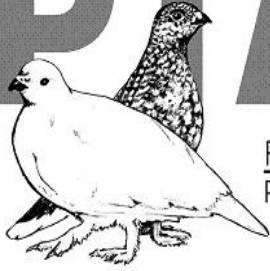


PTARMIGAN



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.

February 2006

Volume 37, Issue 6

KILIMANJARO ADVENTURE

Fourth Annual Silent Auction and Special Program

Take part in the fourth annual FCAS Silent Auction preceding our Special Program. This fundraiser relies on donations of auction items and friendly competition among generous bidders. The proceeds are used to finance a number of FCAS endeavors, including our newsletter, programs, educational activities, scholarship fund, and Audubon Colorado lobbyist.

After the silent auction, be sure to stay for our special program.

Most people say "I didn't do that kind of thing when I was a Girl Scout!" Members of GECCCO (Girls Experiencing Camping, Canoeing, Cycling Outdoors), a local Girl Scout group for teens focusing on outdoor adventure, planning and leadership skills, will present a recap of their recent trip to Africa, including an ascent of Mt. Kilimanjaro and



participation in wildlife and cultural safaris.

Nine local teens, two siblings and ten parents embarked on a three-week journey to Tanzania over the holidays. The group spent seven days climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro (19,342 feet). The youngest climber was 14, the oldest in her 60's. The second part of the trip was 12 days of visiting national parks, wildlife reserves, and villages in northern Tanzania. Wildlife sites included the Serengeti, Ngorongoro Crater, Olduvai Gorge, Lake Eyasi, Lake Manyara, Tarangire, and Arusha National Park. The group visited a Maasai Boma village and spent time

with the Hadzabe tribe in the bush. Their last day in Tanzania was spent visiting a girls' secondary school, donating supplies and interacting with the students. Bring family and friends to hear and see a captivating presentation about these excellent adventures.

THURSDAY EVENING PROGRAM — February 9, 2006
Columbine Room, Fort Collins Lincoln Center, 417 W. Magnolia Street
Auction Begins at 6:30 PM

FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY PROGRAMS AND FIELD TRIPS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Visit our website at www.fortnet.org/Audubon or call 970-490-BIRD.

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FEBRUARY - MARCH FIELD TRIPS

All field trips are free of charge and open to the public. All experience levels are welcome. Attendees should dress appropriately for the weather. Bring snacks, water, binoculars and spotting scopes (if you have them). Carpooling is encouraged. A \$2.00 (unless otherwise specified) contribution per passenger to the driver is suggested. Visit www.fortnet.org/Audubon for more information. For all field trips and surveys, please contact the trip leader for sign up and trip details, or contact the Field Trip Coordinator, Connie Kogler, at ckogler@mac.com or 970-622-9710.

2/5/2006 Sunday. Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Sol Miller at 970-461-4940 or eagleeye1029@yahoo.com. Meet at 7:00 AM. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the city. All levels welcomed. Contact leader for sign up and details.

2/11/2006 Saturday. Birding for Beginners. Leader: Beth Dillon at 970-490-2610. Limited to eight participants. 9:00-11:30 AM. Call leader to sign up and learn meeting location.

2/19/2006 Sunday. Fossil Creek Reservoir Bird Survey. Contact Nick Komar at quetzal65@comcast.net or 970-416-7527. Fort Collins Audubon performs a monthly bird census for the county. All levels welcomed. Participation limited to five plus leader. Contact leader for sign up and trip details.

2/25/2006 Saturday. Winter Raptor Field Trip. Join raptor biologist Rick Harness for a morning of viewing raptors. The trip will begin in Fort Collins and several prairie dog towns will be visited to view Golden Eagles, Red-tailed Hawks, and Ferruginous Hawks. Concentrations of waterfowl will be visited to view Bald Eagles. 9:00 AM to noon. This

trip will be limited to 12 people and reservations are required. If you are interested please e-mail Rick Harness at rharness@edmlink.com.

