

# ptarmigan



## 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.*

## PAST AND FUTURE TRIPS

### **SPONSORED BY FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY**

**This September's meeting is a celebration of FCAS 2003 tours, plus our future February 2004 tour: *Costa Rica Birds, Wildlands, & Conservation.***

#### **SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA**

Southeastern Arizona has long been known for its unique ecosystem and proximity to Mexico. The Chiricahua Mountains provide an international migration corridor above the surrounding desert and rise through seven life zones. Imagine this backdrop for a FCAS tour led by Nick Komar last April. He and the other birders viewed a rich mix of bird species, which Nick will describe in a PowerPoint report and pictures.

#### **GUNNISON RIVER CANOE TRIP**

Both peregrine sightings and petroglyphs viewed close up highlighted this year's three-day canoe excursion on the Gunnison River between Escalante and Whitewater, south of Grand Junction, Colorado. River paddling, canyon hiking, birding, and plunging

in waterfalls and pools along Dominguez Creek built great memories for the coming winter months. This was the second canoe trip offered by FCAS (last year's trip was on the Colorado River west of Fruita) and was a great success. Stay tuned for next year's trip! And don't miss Joel Hurmence's great trip pictures.

#### **COSTA RICA BIRDS, WILDLANDS, & CONSERVATION February 12-22, 2004**

**Sponsored by Fort Collins Audubon,  
Idea Wild, & Emerald Planet**

Get off the beaten track for locations not typically seen by other birding tours and led by local nature guides. It's a new kind of ecotourism where conservation and in-country interaction is the main thrust. While seeing lots of birds and experiencing the friendly, carefree Tico culture of Costa Rica, you'll help forge an opportunity for FCAS and Idea Wild to partner with a local conservation-based travel firm for fundraising, awareness, and conservation action.

### **THURSDAY EVENING PROGRAM—SEPTEMBER 11, 7:30 PM**

**Ludlow Room, Lincoln Center, 417 Magnolia Street**

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



# SEPTEMBER FIELD TRIPS

All field trips are free of charge and open to the public. No prior experience is necessary. Please check FCAS website, [www.fortnet.org/laudubon](http://www.fortnet.org/laudubon) for details, or contact field trip coordinator, **Nick Komar**, 970-416-7527, [quetzal65@comcast.net](mailto:quetzal65@comcast.net), for more information.

## MIGRATING BIRDS ALONG THE RIVER

**Saturday, September 13—morning**

Here's an opportunity to see and hear many species at Fort Collins' premier migration corridor—the Poudre River! This trip is focused towards novice birders. Meet at 9 am at the raptor cages at the Environmental Learning Center, parking area off the east end of Drake Road. Group size is limited so please register with leader **Phil Friedman**, 970-493-2959, [phifri@frii.com](mailto:phifri@frii.com).

## CHICO BASIN RANCH, EL PASO COUNTY

**Saturday, September 20—all day**

In conjunction with the Aiken Audubon Society, visit one of the premier migrant traps in the Colorado Springs area, as well as other Colorado Springs birding locations. A \$10 donation to the Nature Conservancy is expected. For more information, contact leader **David Elwonger**, [davidelwonger@msn.com](mailto:davidelwonger@msn.com) or [davidelwonger@adel-phia.net](mailto:davidelwonger@adel-phia.net).

## FOSSIL CREEK RESERVOIR BIRD SURVEY

**Sunday, September 21—morning**

FCAS has been conducting a monthly census of birds on City and County properties abutting the Fossil Creek Reservoir wetlands area. Contact **Nick Komar** for more information or to register, [quetzal65@comcast.net](mailto:quetzal65@comcast.net), 970-416-7527.

## JACKSON LAKE STATE PARK, MORGAN COUNTY

**Sunday, September 28—all day**

Jackson Lake in fall attracts thousands of migrating shorebirds and waterfowl, as well as land birds. This field trip is geared towards intermediate and advanced birders, with a focus on learning shorebird identification. We hope to see as many as 20 species of shorebirds in various plumages. Weather conditions can be grueling out on the mud flats. Contact leader **Nick Komar** for more information or to register, [quetzal65@comcast.net](mailto:quetzal65@comcast.net), 970-416-7527.

