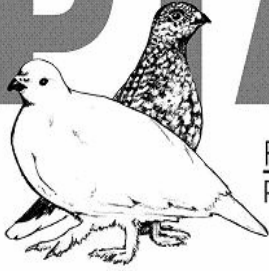


# PTARMIGAN



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.

September 2006

Volume 38, Issue 1

## Audubon: The Man Behind the Paintings

### *Getting to Know John James Audubon*

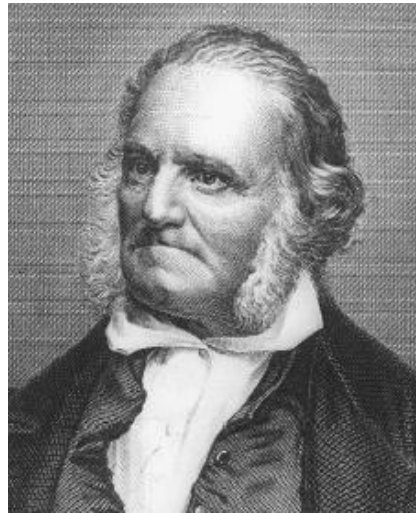
John James Audubon (1785–1851), the namesake of our society, is well known for his paintings of North American birds. Yet how well do you know Audubon, the man behind the paintings? Born in Haiti and raised in France, his parents sent him to North America as a young man. What type of person was he, and how did he get his start in painting and ornithology? Both succeeding and failing in various business ventures, he continued to pursue his goal of painting all the birds of North America. Along the way, he encountered well-known ornithologists: did they befriend him or undermine him? Audubon's endeavor took him into the wilderness for extended periods. Was he faithful to his wife, Lucy, while away on his "birding trips"? Learn what Lucy thought about her husband's quest and his ability to earn a living for his family.

Rebuffed by American publishers when it came time to publish his work, Audubon traveled to England where his life-size bird paintings were well received. His seminal work, *The Birds of America*, was a four-

volume set of 435 life-size prints and was dubbed the double elephant folio. Find out who paid the highest price for this epic work. Join us for our program on September 14 to learn more about the fascinating life of Audubon! Long-time Fort Collins Audubon member

Mildred I. Johnson will share what she has learned in her recent studies of several Audubon biographies.

Mildred spent her early years on a farm in Iowa. As a toddler, she was introduced to birds by a wise, nature-loving mother. Her awareness of birds at an early age led to her winning a bird identification contest during her first year at summer camp: her reward—a set of three bird books! Mildred's birding interests were set aside temporarily for marriage and raising two children. She eventually earned B.S. and M.S. degrees at Colorado



State University and taught for many years at the CSU Business College. After retirement, and with inspiration from Kevin Cook, Mildred joined the Audubon Society and started birding in earnest—in the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, and Scotland.

**THURSDAY EVENING PROGRAM—September 14, 2006**  
**Ludlow Room, Fort Collins Lincoln Center, 417 W. Magnolia Street**  
**Volunteer Fair: 7:00 p.m., Program: 7:30 p.m.**

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

Visit our website at [www.fortnet.org/Audubon](http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon) or call 970-490-BIRD.

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# S E P T – O C T

# F I E L D T R I P S

All field trips are free of charge and open to the public. All experience levels are welcome. Participants should dress appropriately for the weather. Bring snacks or lunch, water, binoculars, and spotting scopes (if you have them). Carpooling is encouraged. A \$3.00 (unless otherwise specified) contribution per passenger to the driver is suggested. Visit [www.fortnet.org/Audubon](http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon) for more information. For all field trips and surveys, please contact the trip leader for sign-up and trip details.

Colorado state law requires all visitors to Colorado Division of Wildlife-owned lands to possess a Habitat Stamp while on the property. Purchase a stamp wherever hunting and fishing licenses are sold, at a CDOW service center, or online for \$5.00 with a previously purchased license, or \$10.00 if purchased separately. Visit <http://wildlife.state.co.us/ShopDOW/AppsAndLicenses/HabitatStamp/> for more information, including exceptions. A triple asterisk (\*\*\*) within a field trip description in this list indicates that the field trip will likely include CDOW-owned lands.

