	Danny Feig-Sandoval	Linda Kotsides	Joseph Polazzi
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Glen Elmore	Elizabeth Knees	Sandra Pitcaithley	

Hotspot Highlight: The Great Backyard Bird Count



birds with the help of over 160,000 volunteers just like you.

The survey last year covered over 100 countries and counted birds from 7,099 species, which is 65% of known bird species. Larimer County saw 115 species across 650 checklists. Some of the highlights from last year included a

Each newsletter this year will include a Hotspot Highlight. The highlight will include a description of a birding hotspot, the kinds of birds you can see, and will be related to the time of year.

This month's highlight is your own backyard. This year marks the 26th Great Backyard Bird Count that runs from Feb. 17 to Feb. 20. Often the greatest adventures begin in our own backyard. For the last 26 years Cornell University, Birds Canada, and Audubon have studied the populations of

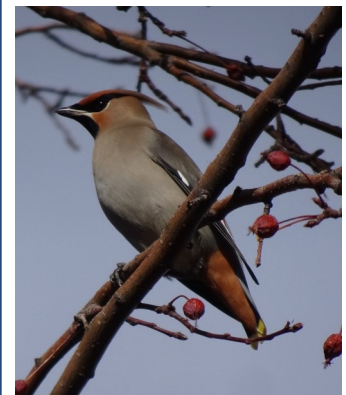
White-Throated Sparrow, a Glaucous Gull, and over 1,000 Canada Geese.

To participate, visit the website <https://www.birdcount.org/>. You simply identify all the birds in an area for 15 minutes or longer for one or more days of the event. The checklist, including number and species, can then be uploaded to eBird, an online database of birds throughout the world.

Want to submit a hotspot suggestion or photo? Email nbunting@rams.colostate.edu.

Christmas Bird Count December Results

Due to the amazing number of participants in this year's CBC, National Audubon is still counting the results. The current count is over 14 million birds seen during the CBC worldwide. Thank you to the volunteers that participated this year.



Bohemian Waxwing
by John Shenot.



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



Printed on recycled paper

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.