



THE DIPPER

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APRIL 2010

EVERGREEN AUDUBON NEWSLETTER

www.evergreenaudubon.org

BE AN EARTH DAY FAIR VOLUNTEER

Volunteer at Earth Day on April 24 and help Evergreen Audubon fund the Nature Center through a \$7,000 grant from Together Green, a program of Toyota and National Audubon.

Better yet, sign up as a Nature Center volunteer and know that your time there also will help raise funds from Together Green.

Contact Michael Stills, 303-921-1936 or enclirector@evergreenaudubon.org, to volunteer for Earth Day.

Click on the Evergreen Nature Center link on the Evergreen Audubon home page to learn more about becoming a Nature Center volunteer.

See Page 3 for Earth Day details.

DAWN CHORUS

Plan now to welcome spring and the return of our summer birds at the annual Dawn Chorus on Sunday, May 2, at Evergreen Lake.

The May *Dipper* will include all the details.

MAY MEETING

On May 6, join Jeff Bogard, a volunteer with the Colorado Division of Wildlife's Bear Aware Program, to learn about bear behavior, life history and how avoid bear-human conflicts.

Take a virtual tour of the Colorado Birding Trail at April 1 meeting

It's no surprise to Evergreen Audubon members that bird watching is one of the fastest-growing segments of wildlife viewing recreation, with nearly 70 million bird watchers nationwide. Colorado residents rate the quality of wildlife viewing in the state higher than in other states.

Now Colorado bird watchers have dozens of new places to go birding and a cyber-resource to locate them. It's called the Colorado Birding Trail.

At the April 1 Evergreen Audubon meeting, John Koshak will provide a virtual tour of the southeastern Colorado Birding Trail with information about this summer's expansion of the birding trail to southwestern Colorado.

Koshak has been the Watchable Wildlife coordinator for DOW's southeastern region since 1998, developing the birding trail and several wildlife festivals in this region.

The Colorado Division of Wildlife teamed up with partners including Audubon Colorado to work with public and private landowners to launch the southeastern Colorado Birding Trail in 2007.

There are 265 sites on 14 trails. More than 50 sites have been developed in cooperation with private landowners. Planning is underway to develop a birding trail in southwestern Colorado as well.

This initiative promotes outdoor recreation, conservation of resources by private landowners and a diversified income for rural economies.

In addition to the printed "Southeastern Colorado Trail Guide," a website at www.coloradobirdingtrail.com assists travelers in planning a personalized, successful wildlife viewing adventure to other regions of the state.

The Colorado Birding Trail website also provides resources such as a calendar of wildlife events, interactive maps, information on Colorado's major habitats or life zones and a page of field notes highlighting specific sites or trails.

Koshak is a Colorado native and a graduate of Colorado College in Colorado Springs. He has worked as a teacher, park naturalist, nature center supervisor and a ranger and senior ranger at six Colorado State Parks.

He has served on the Monte Vista Crane Festival Committee, the San Luis Valley Trails and Recreation Coalition, the Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic and Historic Byway and is a board member of the Friends of the Dunes, a citizens support group for Great Sand Dunes National Park.

Be sure to attend this informative presentation. Guests are welcome. The Thursday, April 1, meeting will be held at 7 p.m. at Church of the Hills, 28628 Buffalo Park Road (just west of Evergreen Library), in the downstairs Fellowship Hall. Refreshments and a business meeting will follow.



John Koshak

- Barbara Nabors, Program chair

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Meetings first Thursday except January, June, July, August
7 p.m., Church of the Hills, 28628 Buffalo Park Road, Evergreen

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE DAVID WALD

Spring is in the air and . . . field trips are back!

After a few-year slump—partly due to some very important and worthy distractions including the Nature Center and fully establishing the Bear Creek Watershed Breeding Bird Atlas—Evergreen Audubon is back on a roll.

Planned spring birding field trips will be as abundant as the migrants. Karel Buckley, Brad Andres, Heather Johnson, Sherman Wing, Sylvia Brockner, Kathanne Lynch and Else Van Erp, among others, will be great leaders, and there will be plenty of opportunities to get out, have some fun and catch up with your friends and fellow birders!

Red Rocks, Nebraska, Pawnee Grasslands, O'Fallon Park and many other locations are among the field-trip destinations.