**9/09/06, Saturday. Eastern Plains Reservoirs.**

Leaders: Beth Dillon (970-490-2610 or [dillon\\_b@hotmail.com](mailto:dillon_b@hotmail.com)) and Peter Gent. We will focus on shorebirds at Jackson and/or Prewitt Reservoirs, depending on shorebird numbers and mudflat conditions. 7:30 a.m. to late afternoon. Meet at the Harmony Transfer Center at the northwest corner of I-25 and Harmony Road. Limited to 12 participants.

**9/10/06, Sunday. Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey.**

Leader: Sol Miller at [eagleye1029@yahoo.com](mailto:eagleye1029@yahoo.com). Meet at 7:00 a.m. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the city. All levels welcomed.

**9/16/06, Saturday. Fort Collins Area Hotspots.**

Leader: Dave Leatherman at 970-416-0193. 7:00–12:00. Meet in the parking lot at the southwest corner of Prospect and Sharp Point Drive. Search for fall migrant landbirds at several locations, including the Poudre River. Limited to 15 participants.

**9/17/06, Sunday. Fossil Creek Reservoir Bird Survey.**

Leader: Nick Komar at [quetzal65@comcast.net](mailto:quetzal65@comcast.net) or 970-416-7527. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the county. All levels welcomed. Limited to five participants plus leader.

**9/24/06, Sunday. Rocky Mountain National Park.**

Leader: Sue Riffe at [sheflew2@comcast.net](mailto:sheflew2@comcast.net) or 970-232-4539. Half-day trip. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Beaver Meadows Visitor Center in Estes Park. We will enjoy fall birds, the changing aspen, and bugling elk.

**10/07/06, Saturday. 2nd Annual Northern Colorado Birding Fair.**

Fossil Creek Reservoir Regional Open Space, Larimer County. 7:00–1:00. For more information visit [www.gsmpc.org/Birdingflyer.pdf](http://www.gsmpc.org/Birdingflyer.pdf).

**10/8/06, Sunday. Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey.**

Leader: Sol Miller at [eagleye1029@yahoo.com](mailto:eagleye1029@yahoo.com). Meet at 7:00 a.m. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the city. All levels welcomed.

**10/14/06, Saturday. Greeley Area Reservoirs.**

Leader: Dick Maxfield at [richard.maxfield@comcast.net](mailto:richard.maxfield@comcast.net). 8:00 a.m. to early afternoon. Meet at the Safeway parking lot at the northeast corner of US 34 Bypass and 47th Ave. We will visit several lakes to search for fall migrant waterbirds.

**10/15/06, Sunday. Fossil Creek Reservoir Bird Survey.**

Leader: Nick Komar at [quetzal65@comcast.net](mailto:quetzal65@comcast.net) or 970-416-7527. FCAS performs a monthly bird census for the county. All levels welcomed. Limited to five participants plus leader.

**10/17–31/06, 15 days. Trinidad and Tobago.**

Leader: Bill Murphy. See details for this international trip on page 5.

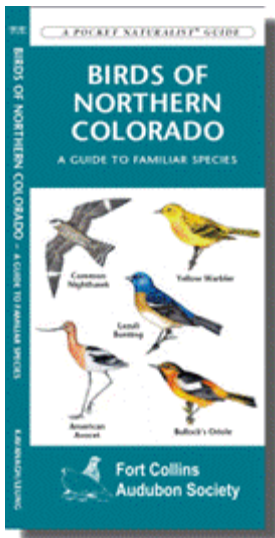
**10/21/06, Saturday. Loveland West and Foothills.**

Leader: Connie Kogler at 970-622-9710 (home), 215-6076 (cell), or [ckogler@mac.com](mailto:ckogler@mac.com). 8:00 a.m. to mid-afternoon. Meet at the King Soopers parking lot on the corner of Taft and SW 14th. We will explore some of the lakes and reservoirs on the western edge of Loveland, and just into the foothills. This will be both a walking and driving trip. Limit 16 people or four car loads! \*\*\*

**10/28/06, Saturday. Birding for Beginners/Fort Collins.**

Leaders: Ken Ecton (970-482-9052 or [kenect@gmail.com](mailto:kenect@gmail.com)) and Rob Sparks. 8:00 a.m. Limited to 10 participants. Call leader to sign up and learn meeting location.