## BIRDATHON 2003 RESULTS

**For the first year—out of 16 years total—it snowed on the Birdathon weekend!** Some of the teams still went out, and some postponed until the following weekend. As a result, our bird totals were somewhat lower than usual. The good news is we still managed to raise \$4,200—our second highest total ever. Thanks to all the hard work on the part of the Team Leaders—**Bill Miller, Joel Hurmence, Phil Friedman, and Nick Komar**—and their team members.

We are also extremely grateful to the following Fort Collins businesses, who supported the Birdathon with generous donations. Please let them know that we appreciate their support. *And please support them as well.*

### Bath Nursery and Garden Center

2000 E. Prospect, 484-5022

### Anheuser-Busch

2351 Busch Drive, 490-4691

### Wild Birds Unlimited

248 E. Monroe Drive, 225-2557

### Poudre Pet & Feed Supply

622 N. College, 482-2741

### Odell Brewing Company

800 East Lincoln Ave, 498-9070

### JAX Outdoor Gear

1200 N. College Ave., 221-0544

## FCAS CHAPTER CONTACTS:

<b>President:</b>	Bill Miller	<a href="mailto:5mcorp@verinet.com">5mcorp@verinet.com</a>	970-493-7693
<b>Membership:</b>	Ann Molison	<a href="mailto:amolison2@attbi.com">amolison2@attbi.com</a>	970-377-4228
<b>Field Trips:</b>	Nick Komar	<a href="mailto:quetzal65@attbi.com">quetzal65@attbi.com</a>	970-416-7527
<b>Birdathon:</b>	Rick Schroeder	<a href="mailto:rmschroe@verinet.com">rmschroe@verinet.com</a>	970-484-8337

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# PRESIDENT'S CORNER: Bill Miller

## A MESSAGE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO MEMBERS from the FCAS Board of Directors

*NOTE: The following information is complex but of extreme importance to the future of both the National Audubon Society and all of its chapters. We appreciate your patience.*

At its meeting on July 17, 2003, the attending members of the Board of the Fort Collins Audubon Society (FCAS) unanimously endorsed support of **TAKE BACK AUDUBON (TBA)**. In so doing, the FCAS Board also voted to solicit your individual proxy to be voted by TBA at the next National Audubon Society (NAS) annual meeting on December 6. We need your proxy vote so that TBA can effect changes in the way NAS does business. TBA is an alliance of concerned Audubon chapters and members that have banded together to bring about positive changes within NAS. The intent of TBA is to democratize NAS and rebuild the partnership between NAS and chapters. *To that end, TBA needs your support.*

Since 1905, when we began as “The National Association of Audubon Societies for the Protection of Wild Birds and Animals,” NAS and the Audubon chapters have been partners. Publications and statements originating within NAS speak to the importance of chapters and how NAS seeks to support them. NAS staff members have stated that there is no effort to do away with chapters. *However, the NAS board of directors and senior management, in the past four years or so, have made decisions that are incongruent with their statements.* Below are just two examples of many:

- The \$5.50 dues share is gone. Dues share will be replaced with an arbitrary formula that, if in place last year, would have resulted in chapters receiving nothing
- Re-writing of the Strategic Plan has changed Audubon Centers from a broadly defined, flexible approach that included chapters to a one-size (large), one-owner (NAS), one-manager (NAS) model. Audubon Centers will cost high hundreds of millions of dollars, thus consuming most of NAS's resources for years, and will directly compete for financial resources in the regions that support the local chapters.

In the 1950s, NAS decided it needed more and stronger chapters and began the “dues share” program under which chapters would receive a portion of each member's annual NAS dues. In return, chapters guaranteed several specific services to the members, such as a regular newsletter and membership meetings. The strategy worked; there are now over 500 chapters nationwide.

Four years ago, NAS senior management decided that, instead of a fixed amount per member per year, chapters would receive a share of the net profit remaining after subtracting the expenses of the membership department from the income generated by membership dues, membership list rentals, and *Audubon Magazine* advertising revenue. This decision was made unilaterally by NAS, without any justification provided and despite loud objections from several elected regional chapter

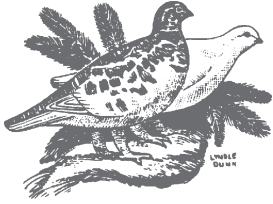
representatives. Chapters were encouraged to replace dues-sharing revenues by soliciting new NAS memberships and would be allowed to retain the first-year dues of any new memberships (\$20.00) that the chapters solicited. However, chapters would no longer receive any portion of the dues from (a) new memberships obtained directly by NAS, (b) memberships renewed by NAS, or (c) members who had moved and were reassigned to a different chapter.