3/4/2006 Saturday. Cathy Fromme Natural Area: Wildlife Adaptations. Leader: Alysia Perry at alysia_hp@yahoo.com. 10:00 - 11:00 AM. Wind, snow, hail, droughtHow does wildlife in the prairie deal with variable weather conditions? Learn about adaptations that help these creatures thrive in their environment.

3/5/2006 Sunday. Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Sol Miller at 970-461-4940 or eagleeye1029@yahoo.com. Meet at 7:00 AM. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the city. All levels welcomed. Contact leader for sign up and details.

3/19/2006 Sunday. Fossil Creek Reservoir Bird Survey. Contact Nick Komar at quetzal65@comcast.net or 970-416-7527. Fort Collins Audubon performs a monthly bird census for the county. All levels welcomed. Participation limited to five plus leader. Contact leader for sign up and trip details.

Note: Occasionally, new field trips may be announced or details may be finalized between issues of the *Ptarmigan*. Please visit our website and click on "Field Trips," or call the FCAS message center at 490-BIRD to check for updated field trip information.

Reminder!

2006 Fort Collins Audubon Birdathon

Friday & Saturday, May 12-13, 2006

It's only two months until spring migration starts and the Birdathon can't be far behind! The Birdathon is Fort Collins Audubon's annual spring fundraiser. It is also a great birding and social get-together that is an enjoyable—if exhausting—24-hour search for birds. It is a great way to help raise money for Fort Collins Audubon, too!



Pledges are needed to support our newsletter, programs, scholarships, and conservation efforts.

Birdathon teams will be formed in early May. On Birdathon day, team members will search for as many species as can be seen or heard in 24 hours. Team members obtain pledges based on the total number of birds the team lists.

Participate in four different ways: (1) **Team Leader** - lead a Birdathon team near and far in Larimer and Weld counties; (2) **Team Member** - participate on a team and help spot birds and, of course, obtain pledges; (3) **Pledge** - provide a pledge to a team member; and (4) **Business Pledge Partner** - provide a pledge to a team member or a team.

For more information contact Birdathon Coordinator, Phil Friedman, at 493-2959 or phifri@frii.com

2005 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

Fort Collins, December 17, 2005—With snow falling and below-normal temperatures, 53 volunteers did a wonderful job finding good numbers of birds. Nearly all the water in our area was frozen, which kept waterfowl numbers below average and gulls totally absent. We recorded 75 species on Saturday and added another 10 species during count week (three days before and three days after the official count date). In spite of adverse conditions, we recorded record high numbers of 12 species/races: Cackling Goose 4,348, Greater Scaup 2, Eurasian Collared-Dove 221, Mourning Dove 83, Great Horned Owl 15, Bushtit 29, American Dipper 35, White-crowned Sparrow 202, Slate-colored Junco 129, White-winged Junco 24, House Finch 852, and American Goldfinch 295. We recorded two species for the first time: Rachel Hopper found a Pine Warbler in her backyard and Cole Wild found a Northern Waterthrush along the Cache la Poudre River! We look forward to next year's count. Mark your calendars now for Saturday, December 16, 2006. Thanks to all the volunteers for making the 106th CBC a success! **Co-compilers: Nick Komar and Sue Riffe.**



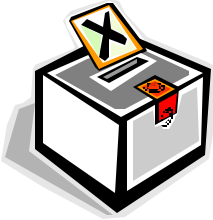
Loveland, January 1, 2006—With warm and windy conditions and 25 observers, we tallied 84 species. Special thanks to the Loveland Reporter-Herald for promoting the event within the community of Loveland, and to our hosts, the Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch, who provided meeting space for our compilation dinner. Four new species were tallied: Snow Goose (1), Say's Phoebe (1), Marsh Wren (3), and Great-tailed Grackle (12), as well as a hybrid Snow/Ross' Goose. New high counts were registered for nine species: Cackling Goose (4,011), Common Merganser (337), Ring-necked Pheasant (2), Red-breasted Nuthatch (20), Townsend's Solitaire (57), Downy Woodpecker (33), Canyon Wren (16), Spotted Towhee (16), and American Goldfinch (126). **Co-compilers: Nick Komar and Connie Kogler.**

The complete results may be viewed at the CBC website: www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/index.html.



