

NOV 2003

ptarmigan

Vol 35 Num 3



Fort Collins Audubon Society

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

BIRDS AND BATS: ADVENTURE AND SCIENCE IN PERU

GARY GRAHAM, Executive Director of Audubon Colorado, lived and studied in Peru for almost two years, where he helped discover several new species of birds and bats for science and for the country. He will show slides of many rare and unique critters and places. Gary will also tell stories of close calls with killer bees, exploration of places where no humans had ever visited, and the joys of biological fieldwork in the tropics. But come prepared. He will conclude with pictures of his favorite birds of the world and challenge the audience to guess their names.

Gary received his Ph.D. in biology from the University of New Mexico in 1986 and has studied bats and birds in the U.S., Mexico and South America.



Coming up in December:

Thursday, December 18

Note change to third Thursday of the month

In keeping with our tradition, the December program meeting will once again be a potluck and slide show, to take place at the Foothills Unitarian Church. You, our members, will provide the program. Feel free to bring up to about 20 slides and the appropriate narrative. Prints of your favorite pictures could be passed around while the lights are still on. Photos do not necessarily have to be of birds. The Church is located at 1815 Yorktown Ave, one block north of West Drake Avenue and one block west of Constitution Avenue. The meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 18. Please bring a supper or dessert item (deli items are more than acceptable!) with four-to-eight servings and any necessary serving utensils. Paper plates, beverage containers, eating utensils, and drinks will be provided.

THURSDAY EVENING PROGRAM—NOVEMBER 20, 7:30 PM

Ludlow Room, Lincoln Center, 417 Magnolia Street

NOTE: December's FCAS meeting will be the 3rd Thursday instead of the 2nd Thursday of that month.

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

Visit our website at www.fortnet.org/Audubon



NOVEMBER

FIELD TRIPS & Notices

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

No prior experience is necessary. Please check FCAS website, www.fortnet.org/audubon for details, or contact field trip coordinator, **Nick Komar**, 970-416-7527, quetzal65@comcast.net, for more information.

EAGLES

Saturday, November 8, afternoon

Meet at the Environmental Learning Center raptor cages (Fort Collins) at 1 PM for an afternoon of eagle and other raptor viewing. Carpooling encouraged (\$2 to drivers). Participation limited. Register with leader Rick Harness, rharness@edmlinnk.com.

WELLINGTON WATERFOWL

Sunday, November 9, morning

Tour lakes of Wellington in northeast Larimer County to observe a great variety of wintering and migrant waterfowl. Be prepared to share telescopes. Register with leader Nick Komar for details quetzal65@comcast.net.

FOSSIL CREEK RESERVOIR BIRD SURVEY

Sunday, November 16, morning

FCAS has been conducting a monthly census of birds on City and County properties abutting the Fossil Creek Reservoir wetlands area. Come out and help. Register with Nick Komar, quetzal65@comcast.net.

BIRDS OF BOULDER COUNTY

Saturday, November 29, morning

Meet at Jimm Hamm Park at 8 AM. Call (303-444-6365) or email tedfloyd@aba.org trip leader, Ted Floyd for details. Email queries preferred.

2003 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT (CBC)

Sunday, December 14

The 2003 Fort Collins CBC, the longest continuous CBC in Colorado, will be conducted on Sunday, December 14. If you are interested in participating, please contact Cynthia Melcher at (970) 484-8373 (home), (970) 226-9470 (work), or email her at birdswords@yahoo.com.

ELECTION TIME AGAIN

We will be holding elections of chapter officers and directors at the January 2004 meeting. Our chapter's activities are totally dependent on the contributions of time by volunteers. Our Nominating Committee is still looking for candidates for the elected positions as well as the appointed positions. A slate of candidates will be announced in the combined December/January issue of the *Ptarmigan*, with the election to take place at the Annual Meeting, January 8, 2004.

If you are willing to serve in any elected or appointed position (or on a committee), please contact one of the members of the Nominating Committee: Joel Hurmence (970) 481-2124, jhurmence@hotmail.com, Beth Dillon (970) 490-2610, dillon_b@hotmail.com, or Phil Friedman (970) 493-2959, phifri@frii.com.

ANNUAL MEETING – January 8, 2004

The next FCAS Annual Meeting is now only two months away. This year we will hold the Annual Meeting in the larger Columbine Room at the Lincoln Center. In addition to the election of new Board officers and Directors and the recognition of certain members who have made significant contributions of their time and energy on behalf of FCAS, we will also hold a Silent Auction. *If you have any worthwhile items or services* that you would like to contribute as auction items or as door prizes, please contact Bill Miller at (970) 493-7693 or at 5mcorp@verinet.com. Further details will be provided in the December/January issue of the *Ptarmigan*.

