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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.

One Mile at a Time : Cycling Through Loss to Renewal

*Wildlife Ecologist - Author, Dwight Smith
Recounts Cycling the Perimeter of the U.S.*

Relive with **Dwight Smith** his odyssey trip cycling through forests, prairies, deserts, swamps, and croplands along the perimeter of the United States. Dwight, Colorado State University professor emeritus of ecology and wildlife, has authored his experiences in a very readable book, "**One Mile at a Time : Cycling Through Loss to Renewal,**" published in 2004 by Fulcrum Publishing. Facing the loss of two teen-age sons and his wife of 39 years, Dwight retired from his university position and set out on a 13,784 mile journey on his Specialized Expedition 18-speed touring bike, which he christened, "Old Faithful."



Dwight peddled slowly through America giving time to revise previous opinions of environments and people. Past graduate students helped him select traveling routes and places to stay and filled him in on their knowledge of natural landscapes and the plants and animals which inhabited them.

Dwight Smith's memories of this trip are recalled from dictation made from a throat mike as he pedaled. Past scholarship, including an M.S. in wildlife biology from the University of Idaho and Ph. D. in ecology from Utah State University, trained Dwight to be a careful, disciplined

observer. Share the recounting of this tale with us at the next Fort Collins Audubon Society meeting.

Unencumbered by 2 tons of glass and steel,

THURSDAY EVENING PROGRAM — February 10, 2005
Ludlow Room, Fort Collins Lincoln Center, 417 W. Magnolia Street
Social Gathering - 7:00 PM, Program - 7:30 PM



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FIELD TRIPS

All field trips are free of charge and open to the public, regardless of experience level. Attendees should dress appropriately for the weather. Bring snacks, water and binoculars and/or spotting scopes if you have them. Carpooling is encouraged. A \$2.00 (unless otherwise specified) contribution per passenger to the driver is suggested. Visit <http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon> for more information. Contact the leader for the field trip in which you are interested or the Field Trips Coordinator, Gary Lefko, at 970-897-2454 or lefkogt@greatpikespeakbirdingtrail.org.

2/5/2005 Saturday - Boulder County Audubon Welcomes Fort Collins Audubon. Joint trip, leaders: John Tumasonis and Gary Lefko. 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 pm. Check out Boulder "hot spots" and look for raptors and waterfowl. Meet at Scott Carpenter Park at 30th near Arapahoe. Bring lunch, snacks, and very warm clothes. All levels welcome. Boulder area residents: call John at 303-926-8779. Fort Collins area residents: call Gary at 970-897-2454. Please contact leaders for signup and trip details.

2/6/2005 Sunday - Bobcat Ridge Natural Area Bird Survey. Leader: Cole Wild at 970-310-3735 or birdingwild1@yahoo.com. Fort Collins' newest natural area, Bobcat Ridge Natural Area, is projected to be open in 2006. Fort Collins Audubon performs a monthly bird census for the city. All levels welcome. Participation limited. Please contact leader for signup and trip details.

2/12/2005 Saturday - Birding Larimer County Open Lands Leader: Gary Lefko at 970-897-2454 or lefkogt@greatpikespeakbirdingtrail.org. All day. Bring lunch, snacks, and very warm clothes. All

levels welcome. We'll try to visit the entire inventory, which includes Carter Lake, Devil's Backbone Open Space, Flatiron Reservoir, Fossil Creek Reservoir Regional Open Space, Horsetooth Mountain Park, Horsetooth Reservoir, Pinewood Reservoir, Ramsay-Shockley Open Space, Rimrock Open Space. Please contact leader for signup and trip details.

2/20/2005 Sunday - Fossil Creek Reservoir Bird Survey. Leader: Nick Komar at quetzal65@comcast.net. Fort Collins Audubon performs a monthly bird census for the county. All levels welcome. Participation limited. Please contact leader for signup and trip details.

3/5/2005 Saturday - Raptors. Leader: Phil Friedman, 970-493-2959 or phifri@frii.com. All levels welcome. We'll travel Larimer County in search of raptors.

3/6/2005 Sunday - Northern Colorado Gulls. Leader: Nick Komar at quetzal65@comcast.net. All levels welcomed. Participation limited to 10. Please contact leader for signup and trip details.

CONSERVATION CORNER—Carol Fiore, Chair

Thank you to all the members who voted for the recent name change to our organization and to everyone who suggested names.

The members have decided to keep the name of Fort Collins Audubon Society.