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.



## New Pocket Guide Available from FCAS

Fort Collins Audubon Society and Waterford Press have developed a pocket guide to the birds of northern Colorado. The 150 bird species featured in the guide were chosen by Fort Collins Audubon to represent the birds most commonly seen and most sought by visitors to our area. The 10-panel foldout brochure is laminated, and will stand up to field use in all kinds of weather. It is a great complement to your field guide, and you will want one for car, bicycle bag, and backpack! Keep one by your bird feeder window. It makes a great gift for family and friends! Have several on hand for your out-of-town guests. Contact FCAS or come to our programs to purchase your copies! Price: \$5.95.

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

October 12, 2006

### Special Program! The Natural History of Trinidad and Tobago

By Bill Murphy. Lincoln Center Columbine Room, 7:00 p.m.

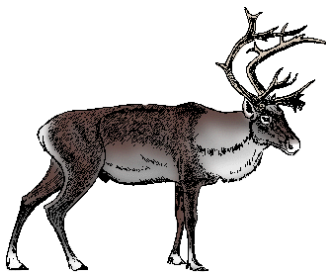
Of all the Caribbean islands, Trinidad and Tobago are the most bountifully blessed with wildlife. Nowhere else do West Indian and Amazonian species overlap. T&T's wealth of wildlife results from a great variety of habitats, perennially available fruits and seeds, and a gentle, sunny climate.

Bill Murphy, author of the book *Birder's Guide to Trinidad and Tobago*, has been visiting Trinidad and Tobago since the late 1970s. In this multi-media presentation, Bill will share with us some of the sights and sounds of the southernmost country in the Caribbean. Besides birds, he will discuss the geology, plants, insects, sea life, impact of human culture, and influence of the Audubon Society on conservation of these emerald isles.