WILDLIFE WATCH - November 15

9am-1pm, Lory State Park, 708 Lodgepole Drive, Bellvue. This fun, 4-hour wildlife viewing-skills program from the Colorado Division of Wildlife will help you become a better wildlife watcher. Discover where, when & how to find wildlife. Learn about wildlife habitats and how best to use binoculars & field guides. A trail walk follows dynamic presentations and informative, hands-on activities. \$15 per person or household. Adults and families, ages 12 & over. For info & reservations, 970.472.4344 or www.wildlifewatch.net.

FCAS CHAPTER CONTACTS:

President:	Bill Miller	5mcorp@verinet.com	970-493-7693
Membership:	Ann Molison	amolison2@attbi.com	970-377-4228
Field Trips:	Nick Komar	quetzal65@attbi.com	970-416-7527
Birdathon:	Rick Schroeder	rmschroe@verinet.com	970-484-8337

PRESIDENT'S CORNER: Bill Miller

REFERENDUM A IS A BAD IDEA! \$4 billion dollars for what?

In the last Colorado legislative session, the Legislature struggled with how to cope with the drought of the past several years. To that end, they proposed SB 236, which would have authorized up to \$10 billion in bonds for unidentified dam projects. What finally emerged from the session was REFERENDUM A, which will appear on the November 4, 2003 ballot. Voters will be asked, "Shall the state of Colorado debt be increased \$2,000,000,000 with a repayment of \$4,000,000,000 for the purpose of addressing the water infrastructure needs of the state through the issuance of revenue bonds?"

As of yet, no specific water storage projects have been identified upon which the \$2 billion dollars are to be spent. Also remaining unidentified is how the revenue bonds will be paid back. Storage projects pay for their costs of construction in one of several ways. They sell water to agriculture or to municipalities, or they generate electricity for sale. In the case of Referendum A, a new method or repayment is raised—making the taxpayers liable, if need be.

Referendum A is not risk free economically. Proponents argue that there is no liability for the taxpayers because the bonds will be repaid from the revenue the projects generate. What if the project is never finished? Dollars are spent, but there is nothing to sell? The proposal allows the state itself to be a project proponent. If the state partners with private project proponents, there is clearly a state taxpayer liability.

Referendum A is simply a bad idea. It tries to solve issues of a water policy by asking voters to approve a blank check—without knowing what will be built or where, without knowing what the ecological or economic impacts are, and creating some level of liability for us all. The Public Policy Committee of Audubon Colorado has taken a firm stance in opposition to Referendum A, for the following reasons (not all inclusive):

- It provides no immediate relief to our water problems (new dam projects can take decades to build).
- It does not encourage conservation measures to be implemented NOW (efficiency measures can be implemented in a much shorter time period).
- It will be damaging to Colorado's environment and will encourage moving more Western Slope water to the Front Range.

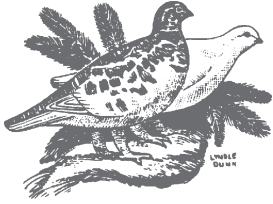
- West slope folks strongly oppose Referendum A (large new dams, which encourage moving water from the Western Slope to the Front Range, endanger rural Colorado's economy and the environmental and social future of the Western Slope).
- Keeping water in streams, not behind dams, is worth billions to Colorado's economy for fishing, rafting, boating, and other forms of recreation.
- It could potentially be costly for the taxpayers.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP FCAS

"United we stand, divided we fall." This quotation, attributed to Greek author Aesop (620 – 560 BC), has been worked into numerous speeches and articles in more modern times. It is especially true today in the Fort Collins Audubon Society. Two major problems faced by volunteer organizations such as ours are burnout and the moving on, for whatever reason, of key players. This past year we have had someone serving in all elected and appointed positions. However, we are now faced with resignations from several key players and, unless they are replaced, the services and activities of the chapter will decline. Of critical importance is finding someone to put out the newsletter. We also need to find a replacement for the Membership Chair. If you think you could spend several hours each month helping out in these areas (or on another committee), we would appreciate hearing from you. You may contact any member of the Nominating Committee or Bill Miller.

TAKE BACK AUDUBON (TBA) REMINDER

We would greatly appreciate it if you would fill out a TBA proxy form and either bring it to the November program meeting or send it to the address on the proxy form that was included in the October issue of the *Ptarmigan*. It is important that you use your name as it appears on the *Audubon* magazine mailing label. It is critical that these reach TBA by November 30. If you no longer have the proxy form included in the October newsletter, you may visit the FCAS website: www.fortnet.org/Audubon and print one off, using the hot link in the left column on the first page of the site.



Fort Collins Audubon Society
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 Fort Collins, CO 80527-1968

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DATES TO REMEMBER

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**National Audubon Society Chapter
 Membership Application**

YES, I'd like to join.
 YES, I'd like to renew (by phone 1-800-274-4201)

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.
 STUDENTS/SENIORS My check for \$15 is enclosed.
 OR charge my credit card: _____
 Expiration date: _____

Please make your check payable to **Audubon** 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

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