Voting closed at 7:30 p.m. and the breakdown of the voting is as follows:

11 votes for Mountain & Plains Audubon Society
9 votes for North Front Range Audubon Society
15 votes for Peaks to Prairie Audubon Society
19 votes for NO CHANGE



Be a City of Fort Collins Master Naturalist!

Master Naturalist Program

Do you like nature? Do you like working with people? Do you have some spare time?

You may be a candidate for the City of Fort Collins Master Naturalist Program. Volunteers attend a training program and learn about basic ecology, the values and benefits of natural areas, common plants and animals found in different habitat types, and how to communicate this information to others. The Master Naturalists learn how to conduct fun field trips in local natural areas, and then help us with outreach programs.

Examples of some fun volunteer activities include:

- ? Developing and presenting slide shows on wildflowers to seniors.
- ? Staffing public education booths at community events.
- ? Discovering insects with preschoolers.
- ? Teaching Scouts about prairie dog behavior.
- ? Tracking down wildlife with plaster casts in after school programs.

Training begins in late March. There is no charge for the training program and all materials are provided. Interested citizens must fill out an application to be considered. Applications are available on the web at <http://fcgov.com/naturalareas/pdf/master-nat-app.pdf>, or pick one up at the Natural Resources Department at 281 North College Avenue, or call Sue Kenney, Natural Areas Education Coordinator, at 224-6118. The application deadline is March 18, 2005.

COUNTY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY:

The Larimer County Parks and Open Lands Department is looking for volunteer(s) to help with the monitoring of nests, primarily those of raptors, on LC Open Lands. The properties would include Fossil Creek Reservoir, Long View Farm (between Ft. Collins and Loveland), Devil's Backbone, Indian Creek, Ramsay-Shockey, and Chimney Hollow (west of Carter Lake). Following a familiarization period, monitoring would start with owls in February and end with Swainson's Hawks in June/July. The volunteer(s) would also assist in developing a monitoring report at the end of the season which would include success rates, new nests located, etc. This information is used when we are developing management plans, writing grants, and also for monitoring the effects of public access on these properties. If interested, contact Travis Rollins, Fossil Creek Reservoir Open Space Manager, at (970)498-5622 (Office), (970)227-3296 (Cell), or at trollins@larimer.org.

ANNUAL MEETING & SILENT AUCTION SUMMARY:

This year's Annual Meeting and Silent Auction had a different twist to it, in that the Silent Auction raised money for two purposes – the FCAS treasury and the Achiote Project. Emerald Planet, which organizes tours, had some tables during the auction in order to raise money for the Achiote Project. The project, discussed in previous issues of the Ptarmigan and on our web page (<http://www.fortnet.org/Audubon/> - click on the **Donate to Achiote** button), will benefit conservation efforts at both ends of the upcoming March trip to Panama. FCAS will receive some nominal financial benefit because of its sponsorship of the trip and project. More importantly, the villagers of Achiote will benefit from the money and materials derived from the project that will help them to enter the eco-tourism market.

The Silent Auction began at 6:30 p.m., and was followed by a short business meeting at 7:15 p.m. Part of the meeting was devoted to three proposed Bylaws changes. Members present voted to **NOT** change the chapter name, but did vote to allow chapter memberships and to replace the Publicity Committee with a Public Relations Committee. Outgoing President Bill Miller presented Service Awards to Dave Dubois, Marcia Maeda, Jackie Boss, Phil Friedman, Joel Hurmence, Nick Komar and John Waddell for their service to the chapter while in their respective positions. Board Elections were also held, with members present accepting the slate of nominees by General Consent. The following officers and directors were thus elected: President – Joel Hurmence; Vice-President – Phil Friedman; Secretary – Scott Cobble; Treasurer – John Waddell; Directors-at-Large – Heman Adams, Beth Dillon, Ruth Grant, Ron Harden, Nick Komar, and Sue Riffe.

Following the Business Meeting, Program Chair Jackie Boss introduced the speaker for the evening, Roy Halpin, who provided an informative program on DigiScoping, or taking photographs with a digital camera using a telescope as a lens. There were 108 people present for the program presentation.

The Silent Auction grossed \$1953, with \$724 being raised for the Achiote Project. FCAS grossed \$1229 and had expenses of \$283, leaving a net profit of \$846.

The Fort Collins Audubon Society would like to thank the following businesses for their generosity for contributing auction and food items in support of our Annual Meeting and Silent Auction fundraiser, held on January 13, 2005. We encourage our members and readers to consider them for their shopping needs or to otherwise support them and their programs.