2006 FCAS Election Results

The January program meeting included an election by acclimation for the 2006 FCAS officers and directors. The FCAS Board for 2006 is President: Joel Hurmence (second year of two-year term), Vice-president: Phil Friedman, President-elect: Nick Komar, Secretary: Scott Cobble, Treasurer: John Waddell. Directors-at-large: Heman Adams, Beth Dillon, Ruth Grant, Ron Harden, Nick Komar, and Sue Riffe. The committee chairs are Conservation: vacant, Membership: Barb Jones, Education: Lynne Hull, Programs: Jackie Boss, Field Trips: Connie Kogler, Publications: Joe Martin, Public Relations: Diann Johnston, Hospitality: Heman and Pat Adams, Finance and Fundraising: vacant. Other special positions: Birdathon: Phil Friedman, Audubon Colorado delegate: Bill Miller, Scholarship Fund: Lisa Evans, fcaudubon group: Debbie Holman, Volunteer Coordinator: Ellen Wride, Message Center: Shelagh Tupper. Complete contact information for the Fort Collins Audubon Society Board can be found on our website: www.fortnet.org/Audubon/leadership.htm.



FCAS Message Center: Call 490-BIRD

Have you called 490-BIRD to try out the new Fort Collins Audubon Message Center? You will hear information about upcoming programs, field trips, and special events. After the recording, you can leave a message that will be picked up within a few days. To find out about last minute changes in schedule, this service is a good alternative for those who do not have access to our website. FCAS would like to know if the recorded information is useful to you. Is there any other information you would like to hear? Do you like this service? Please call the number and leave a message to let us know!



Welcome to our new members since November 2005!

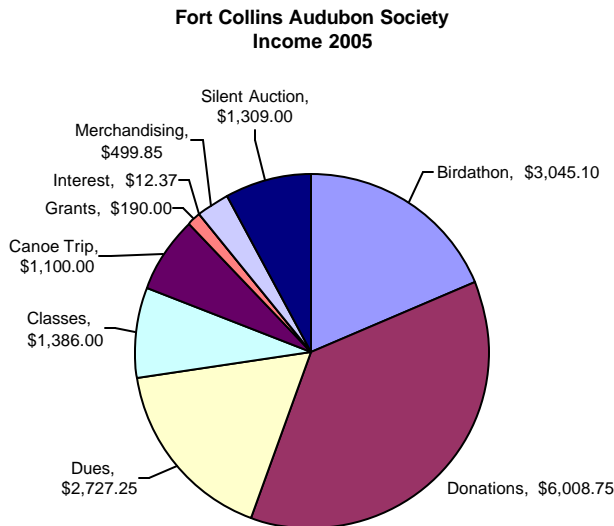
We look forward to seeing you at our meetings!

Sharon Austin	Carol Hunsicker	Judith Sanborn
Heather D. Bartmann	Sue Ellen Kempton	Suzanne Shaw
Barbara Benjamin	Kathleen Kilkelly	James L. Shafer
Kim Bohling	Shirley Kobar	Thomas Siller
Silja Daub	Erick C. Larson	Jim Skog
Virginia Davie	Howard K. Lauren	Roger A. Sleeper
The Disney Family	Loveland Prof Offices	Sallie S. Sprague
Willie Duboise	Kim and Gregory Luft	Herbert D. Swett
Carol Eckberg	Mike McDonald	Barbara J. Turnbull
William Eyl	Richard Minor	Gideon Vanzyl
Janet Franzen	Kevin L. Niemann	Lorraine Velasquez
Beverly Gamble	Eric O'Dell	Marilyn Wells
Rhoda E. Geiger	Bielefeldt Ohmann	Helga Williamson
Susan R. Gough	Barbara Patterson	Robert P. Worrall
Brian T. Graham	Alysia Perry	Karl Zeller
Margaret Grant	Robert Rubenstein	