If that's not enough, the April 10 opening of Evergreen Nature Center brings more opportunities, including Brad's "Birding by Ear" program, which is one I need to take a just few more times.

And, don't forget to set the alarm for the Dawn Chorus on May 2; we'll use the Nature Center to warm up and for breakfast!

If you can't find something to fit your calendar or interests under the auspices of Evergreen Audubon, there are quite a few options among the other Audubon chapters in the region.

Many of these trips are on our web-page calendar, but you might want to surf around for other possibilities. (The Boulder and Denver groups are particularly busy!)

One reason I highlight these trips is that they are a primary, critical and gratifying activity of our society, and we are lucky to have such enthusiastic and talented leaders.

Field trips are what got me enthralled with Evergreen Audubon and local birding, and every spring we get to start all over again! Sign up now, so you have a few trips to look forward to.

VIP VOLUNTEERS

- Thanks to **Debbie Marshall** for her redesign of the *Dipper*. It looks great! Our little *Dipper* is one of the best Audubon newsletters out there!
- *Dipper* mailing volunteers (the last major mailing!) **Sylvia Robertson, Peggy Durham, Marge Petersen, Marilyn Kaussner** and **Ruth Salter**.
- **Dick Prickett** for becoming our Audubon Colorado Representative!
- All the bird-box sellers, organized by **Bud Weare**.

MEMBERSHIP KENT SIMON

We thank the new and renewing Evergreen Audubon local members for their support.

New

Purnee McCourt—Golden
Patricia Wyker—Georgetown

Renewing

Trish Baker—Evergreen

Charlie Ganse—Evergreen
Gisela Henderson—Evergreen
Pat Jurgens—Evergreen
Elaine McCoach—Golden
Sandy Sykes—Golden

Renewing Family

Craig Wibirt & Pam Little—
Conifer

Always popular Evergreen Earth Day Fair is April 24

Evergreen's Earth Day Fair is one of the largest and most popular in the state, with more than 50 federal, state and local agencies, nonprofit organizations and businesses planning an array of exhibits, food and fun.

The annual event is scheduled for Saturday, April 24, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Evergreen Lake House.

Numerous activities are planned for children. HawkQuest will present its live raptors, thanks to funding by the Montessori School of Evergreen and the Colorado Foothills World Affairs Council. The Montessori School also is preparing a whole new kids corner with fun activities throughout the day.

The Evergreen Alliance for Sustainability, or EAS-Y, will host an exhibit to help the mountain community understand sustainability in its full definition

of the "triple bottom line," which includes the environment, social networking and economic stability.

During the fair, be sure to visit Evergreen Nature Center, which will be open in the old warming hut.

To volunteer for Evergreen Audubon at the Earth Day Fair, call Michael Stills, 303-921-1936, or email encdirector@evergreenaudubon.org. Your participation will help fund a \$7,000 grant from Together Green, a program of Toyota and National Audubon.

Parking for the fair is available at Wulf Recreation Center, 5300 S. Olive



Rd. (behind Evergreen High School). Admission is free and open to all ages.

The event is hosted by the Earth Day and Beyond Planning Group and is sponsored by Evergreen Park and Recreation District, Evergreen Newspapers, Evergreen Audubon and the Mt. Evans Group of the Sierra Club.

BREEDING BIRD ATLAS BRAD ANDRES

With juncos and robins singing, it is time to start thinking about the 2010 Bear Creek Watershed Breeding Bird Atlas. All the data for 2009 has been entered, and I am in the process of summarizing the results.

Like last year, I hope we can get together to review progress we made in 2009 and discuss plans for 2010. Remember, you can see the progress on the website at www.bcwbba.org.

All those interested in participating in this year's Bear Creek Atlas are invited to meet at Evergreen Nature Center on

Saturday, April 10, from 3 to 5 p.m. I hope to provide a general overview of the project and invite greater participation from the membership and general public.

A training trip to Red Rocks is tentatively scheduled for Sunday morning, April 25.

The following sites have been identified for surveys in 2010, so think about becoming a leader for one of them:

- Chief Mountain Trail/Forest Road 192, Arapahoe National Forest
- Squaw Mountain Trail, Arapahoe National Forest

- Maxwell Falls, Arapahoe National Forest
- Hicks Mountain, Denver Mountain Parks
- Dedisse Park, Denver Mountain Parks
- Mount Evans State Wildlife Area (Elk Management)
- Mount Falcon Park, Jeffco Open Space
- Bear Creek Greenbelt East, city of Lakewood

For questions, contact me at 303-670-0101 or birdmon@evergreenaudubon.org.