Bill also will be leading a trip to Trinidad and Tobago for FCAS on Oct 17–31, 2006. For details on the trip and how to sign up, visit [www.birderbill.us/Oct06/](http://www.birderbill.us/Oct06/). Time is short, so don't delay!

~~~~~  
November 9, 2006



### Backpacking the Brooks Range and the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

By Mark Easter. Lincoln Center Ludlow Room, 7:00 p.m.

Mark will chronicle his June 2006 wilderness backpack trip with friends in northern Alaska. Don't miss this photographic journey of wilderness and wildlife!



## Birdathon 2006

This year's Birdathon took place on the second weekend in May during a 24-hour period beginning on Friday, May 12, lasting through Saturday, May 13. It was the beginning of peak spring migration on the plains and foothills—although in a period that should be cool and wet, it was hot and dry!

Teams obtained pledges based on the total number of species seen. We received more than 50 personal and business pledges and raised \$6,600. We had a challenge grant by a generous FCAS couple, who pledged to equal dollar-for-dollar what we raised. However, in their generosity, they gave us \$4,000, which made this Birdathon a rousing success. We thank them greatly. We would especially like to thank our business pledges: Bath Garden Center, Wells Fargo Foundation, Bretting Law Firm, and Jax Outdoor Gear for their generous contributions this year.

Four teams were formed with about 20 participants. Teams covered the usual terrain including Rocky Mountain National Park, Cameron Pass, Rist Canyon, Dixon Reservoir, Watson Lake, and all the way to Crow Valley Campground and Murphy's pasture on the Pawnee (a nationally designated *Important Bird Area—IBA*).

After the Birdathon, several folks met at Avogadro's for tall tales, comparative notes, and a comfortable chair!

As mentioned in our spring newsletters, a portion of the Birdathon proceeds this year was dedicated to the Fort Collins Audubon Scholarship Fund.

For more on the Birdathon and IBAs see:

### ***Fort Collins Audubon Birdathon***

[www.fortnet.org/Audubon/activities/birdathon/birdathon.htm](http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon/activities/birdathon/birdathon.htm)

### ***National Audubon Birdathon***

[www.audubon.org/bird/birdathon/](http://www.audubon.org/bird/birdathon/)

### ***Colorado's Important Bird Areas Program***

[www.audubon.org/bird/iba/co.html](http://www.audubon.org/bird/iba/co.html)

[www.abcbirds.org/iba/colorado.htm](http://www.abcbirds.org/iba/colorado.htm)



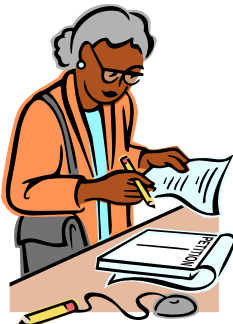
Phil Friedman

2006 Birdathon Coordinator

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## FCAS Volunteer Fair

The vitality of Fort Collins Audubon depends upon the energy of our volunteers, and the quality of our programming depends on the efforts they contribute. Last year's FCAS Volunteer Fair was successful in finding members to fill some of our key leadership positions. Please plan to come early to the Program Meeting on September 14. We will again be holding a "job fair" from 7:00 to 7:30 p.m. for any members interested in volunteering their skills and time to Fort Collins Audubon. Committee Chairs will be on hand to talk about their work and opportunities to help. Openings and opportunities include Program Chair, Conservation Chair, Booth Coordinator, Fundraising and Development Chair, and more. We also want to know about you and your skills and interests. Please plan to attend!



## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO BIRDING TRIP, 17–31 October 2006



Bill Murphy, author of the *Birder's Guide to Trinidad and Tobago* (now in its third edition) and presenter at our October program, is offering an exclusive birding trip for Fort Collins Audubon Society. Visit [www.birderbill.us/Oct06/](http://www.birderbill.us/Oct06/) for details and to sign up for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Only 10 participants can go! Deadline to sign up is Saturday, 23 September. The trip fee includes a \$100 donation to Fort Collins Audubon Society. Time is short, so don't delay!

Trinidad and Tobago are lush, stunningly beautiful islands located just 10° above the Equator, adjacent to Venezuela. Blessed with a perfect climate and a unique blend of Amazonian and West Indian fauna and flora, this verdant two-island republic is universally acclaimed as the best place in the New World to first experience the splendor of tropical birds.

Even persons with broad experience with Neotropical birds return to T&T because of the ease with which birds and other kinds of wildlife can be studied. Birds and butterflies resplendent in gaudy hues probe at arm's length at nectar and fruit feeders. A profusion of vivid flowers adds intense color to the tropical vistas, and every scene is a photo opportunity. Our accommodations are time-tested and birder-friendly, and the food is sensational. Enjoying freshly picked fruit and locally grown coffee for breakfast is a luxurious experience.

A high percentage of South American bird families are represented in T&T, yet 12,000 years of isolation from the mainland has left the species list at a manageable 457, of which participants on the 50+ tours Bill has led to T&T since 1980 usually observe about 225. Such diversity in a small area is unequalled anywhere else in the Caribbean, indeed almost anywhere else in the Western Hemisphere. Avian species rare or difficult to observe elsewhere are observed easily in T&T. Of particular interest are the endangered White-tailed Sabrewing, Green-throated Mango, and Tufted Coquette hummingbirds; the bizarre nocturnal Oilbirds and Common Potoos; and the seabird colonies on Little Tobago Island. Even the common species are quite spectacular, with three kinds of hyperactive manakins popping about their leks, tanagers that look like plush burgundy velvet, jacamars gleaming with scintillating colors and acting like goliath hummingbirds on steroids, and luminescent lines of Scarlet Ibis floating into their emerald mangrove roosts at sunset.