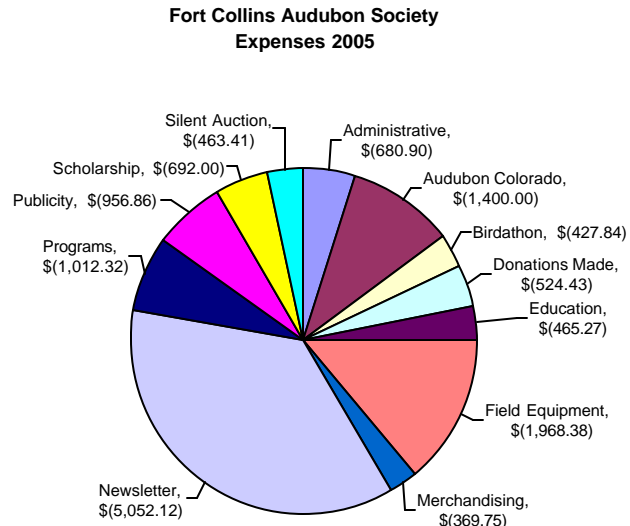
As of January 2005, the FCAS Bylaws were amended to allow membership in our local Fort Collins Audubon chapter without National Audubon membership. January 2005 membership was about 667. Our membership as of January 2006 is 722 — 660 through National Audubon membership and 62 through independent FCAS memberships.

FCAS Financial Summary for 2005

The Fort Collins Audubon Society is in very good shape financially, thanks to fundraising efforts and generous donations from our supporters. Although our expenditures were high, our fundraising efforts were very successful. The graphs below show income and expenses for 2005, summarized by category. For comparison, 2004 income totaled \$14,437 and 2004 expenses totaled \$13,168.



Total 2005 Income: \$16,278.32



Total 2005 Expenses: \$14,013.28

The largest sources of income were from the Birdathon, donations, and dues. Dues collected for 2005 included \$724 FCAS dues and the "safety net" payment from National Audubon. Audubon of Colorado collects a fee of \$2 per member, which leaves less than \$1 of national member dues for FCAS funds. Approximately 115 people enrolled in five FCAS classes (Kevin Cook's birding classes, wildflower class, and the field-trip leader seminar). FCAS merchandise included T-shirts, books, and posters.

The largest expenses in 2005 were our newsletter, contributions to Audubon Colorado, and our monthly programs. Another large expense was the purchase of two spotting scopes reported in last month's newsletter. Newsletter costs include printing, mailing, and postage. Contributions to Audubon Colorado help support the Colorado lobbyist. Programs expenses include room rental, refreshments, and reimbursements for speaker travel. Education expenses were for the field-trip leader seminar. Publicity includes newspaper ads, website, new banner, new logo, and brochures. The administrative category includes postal fees, attorney fees, name badges, meeting expenses, etc.

The balance of all FCAS funds at the end of 2005 was \$17,900, which includes \$3,417 reserved in the Scholarship Fund. Fort Collins Audubon looks forward to continued growth and expanded offerings. The Board has set new goals and identified the following financial needs for the future:

- ✦ Approximately \$1,200 for programs (rent increase for the Ludlow Room)
- ✦ Additional funds to offer some programs in Loveland
- ✦ Newsletter—increased postage in 2006
- ✦ Scholarship Fund—continue to grow the fund and make awards
- ✦ Maintain website, telephone message center and other publicity expenses
- ✦ Adoption of Fossil Creek Reservoir IBA—providing checklists, projects
- ✦ Purchase of digital projector for use in programs and classes
- ✦ Liability insurance (under investigation)
- ✦ FCAS office or storage space (under investigation)
- ✦ FCAS paid staff (under investigation)

The complete list of FCAS goals for 2006 may be viewed on our website at www.fortnet.org/Audubon/board_minutes/2006_FCAS_Goals.pdf.