NEST BOX MONITORING BRAD ANDRES

We are again gearing up to monitor nest boxes on public lands in west Jefferson County.

In partnership with Jefferson County Open Space, we will be expanding the number of boxes in Elk Meadow (35) and developing periodic monitoring at Three Sisters (25 boxes).

We also are working with Dr. Mike Wunder and the University of Colorado at Denver to develop a research program

on cavity nesters at sites in Jefferson County.

Like the last few years, we hope to visit boxes every two weeks beginning in early April and wrapping up by the end of July. With the expansion into Three Sisters, we will need additional help.

We hope the partnership with Dr. Wunder will provide members of Evergreen Audubon with the opportunity to

participate in a bird research project.

If you would like to assist with the monitoring effort, please contact Brad (303-670-0101; birdmon@evergreenaudubon.org), Mike Wilson (303-697-9445, vicepresident@evergreenaudubon.org) or Kay Niyo (303-679-6646; Kay@KayNiyo.com).

We will gladly show you around the trail before asking you to monitor the boxes yourself.

MEET THE BOARD: VP MIKE WILSON

A person who takes time to investigate the natural world will always have a story to tell, and it likely will be but one page among volumes filled over his lifetime.

One of my early stories took place on a cloudy, wet morning with a fellow zoology student, collecting specimens at tide pools along the Redwood Coast of California.

With one eye on the swells and one on the rocky pools, we searched and found a genuine wonder of the world, a beautiful and brief expression of energy and DNA—a 2-centimeter translucent medusa, trimmed with lavender, tiny and delicate, the free-swimming reproductive “jellyfish” stage of one of the simplest animal forms, the Hydrozoa: “As bewildering to the average man as if he were asked to believe that rosebushes give birth to hummingbirds, and that the hummingbirds’ progeny becomes rosebushes again.” (Ricketts and Calvin, “Between Pacific Tides,” 1939)

Back up the cliff we hiked and then sped up the coast to the laboratory. When we arrived, though, we found our prize to be nearly lifeless and askew, oxygen-starved.

Plastic tube, stat! We bubbled air into the jar of seawater and voila, our miniature man-of-war came buoyantly pulsating back to life. The laboratory

was filled with joy and life was good.

It’s a story without a plot, but reveals one of many moments that illustrate my memories of lifelong study. Despite the plethora of nature’s distractions, I completed a bachelor’s degree in zoology in 1979 at the temperate paradise of Humboldt State University in California.

I subsequently turned my attention to the behavior of toxic agents in biological systems. Moving to Colorado State University in Fort Collins, I earned a doctorate in environmental health in 1986.

Much of my professional career was spent as chief of Environmental Epidemiology at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, directing a statewide program in environmental epidemiology and toxicology.

During this time I also served seven years as chair of the department’s Institutional Review Board, a committee of public health scientists, physicians and non-scientists responsible for protect-



Mike Wilson in Antarctica aboard the Professor Multanovskiy, January 2005. Photo by Barbara Nabors

ing the rights and welfare of human research subjects.

I have served since 1993 as an assistant professor adjoint in the Department of Preventive Medicine and Biometrics at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, now the Colorado School of Public Health.

Although I have spent many stimulating years investigating environmental exposures and the causes of human disease, it is still the wilder, blameless world that most strongly holds my attention and creates the moments never forgotten.

I now pursue life’s stories with my wife, Barbara Nabors, from our home base near Lone Peak in Evergreen.

BIRD BUSINESS

On March 5, in Red Rocks Park, Sherman Wing saw a pair of Common Ravens occupying the old nesting site of last season’s Peregrine Falcon. One raven would fly in, then the other would fly out.

Later in the afternoon, a Prairie Falcon circled above, then soared directly toward the nesting site, but was intercepted and chased off by the larger raven. The falcon made two attempts, and twice was chased away.

The “early bird” does get the worm, and in this case the nesting site.

Also on March 5 at Red Rocks, in the large meadow near the will-call ticket

booth, Sherman saw 4 male Mountain Bluebirds, his first of the season.