Albertson's Supermarkets (Riverside & Lemay), Barnes and Noble Booksellers, Bath Nursery, Bill and Sue Miller, City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Program, EDM International, Fort Collins Nursery, Fossil Creek Nursery, Idea Wild, JAX Outdoor Gear, King Soopers (Taft & Elizabeth), Perennial Gardener, Poudre Feed Supply, Ranch-Way Feed Mills, Sunflower Market, Wild Oats, Wild Birds Unlimited

We would also like to thank the 28 individuals who donated items for the Silent Auction. Without your generosity our event would not have been successful.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER – by Bill Miller

This will probably be my last article submitted as President or as Conservation Chair, two positions I have held in the past eight years with FCAS. But it is not a “farewell” article, as I will continue to serve the chapter as its delegate to Audubon Colorado where I will have a seat on its Board of Directors.

My 15-year “career” with FCAS began in 1990 when Rick Schroeder bent my arm behind my back after I attended three consecutive program meetings. At that time the Board met for 45-60 minutes before monthly program meetings. At that time our major involvements were the Birdathon, monthly programs, and providing Audubon Adventures to the Poudre School District with the assistance of the Environmental Education Coordinator at the Poudre School District. We had one field trip per month, tenuous as it was. And there was very little in the way of a conservation effort.

Things have changed since then. Our communications have become more effective and timely with the advent of the personal computer, email and web sites. These tools have allowed the organization to become more sophisticated with regard to the issues dealt with.

But there is no getting around it - we are what we are today because of the people who are involved. A corporate mantra has been “team work.” This is especially true in an all-volunteer organization where the overall effort is more than one person can handle. Fort Collins Audubon Society is what it is because of team work, whereby many people each pick up a share of the overall effort, based on what they can accommodate.

We have made great progress over the years in becoming an effective voice in the community. We reach out to many people each month because of our field trips scheduled almost every weekend. Our thanks go to Nick Komar for his enthusiasm in establishing this new pattern, and to Gary Lefko continuing it. Our monthly programs have become very successful in reaching our members and the public. This success can be attributed to several things. Programs have always been of a high caliber, thanks to the efforts of our Program Chairs (Paul Opler, Cynthia Melcher and Jackie Boss). Our publicity efforts are more effective, thanks to Rick Schroeder and Diann Johnston. We saw improvements in our hospitality efforts (Barb Turnbull and Sue Miller). And we revised our before-program social half-hour that allows our membership Chairs (Ann Molison and Kate Bolster) as well as other board members to mix with our members and guests, and answer questions.

What I am most excited about, however, is our Conservation Committee. We are, indeed, fortunate that Carol Fiore happened upon the scene at the end of 2003, and agreed to chair the Conservation Committee. Her enthusiasm has been contagious, because we now have a committee of eight people. Yes! Eight people!!! You will be reading more about this committee in future editions of the Parmigan, because they are meeting on a regular basis, and are tackling issues that will allow our organization to make a positive impact at city, county, and state levels as we endeavor to protect the wildlife and environment that we love.

For many years I have strongly urged our Board members to “grow their own replacements.” This is vital for volunteer organizations in order to remain active, vigorous and alive. Burnout of volunteers is a common difficulty and, with no pay and no benefits, the only thing that keeps volunteers motivated is the personal satisfaction realized from helping the organization fulfill its goals. I think we have reached a point where our members and members of the public are interested in becoming more involved. Once this happens an organization usually has no trouble in recruiting new leaders.

I have finished my term as President with mixed emotions. There has been a sense of pride coming from seeing the organization evolve from what it was to what it is. This has been made possible because of the personal contributions of help, ideas, and guidance from all the Board members with whom I have served. But there is also a sense of relief that comes from knowing that I no longer have to be governed by deadlines. That relief is enhanced further by knowing that the presidency and its responsibilities have passed on to my very capable successor, Joel Hurmence, who will be ably assisted by all the other fine members of the chapter's Board. It is time for me to move on, and it has been my great pleasure to have served with, and for, all of you.

With great respect,
Bill Miller



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Audubon Society Membership Application

Support FCAS by paying your National Audubon Society (NAS) and/or Chapter (FCAS) dues through your chapter:

? New Member (NAS & FCAS)	\$20
(Receive <i>Audubon</i> magazine and <i>Ptarmigan</i>)	
? Renewing Member (NAS & FCAS)	\$35
(Receive <i>Audubon</i> magazine and <i>Ptarmigan</i>)	
? FCAS Chapter Member only	\$15
(Receive <i>Ptarmigan</i> only)	
? FCAS may share my name with NAS	
? Additional donation to FCAS of:	\$ _____
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? **I prefer to receive the Ptarmigan via the FCAS website, www.fortnet.org/Audubon. Please e-mail me when posted.**

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