Fort Collins Audubon would like to thank all of our members and donors for their support. To donate visit www.fortnet.org/Audubon/donate/

CONSERVATION CORNER — Bill Miller, Acting Conservation Chair

Happy New Year! As normally happens around this time of year, we experience personnel changes in our organization. Unfortunately, we have lost the services of Carol Fiore as chair of the Conservation Committee (C-COM) for personal reasons. Carol will still participate with the committee, as time permits. Her leadership will be missed.

Prior to the program meeting on Jan. 12th, C-COM had nine members. At the conclusion of the program meeting we had 13 members. We would like to welcome Tony Saba, Jenna Nielson, Dick Maxfield and Phil Cafaro to C-COM.

At our meeting on Jan. 12th, we discussed how the C-COM will function, given that we don't have Chair. We agreed to the following:

- (1) Invite members to suggest issues that C-COM can follow up on in depth. Members can contact any one of the following: Scott Cobble at RWEmerison2002@yahoo.com, Maria Struss at struss631@msn.com, or Bill Miller at 5mcorp@comcast.net;
- (2) C-COM members will communicate with each other on issues as they learn of them, and decide who will lead on a particular issue, based on their interests;
- (3) We will continue the current Ptarmigan format that includes a feature article, a section on how members can take action, and a section titled, "Kudos and Raspberries."

Even though C-COM doesn't currently have an "official" chair, we hope that we can remain effective, especially since we now have 13 members on the committee, with a wide variety of backgrounds, interests, and areas of expertise.

TAKE ACTION

URGENT: There is an Anti-Endangered Species Bill looming in the U.S. Senate. On December 15, 2005, Senator Mike Crapo (R-ID) introduced Senate Bill 2110, which will drastically undermine the Endangered Species Act by removing protections for endangered species habitat and cutting federal oversight of projects that threaten endangered species. Details, as provided by the Center for Biological Diversity, may be viewed at www.actionnetwork.org/campaign/crapo_s_2110. A full explanation and the full text of the Crapo bill is available at www.biologicaldiversity.org/swcbd/. If you prefer, you may call Senator Salazar's main environmental aide working on this bill, Steve Black. His direct line in Washington, DC is 202-228-5033.

The Colorado State Legislature recently began its 2006 session. The Public Policy Committee of Audubon Colorado will soon begin its annual ritual of examining the various bills that are of interest to Audubon and prioritizing the issues for our lobbyist, Jen Bolton. If you are willing to occasionally call your elected representative, you may sign up to receive legislative alerts by sending your e-mail address to Bill Miller at 5mcorp@comcast.net.



Kudos And Raspberries



The National Audubon Society recently recognized Ken Strom, of Audubon Colorado, with the prestigious *Golden Egret* award. This is awarded to only one Audubon employee each year and is one of the highest forms of recognition within Audubon. In brief, Ken was recognized for 26 years of service within NAS. He started in 1979 as a warden and maintenance man at the Francis Beidler Forest in South Carolina, moved on to become the manager of the Rowe Sanctuary in Nebraska, ran Audubon's Population and Habitat program, served as Interim Executive Director of Audubon Colorado, and currently serves as the Director of Conservation and Public Policy for Audubon Colorado. In late 2005, Ken received from the North American Association for Environmental Education the prestigious 2005 Award for Outstanding Service to Environmental Education by an Individual at the Regional Level. Ken has also helped with the establishment of nearly 50 Important Bird Areas, and started the Adopt-an-IBA program, which helps the eleven Audubon chapters within Colorado to identify and conserve a local IBA. We are very fortunate to have Ken working with Audubon Colorado and Audubon chapters in Colorado.