Brad Andres observed a nice flock of Mountain Bluebirds the next day at the north end of Elk Meadow along Squaw Pass Road. There were 27 males and 2 females.

The same day, Dick Prickett spotted 1 male Mountain Bluebird in Evergreen Highlands. Last year he saw his first Mountain Bluebird of the season in that area on March 1.

Light snow dusted many Pygmy Nuthatches, crows and the usual large group of Evening Grosbeaks at a neighbor’s feeders on March 8, according to

Jonelle Balais of Witter Gulch. The day before, on the way to see Rusty Blackbirds on Clear Creek, she thought she saw a bluebird at a ranch on Stagecoach Boulevard.

Sherman Wing was birding Red Rocks again on March 12 and reported 6 Mountain Bluebirds (4 males and 2 females) in the northerly field between Entrance 1 and Entrance 2 and a Canyon Wren singing on top of a large boulder, behind the amphitheater.

He also spotted a Belted Kingfisher in Corwina Park the same day. It was perched on a tree limb above some open water.

Evergreen Auduboners spot 427 species in Panama

Heather and I were joined by Dave Balogh, Karel Buckley, Fran Enright, JoAnn and Bill Hackos, Kammie Kruse and Dick Prickett in mid-January for a birding tour of Panama.

The trip was organized by Panamanian Guido Berguido of Advantage Tours and included sites in the Canal Zone and western Panama, with an extension onto the Darién Peninsula.

Although slightly smaller than South Carolina, Panama has 982 species of birds on its country list, which is due to the country's wide elevation range (sea level to over 11,000 feet) and its geographic position as a bridge between Central and South America. Our trip was designed to sample a variety of Panama's habitats.

We started the trip with a partial transit of the Panama Canal. Although this was mainly focused on the history of the canal, we were able to tally 65 species for the day, including great looks at Blue-footed Boobies.

At the hotel in the morning, we

had a roost of several hundred orioles, including many migrant Baltimore and Orchard orioles. While exploring central Panama, we were based out of Gamboa, where Guido has refurbished former U.S. military quarters as a guest-house.

We were treated to Green Honeycreepers, White-necked Jacobins and Gray-headed Chachalacas on the feeders, and agoutis, pacas and armadillos feeding on the lawn. Our dawn chorus was provided by troops of howler monkeys proclaiming their territories.

Over the next few days, we explored trails within Soberania National Park, Panama City's Metropolitan Park and the Bay of Panama.

Highlights included watching a young Rufescent Tiger-Heron attempt to eat a turtle, a pair of Bat Falcons nesting in Gamboa, lots of Red-lored Amazons and other parrots coming to roost, great looks at male Blue Cotingas and a statuesque Common Potoo.

We also sorted through a variety of

antwrens, antshrikes, antvireos and antbirds (a family that does not even occur in North America).

After a few days in central Panama, we flew west to the city of David in the province of Chiriquí. We had some great birding around the airport and then headed north to the town of Volcán.

Volcán was our base for the next few days for exploring Volcán Barú National Park (the Barú Volcano is the highest point in Panama), La Amistad National Park and coffee plantations around Santa Clara.

Each day was spent at a different elevation to search for species specific to that zone.

One afternoon, we stopped by the Finca Cielito Sur Bed and Breakfast, where we got great looks at Violet Sabrewings, Green Violetears and Stripe-tailed Hummingbirds visiting the feeders.

We saw 178 species during this segment of the trip, so it is hard to pick out

Continued on page 6



Indigenous Embera villagers treated their Evergreen Audubon visitors to dances and demonstrations of traditional living. Photo by Brad Andres

Harpy Eagle highlights conclusion of Panama trip

Continued from page 5

a few highlights, but I might suggest a calling Barred Forest-Falcon, an incessant Costa Rican Pygmy Owl, Fiery-billed Araçaris, fleeting looks at a male Silvery-fronted Tapaculo, great looks at the sulking Wrenthrush, numerous warblers, and many colorful tanagers. We even scored an American Dipper!

After returning to Gamboa, we took additional trips to the lowlands of the Caribbean coast along Achiote Road, and higher elevations of Cerro Azul and Cerro Jefe east of Panama City.