Although you will always remember the sights and sounds of the birds, you will also treasure your memories of T&T's other wildlife, including mammals (99 species), reptiles (96 species), amphibians (37 species), and butterflies (617 species).

Besides seeing all the great birds, you will learn much of the diverse natural history of the islands, including trees, wildflowers, and the more spectacular butterflies. So there you have it. From the predawn calls of owls to the twilight chorus of thrushes, each day will be a wonderful mixture of exotic birds, animals, plants, and cuisine. You will experience Trinidad and Tobago from forested slopes to palm-fringed beaches. Breathtaking scenery, unique sounds, delectable cuisine, and exceptional companionship all will add to the thrill of the trip. And remember—you need not be an experienced naturalist to enjoy this tour.



## Second Annual Northern Colorado Birding Fair



October 7, 2006

7 am – 1 pm

**Fossil Creek Reservoir Regional Open Space**

(On Carpenter Road, 1 Mile West of I-25/HWY 392 Windsor Exit)

**Crazy about birds, or just curious?  
Join us for a free day of fun and learning!**

Compete in the Bird Olympics, go on bird walk, or listen to presentations from experts in the field.

No matter what tickles your fancy, birders young and old, beginner to experienced, will find something at this exciting event to fit the bill.

### **FREE FUN FOR EVERYONE!**

Hands-on Activities and Informational Booths

Guided Birding Walks (7, 8:15 & 10 am)

Raptor Releases (8 am & 1 pm)

Guest Speakers (Hourly: 8:30 – 11:30 am)

Live Raptors on Display

Continuing Education Credits for Teachers

T-shirts and Other Door Prizes

Hot dogs, hamburgers, drinks and more will be available for sale from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm by the Berthoud Lions Club.



Call Larimer County Parks & Open Lands to learn more, 679-4534 or [ggood@larimer.org](mailto:ggood@larimer.org)

**Welcome to our new members!  
We look forward to seeing you  
at our meetings!**

|                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Randall Bain          | Sharon Kay             |
| Philip R. Bigsby      | Julie Keahey           |
| Faye Blanding         | Mary R. Kennedy        |
| Lanny Brown           | Mani Lee               |
| J. Buck               | Ulla Lee               |
| James Buckley         | Shirley Lindley        |
| Leslie A. Burch       | Alyson Lowe            |
| Col-D-D Campbell      | Cindy Lyons            |
| John Capp             | Mary Madrid            |
| Shirley Carter        | John McGreen           |
| Dave Cawrse           | Doris G. Miller        |
| Sandy Dahlberg        | Hildegard Morgan       |
| Patrick Damone        | Margaret Moyle         |
| Antonia Damone        | James O'Connor         |
| Wayne T. Doud         | Constance Peck         |
| Dorothy Farnell       | Kerri Pedersen         |
| Earl L. Fedder        | Cheryl Platz           |
| Mary Louise Firkins   | Judy Robertson         |
| Erin Fox              | Matt and Cara Robinson |
| Sandra Freeman        | Douglas K. Swartz      |
| Clarence O. Goetz     | Marilyn Tobin          |
| Thomas Hoffman        | Rafael Ubico           |
| Dorthea Huggenberger  | Jane G. Wallower       |
| Charline Hunt         | Georgia J. Wilson      |
| William Hurmence      | Rich Wright            |
| William Stephen Jaffe |                        |

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[www.fortnet.org/audubon/leadership.htm](http://www.fortnet.org/audubon/leadership.htm)

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Would you like to reduce the amount of mail you receive? Use less paper? You can choose to receive e-mail notification when the Ptarmigan is available on the Fort Collins Audubon Society's website! The current issue of the newsletter is available online to members only, AND is available a week or two earlier than the paper copy! If you'd like to receive an e-mail notification, please e-mail your **name and address as it appears on your newsletter's mailing label** and the e-mail address you wish to use to *bjones@frii.com*. Please indicate if you just want e-mail or if you would prefer both e-mail and the paper newsletter. We'd be happy to accommodate!



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## Trinidad & Tobago Birding Trip, October 17–31. See page 5 for details!

### In This Issue!

#### Regular Monthly Features

|                                              |        |
|----------------------------------------------|--------|
| September Program: John James Audubon: A Bio | Page 1 |
| Field Trip Calendar: September & October     | Page 2 |
| Upcoming Programs: October & November        | Page 3 |
| FCAS Contacts                                | Page 7 |
| In This Issue!                               | Page 8 |
| Membership Application                       | Page 8 |

#### This Month's Features

|                                             |        |
|---------------------------------------------|--------|
| New Pocket Guide Available                  | Page 3 |
| 2006 Birdathon Summary                      | Page 4 |
| FCAS Volunteer Fair                         | Page 4 |
| Trinidad & Tobago Birding Trip              | Page 5 |
| Northern Colorado Birding Fair              | Page 6 |
| Want Less Mail? Get Your Newsletter Online! | Page 7 |
| Monthly List of New Members                 | Page 7 |

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



Go to [www.fortnet.org/Audubon/fcaudubon.htm](http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon/fcaudubon.htm) to learn more and to subscribe to the *fcaudubon* e-mail news service.

#### 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**

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