

ptarmigan

SEPT 2001

Fort Collins Audubon Society

Volume 33 Number 1



GALAPAGOS: A WILDLIFE MECCA

When you hear “Galapagos Islands,” you probably imagine giant tortoises, arrays of Darwin’s finches, and algae-eating marine iguanas.

But, what you might not picture are virtual “hailstorms” of blue-footed boobies, confusions of magnificent and great frigatebirds, red-footed boobies perching in trees, penguins hanging out as far north as any penguin will go, cormorants that can’t fly, too many storm-petrels to count, swallow-tailed and lava gulls strutting at your feet, striated and lava herons stalking the lava shorelines, waved albatrosses coming in for their unlikely landings, yellow warblers sporting red caps, medium ground finches helping themselves to bread at your table, Hood mockingbirds pecking your ear, giant land iguanas rustling through the woodlands, lava lizards catching some BTUs across sun-heated lava, green sea turtles and white-tipped sharks skimming underneath you as you snorkel, sea lions hauling up to lie on the beach (right next to you)...

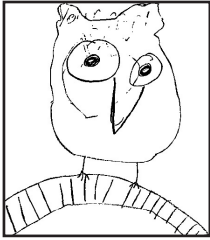
This past summer, Cynthia Melcher visited

the equator-straddling Galapagos Islands, and she’s anxious to share her experiences with you. Please join us as Cynthia takes us on a wildlife photo tour of Seymour, Bartolomé, Santiago, Genovesa, Santa Cruz, Isabela, Fernandina, and EspaZola islands. To accompany her slides, Cynthia will discuss the natural histories of species she saw, the Galapagos in general, and a bit about the landscape around Quito--Ecuador’s capital.

Cynthia earned her M.S. in Biology and the Program for Ecological Studies at Colorado State University in 1992. Her work in avian field ecology has included a wide variety of projects, including the behavioral ecology of piping plovers and white-tailed ptarmigan, the use of migration stopovers among shorebirds and passerines, and the responses of birds to both natural and anthropogenic disturbances. Cynthia currently works with the Zoology team at Colorado Natural Heritage Program, and each year she leads an Audubon Christmas Bird Count near Janos, Chihuahua.

WHEN: Thursday Evening
September 13, 2001
7:30 pm

WHERE: Ludlow Room
Fort Collins Lincoln Center
417 Magnolia Street



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Rick Harness, President

Although our chapter takes a break each summer, it was a busy season on the environmental front, both nationally and locally.

The Bush Administration is looking to undo the Roadless Area Conservation Rule -- an overwhelmingly popular, publicly mandated policy that protects the last 30 percent of America's wild national forests from road building, logging, mining, and drilling. President Bush called for a re-examination of the Roadless Rule - a forest protection policy developed over a two-year period through the largest public participation process in history. On July 10, 2001, the Bush Administration issued an "Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking" seeking public input in order to "determine the next steps in addressing long-term protection of roadless forest values within the National Forest System." These comments must be received by September 10, 2001, and it's possible the Roadless Rule will be overturned.

On August 1, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to open the pristine Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas drilling. On a vote of 206-222, Members of the House voted against an amendment by Reps. Edward Markey (D-MA) and Nancy Johnson (R-CT) that sought to remove the Arctic drilling provision from the House energy policy package.

The fight to save the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge now moves to the U.S. Senate, who may take up the issue when they return from their summer break in September. Audubon is working to ensure the Senate does not go the way of the House. You can help in the effort by contacting your two U.S. Senators

and urging them to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from oil and gas drilling. If you want to help Audubon protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the Roadless Rule, call Audubon at 202-861-2242, or visit www.audubon.org.

At the local level, FCAS members have participated in the decision-making process about Fossil Creek Reservoir boating restrictions, the I-25 Subcorridor Plan, and siting of communication towers proposed north of Fort Collins. FCAS was also busy with summer field trips. During the year, FCAS members led 30 field trips; from one-hour nature walks in downtown Fort Collins to all-day excursions to distant parts of the state. Although most of the trips focused on bird finding and identification, we also featured a herptile observation field trip to the Pawnee National grasslands and a fire ecology field trip in foothills habitat. One of the highlights of our program has been the development of a monthly "Birding for Beginners" series. More than 300 participants have benefited from the trips. If you are interested in joining future trips, please contact Nick Komar!

One of the best ways you can support the Fort Collins Chapter of the Audubon Society is to become more active. Please feel free to contact me or any other officer if you'd like to become more involved. Our chapter also holds monthly board meetings, which are open to anyone. At our next meeting, we will create a nomination committee to develop a list of candidates for next year's officers. If you have interest in holding an office, please don't be shy! We are always glad to bring in new faces with new ideas!

CONSERVATION CORNER

Bill Miller, Conservation Committee

Summer is over, which means that the Colorado legislative session is just around the corner. Issues of concern to the Fort Collins Audubon Society have been cropping up at the local, state, and national levels. Rick Harness mentions some of the most critical ones in his President's Message elsewhere in this issue. Fort Collins Audubon is actively involved not only at the local level, but also in supporting the efforts of Audubon of Colorado. We have a list of people who have volunteered to respond to legislative alerts sent out by the Chapter. We do this by e-mail. May we add your name and e-mail address to this list? Please contact Bill Miller at 493-7693 or e-mail him at: 5mcorp@verinet.com.