Thus, chapters faced the expenses of servicing all of their NAS members with a newsletter without receiving dues-share monies for the majority of its members. For example, FCAS recruits about 50 new NAS memberships each year (\$1,000) but must service, conservatively, 650 memberships per year with 8 issues of the *Parmigan* at \$0.60 per issue (\$3120). The impacts of the changes in dues sharing has been hardest felt by small chapters, especially those chapters with small populations to draw upon for support. Chapters in small communities or with widely spread memberships have few alternative fundraising opportunities and stand a very good chance of going out of business. A senior NAS VP estimates that, over the next few years, NAS will lose 200 chapters. TBA agrees, primarily because of competition from Audubon Centers but also because of losing the dues share. TBA believes that senior management's goal is to replace chapters with Audubon Centers.

There is not enough space in this issue to devote to the complicated subject at hand. Therefore, I encourage each of you to visit TBA's website at [www.smbas.org/tba](http://www.smbas.org/tba) for further information. TBA's immediate goal, which FCAS supports, is to have a majority of the proxies at the next Annual Meeting in December. This would allow TBA to pass reform resolutions and to elect NAS board members that support those reforms. The resolutions – concerning Communication, Partnership, Board Reform, Grassroots Empowerment, and Dues Share—are in draft form on the TBA website.

There are some chapters who have given up on NAS and just want to be left alone. TBA says to them that NAS is 90 percent intact, staffed with brilliant and sympathetic people, and the synergy we could have together is worth fighting for. There are many chapters who feel that internal problems are less serious than today's threats to our environment. TBA says to them that charity begins at home. Fixing what ails NAS will make it more powerful as an environmental protector, instead of spending all its time and resources raising money for 1,000 multi-million dollar nature centers. There are some chapters that say we cannot change NAS. To them TBA says all we need is 100 votes per chapter. Last year, President Flicker used your proxies to vote down all reform resolutions (listed on the website) that TBA presented. This year, you will have a choice of proxies.

A successful proxy campaign will change NAS. TBA thinks the best way to save NAS is to bring back our tradition of partnership and save those 200 chapters. With your help, it can be done. FCAS will have additional information as well as proxy forms available at the September and subsequent program meetings.



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

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**DATES TO REMEMBER**

**SEPTEMBER MEETING: Past and Future Trips**  
 Thursday, September 11, 7:30 Ludlow Room

**MIGRATING BIRDS ALONG THE RIVER**  
 Saturday, September 13—morning  
 Phil Friedman, *phifri@frii.com*  
 970-493-2959

**CHICO BASIN RANCH, EL PASO COUNTY**  
 Saturday, September 20—all day  
 David Elwonger, *davidelwonger@msn.com*

**FOSSIL CREEK RESERVOIR BIRD SURVEY**  
 Sunday, September 21—morning  
 Nick Komar, *quetzal65@comcast.net*  
 970-416-7527

**JACKSON LAKE STATE PARK, MORGAN CO.**  
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 Nick Komar, *quetzal65@comcast.net*  
 970-416-7527

**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

**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)**

# Fort Collins Audubon, Idea Wild & Emerald Planet

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## COSTA RICA BIRDS, WILDLANDS, & CONSERVATION

### 11-DAY BIRDING ADVENTURE February 12 – February 22, 2004

**Fort Collins Audubon Society, Idea Wild, and Emerald Planet are teaming up to host an 11-day premier exploration of Costa Rica and the birds that inhabit this wonderful, peaceful (Costa Rica does not have an army), and prosperous Central American country.** Emerald Planet, a local, conservation-based travel company, is coordinating this exceptional trip. Fort Collins Audubon is also partnering with Idea Wild, a local conservation nonprofit whose mission is to minimize the loss of biodiversity by empowering people on the front lines of conservation with small-scale research and equipment grants. This is a unique, collaborative, three-way partnership. We expect to raise money for Audubon and Idea Wild while providing opportunities for Costa Rican conservation organizations to meet conservation-minded people from the United States. Throughout the trip we will be engaged with representatives of these groups who will accompany us to little known and seldom visited areas of Costa Rica...all with an eye towards seeing lots of birds! The advantages of in-country contacts gained through our association with Emerald Planet and Idea Wild will make this trip a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Of course, there will be plenty of time to relax, take hikes, take a nap (after some 5 am birding forays on days of your choosing), and absorb the vibrant culture of Costa Rica. Oh, yes, did we mention that Costa Rica is home to more than 850 bird species, including many endemics! Costa Rica is a unique destination for birders because of the large number of birds that inhabit the country year-round, are winter residents, or are there for only a brief time as migrants. Due to its position close to the narrowest part of Central America, many plant and animal species of North American origin merge and overlap with those of South America. Thus, avian migrants from both South America as well as North America can be found in this country. Costa Rica contains