Better Birding, Better Living Lynne Hull, Education Chair

The Fort Collins Audubon Society has over 700 members. I may have met about 100 of you at meetings and field trips, and I occasionally wonder about the rest of you. I have hints that some of you are spectacularly phenomenal birders. But I wonder if many of you are (bad) birdwatchers? Before you take insult and quit reading, let's define the term! I've been reading a charming book, *How To Be A (Bad) Birdwatcher*, by Simon Barnes, a British sports writer. It's available at the public library or from Pantheon books. Funny and irreverent, the book talks about those of us who really don't know much technical or scientific information on birds but are entranced by them: their colors, their habits, their ability to fly. They enrich our lives, even if we don't know their names and have no interest in distinguishing a Sprague's Pipit from an American Pipit. Somewhere along the line we fell in love with some aspect of, or experience with, birds. As Barnes notes, "Birdwatching embraces both halves of our natural desire for contradiction. It brings us enhanced enjoyment of the ordinary, the easy, the safe, and it brings us moments of high drama and gratification and dangerous delight. Rather like life, really. And that is what bad birdwatching is all about. Life, that is to say."

Barnes goes into why we watch birds: they are available, accessible, and we are entranced by flight. He points out that most of our non-confrontational sports are based on how well we imitate flying (horse and motorcycle riding, sailing, skiing) or defy gravity (figure skating, high jump, golf). Of course, we also get caught up with the search for the rare and end up plunking down our life savings to go to the Amazon to see wildly colored birds that never cross our normal paths. Some of us get very competitive and have to know all the details of every bird that flies by at 50 feet and recognize it by one note of its call. Many of us feel enriched simply by the presence of the creatures with which we share the planet. The book does ease us into more knowledge, or at least easy access to developing more skills for recognizing birds and finding ones that interest us. Knowing their names, Barnes advocates, develops a personal relationship with them. The author takes us on some entertaining side trips into the world according to other mammals—the dog's understanding of the world through scent rather than vision, for example.

This month, FCAS member Gary Lefko's wonderful birdwatching website, www.coloradobirding.org/, has a new feature of interest to bad and intermediate birdwatchers, in particular, as well as top competitors. Gary is building a database for finding specific birds by species, or finding out what birds can be found and where, at different Colorado locations. At this point, the species list is short, but it will grow, and if you click on it, it will lead you, for example, to details of where to find Burrowing Owls or Bald Eagles. The area lists are more detailed, so whether you're headed for Aiken Canyon or Boulder County, the site has a number of recommendations (on a rating scale of from one to five birds) for places to visit. The website also carries announcements of field trips and special programs for numerous Northern Colorado organizations and locations.



Fort Collins Audubon Society Members! Free! E-mail News Service Now Available!

- Receive regular news posts on FCAS events
- Get timely monthly meeting reminders
- Hear of volunteer opportunities as they arise

Visit www.fortnet.org/Audubon/ to learn more and to subscribe to this new members-only service.

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Membership Application

Join the Fort Collins Audubon Society (FCAS) directly, or automatically become a member by joining the National Audubon Society (NAS). *Choose one below:*

- New or Renewing Member of FCAS** (annual dues) **\$15**
 (Receive the *Ptarmigan* newsletter)
 FCAS may share my name with NAS
- New Member of NAS & Chapter** **\$20**
 (Receive *Audubon* magazine and *Ptarmigan*)
- Renewing Member of NAS & Chapter** **\$35**
 (Receive *Audubon* magazine and *Ptarmigan*)

Did you know? Less than \$1 of your NAS dues is left for FCAS funds. FCAS serves NAS members through its own fundraising efforts. We appreciate your financial support!

Additional donation to FCAS \$ _____
Total enclosed \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

- I prefer to receive the *Ptarmigan* via the FCAS website. Please e-mail me when posted.**

Please make your check payable to **FCAS** and send along with this form to: **Fort Collins Audubon Society, PO Box 271968, Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968**

**FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY PROGRAMS AND
 FIELD TRIPS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.**
 Visit our website at www.fortnet.org/Audubon or call 970-490-BIRD.

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