FCAS FIELD TRIPS



All field trips are open to the public and free of charge.

No prior experience is necessary. Please call field trip coordinator Nick Komar at 970-416-7527, or e-mail him at quetzal65@home.com for more information.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS. 8-11 a.m. Meet at the parking area on the south side of Sheldon Lake (City Park) along Mulberry Street. A telescope will be provided for close-up viewing of waterfowl and other birds. Children accompanied by adults are welcome. Bring snacks and water. Contact leader Beth Dillon for more information, 970-490-2610, dillon_b@hotmail.com.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

TURKEY VULTURE ROOST. Morning. Join biologist Alex Cringan at 7 a.m. to observe an urban communal roost of migrating Turkey Vultures, located near downtown Fort Collins. Participants will have photo opportunities of the birds, but must stay silent while below the roost. Meet at 1200 Stover St. Additional birdwatching opportunities will be sought at Riverbend Ponds/Cottonwood Hollow Natural Area until 10:30 am. Contact leader Alex Cringan for more details, 970-493-9138, acringan01@home.com.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

JACKSON LAKE STATE PARK. All day. Meet at 6 a.m. at the new Colorado Welcome Center parking lot (E. Prospect Street, just west of I-25) to car pool for the drive to Jackson Lake, which is near Fort Morgan. The specialty of this trip will be migrating shorebirds. Bring a lunch and clothing for both warm and cold weather. For more details, contact co-leader Nick Komar, 970-416-7527, quetzal65@home.com, or co-leader Doug Faulkner (Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory), 303-458-5802, pomjaeger@aol.com.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

BARR LAKE STATE PARK. All day (back by 3 pm). Meet at 7 a.m. to carpool to Barr Lake, a magnet for migratory birds northeast of Denver (about an hour south of Fort Collins). Contact leader Phil Friedman, 970-493-2959, phifri@frie.com, to sign up for this trip and get further details.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

FORT COLLINS BIRDING HOT SPOTS. Morning. Meet at 7 a.m. at Pine Ridge Natural Area parking area (next to Dixon Reservoir on Larimer County Rd. 42C). Contact leader Nick Komar for more details, 970-416-7527, quetzal65@home.com.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 6

HAWKS and OWLS. Evening. Meet at 3 pm at the raptor cages of the Environmental Learning Center (east end of Drake Rd.). We will carpool to rural areas where we should observe several species of hawks. At sunset we will search for Short-eared Owls near the Wellington State Wildlife Area. Contact leader Rick Harness (FCAS President) for more details, 970-204-4001, rharness@edmlink.com.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13

STRAUSS CABIN LAKE and ARAPAHOE BEND NATURAL AREA. 8-9:30 a.m. Contact leader Joe LaFleur, Birdcdroms@aol.com, 970-221-9619, or call Wild Birds Unlimited, 970-225-2557, for more details.

SUNDAY OCTOBER 14

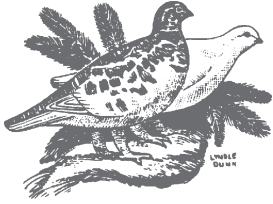
BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS. 9-11:30 a.m. Meet at City Park Municipal Swimming Pool Parking Lot. Contact leader Phil Friedman for more details, 970-493-2959, phifri@frie.com.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 20

JAEGERS. All day. Meet at 8 a.m. at the new Colorado Welcome Center parking lot (E. Prospect Street just west of I-25). Contact leader Doug Faulkner (Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory) for more details, 303-458-5802, pomjaeger@aol.com.

SUNDAY OCTOBER 28

LOVELAND LAKES. Morning. Meet at 8 a.m. at Lake Loveland Swim Beach (North Lake Park, Taft Road, Loveland). Some of the lakes that we will survey for waterfowl, gulls, and other birds include Lake Loveland, Horsehoe Lake, and Boyd Lake. Contact leader Nick Komar for more information, 970-416-7527, quetzal65@home.com.



Fort Collins Audubon Society
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 Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968

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Ptarmigan thanks the Johnson Elementary School student who drew the owl illustration on page 2 during a FCAS sponsored presentation by the Rocky Mountain Raptor Program.

Upcoming Field Trips

Saturday, September 15
 BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS

Tuesday, September 18
 TURKEY VULTURE ROOST

Sunday, September 23
 JACKSON LAKE STATE PARK

Saturday, September 29
 BARR LAKE STATE PARK

Sunday, September 30
 FORT COLLINS BIRDING HOT SPOTS

Saturday October 6
 HAWKS and OWLS

Saturday, October 13
 STRAUSS CABIN LAKE and ARAPAHOE BEND

Sunday October 14
 BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS

Saturday October 20
 JAEGERS

Sunday October 28
 LOVELAND LAKES

National Audubon Society Chapter Membership Application

YES, I'd like to join.

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and of my local chapter. Please send Audubon Magazine and my membership card to the address below.

My check for \$20 is enclosed.

Please make your check payable to the National Audubon Society and send along with this form to:

National Audubon Society
 Chapter Membership Data Center
 PO Box 51001
 Boulder, CO 80322-1001

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____
 State _____ Zip _____

Local Chapter Fort Collins Audubon Society D06
 Local Chapter Code: 7XCHA

The mission of Fort Collins Audubon Society is to promote the appreciation, conservation and restoration of ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife, through education, participation, stewardship, and advocacy.