1/5 of the world's hummingbirds—including the ruby-throated that journeys almost 1,000 miles across the Gulf of Mexico. There are many Central and North American representatives of warblers, swallows, thrushes, finches, orioles, flycatchers, sparrows, tanagers, and water and shore birds galore. Resident Central American birds number in the hundreds. Costa Rica truly is one of the foremost birding destinations in the world! We can't promise you'll see them all, but we can promise the birding experiences will be superb.

The trip's cost will be dependent on the total number of people who sign up—with an estimated \$2,350 to \$3,225 per person based upon double occupancy (exclusive of air-fare). The chart below shows the pricing scale.

<i>Participants</i>	<i>Tour Fee</i>
<b>6-7</b>	<b>\$3225</b>
<b>8-9</b>	<b>\$2750</b>
<b>10-11</b>	<b>\$2475</b>
<b>12-15</b>	<b>\$2350</b>

Part of the fund-raising efforts of Fort Collins Audubon Society and Idea Wild will be used to benefit conservation efforts by both organizations in the US and in Costa Rica. To help make this happen, the final cost of the trip includes a \$200 tax-deductible donation to Fort Collins Audubon Society and Idea Wild (both are 501(c)(3) tax-exempt).

An Emerald Planet trip leader and representatives of Fort Collins Audubon and Idea Wild will accompany our group of no more than 15 people. We will visit such special places as the Central Valley Hills, Sarapiquí, La Selva Biological Station, San Gerardo de Dota cloud forest, Carara National Park, Villa Lapas skyway, Sarapiquí and Torcoles Rivers, Poas Volcano National Park, Braulio Carrillo National Park, Mata Redonda wetlands, and La Ensenada.

Cloud forests, rain forests, tropical warm water rivers, jungles, volcanoes, and a seacoast. Wow!

The trip includes all meals, all lodging, all ground transfers and transportation, and the services of an in-country certified nature guide and/or professional ornithologist familiar and experienced with birds of the country and region. All accommodations have air-conditioning or ceiling fans and all have showers. This trip covers a wide variety of activities on foot and in boats and there are some lengthy drives over country roads.

The trip arrives and departs from San Jose, Costa Rica. Airfare to that point is the participants' responsibility. Emerald Planet can arrange a group travel plan with a local travel agency in Ft. Collins if there is sufficient interest and number.

In a nutshell, the trip details:

- **Many off-the-beaten track locations not typically seen by tourists nor by other birding tours. Birding excursions lead by local conservationists and nature guides.**
- **Participate in a new kind of ecotourism where conservation and in-country interaction is the main thrust, not just environmental ethics and low impacts.**
- **Help forge an opportunity for Fort Collins Audubon and Idea Wild to partner with a local conservation-based travel firm for fundraising, awareness, and conservation action.**
- **Be part of conservation and environmental education efforts in both countries.**
- **Have an opportunity to meet with Costa Rican conservation leaders and in-country conservation partners.**
- **See lots of birds, enjoy the company of other conservation-minded birders, and enjoy the friendly, outgoing, and carefree Tico culture of Costa Rica.**

We hope you will join us for this exceptional opportunity. ***For more information, trip details, and a complete itinerary and orientation packet, please contact:***

**Ryan Finchum—EMERALD PLANET**

ryan@emeraldplanet.com  
(970) 204-4484 1-888-883-0736  
[www.emeraldplanet.com](http://www.emeraldplanet.com)

**Wally Van Sickle—IDEA WILD**

ideawild@ideawild.org  
(970) 482-6748  
[www.ideawild.org](http://www.ideawild.org)

**Phil Friedman—FORT COLLINS AUDUBON SOCIETY**

phifri@frii.com  
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