Achiote Road provided great lowland birding, and we added additional species of puffbirds, hummingbirds, trogons and wrens. The higher elevations of Cerro Azul and Cerro Jefe yielded some good raptors (Black Hawk-Eagle, White Hawk), Blue-fronted Parrolet, the tiny Rufous-crested Coquette (a hummingbird), migrant warblers and plenty of tanagers.

Rosabel Miro, president of Panama Audubon, kindly allowed us to use her house as a base to explore Cerro Azul. Our list for all sites in central Panama reached 273 species. After this, we said goodbye to Dave, JoAnn and Bill, and the rest of us headed east to the Darién.

Our trip started with a five-hour drive on the Pan-American Highway to Puerto Quimba, where we boarded a small boat to continue on to the indigenous Embera village of La Marea. Guido has worked with the villagers to construct rustic sleeping quarters for guests.

It was a real privilege to visit the village, and we were treated to dances, demonstrations on traditional living, tattooing and the opportunity to purchase beautiful crafts.

Our main birding destination was a Harpy Eagle nest, where a year-old bird was still being fed by its parents. After



A six-mile trek by foot and horseback was rewarded with good looks at a juvenile Harpy Eagle. Photo by Brad Andres



A Collared Aracari viewed in Panama. Photo by Dave Balogh

birding around the village on our first full day, we then trekked six miles on horseback and by foot to the nest site, where we camped for the night.

Within just a few minutes of arriving at the nest site, one of our porters found the young Harpy, and we all got great looks at this spectacular bird. We birded around the camp, enjoyed a refreshing swim in the creek and then slowly birded back toward the village the next day.

Highlights, besides the Harpy Eagle, around La Marea included Red-throated Caracara, Great Green and Blue-and-Yellow Macaws, Gray-cheeked Nunlet, Spot-crowned Barbet and Black Oropendola.

As we headed back to Panama City, we added numerous birds along the way and sampled a little of the culture in the village of Chepigana.

For the entire trip, we tallied 427 species, of which 380 were observed at sites other than the Darién. If anyone would like a copy of our trip list, send a request to me at birdmon@evergreenaudubon.org.

- Brad Andres

FIELD NOTES SHERMAN WING

Seventeen birders gathered Saturday morning, March 13, for an early-season bird walk in Red Rocks Park with Sherman Wing. We discussed our options for the beginning of the day, and decided to check out the rumors of falcons on the cliff top.

We began our walk with Aaron Wald running ahead. Soon he turned and shouted, "There they are!" Yes, in the south-western sky, were two falcons soaring.

What were they? In the morning sun, the underside was very white . . . Could these birds be Prairie Falcons, which were seen here a week ago? Or Gyr Falcons, which were reported near North Table Mesa this week? Perhaps Peregrine Falcons, which successfully nested here last year.

For the next 10 minutes, the two falcons appeared and disappeared from our view. Then one flew to the cliff's edge, landed and perched there for a very long time. The second bird appeared, flew and hovered over the first and we all saw the two birds copulate. We were all awestruck.

That second bird flew to the cliff top and perched in the morning sun. Through our scope, we studied these two birds—Peregrine Falcons! Oh! Serenaded by Canyon Wrens while watching peregrines, we should have brought our chairs and stayed right there preserving a perfect birding moment!

Given a rare opportunity to study a rare bird, we birders were just in time for the luck of the Irish!

Twenty species of birds were observed that morning in sunny, warm conditions: 1 Red-tailed Hawk, 2 American Kestrel, 2 Peregrine Falcon, 9 Rock Pigeon, 1 Downy Woodpecker, 2 Northern Flicker, 2 Say's Phoebe, 22 Western Scrub-Jay, 23



(L-R) Ginny Chamberlin, Phil Rogers, Patti O'Neill, Karel Buckley and Sherman Wing. Photos by Susan Harper

Black-billed Magpie, 7 American Crow, 4 Common Raven, 6 Black-capped Chickadee, 2 Canyon Wren, 6 Townsend's Solitaire, 7 American Robin, 4 European Starling, 6 Spotted Towhee.

Thanks, Sherman, for getting us out on this gorgeous day.



(L-R) Patti O'Neill, Pat Wyker, Bob Holmes, Kiki Widjaja, Kathanne Lynch, Jeanette Strom, Aaron Wald, Dave Wald, Sherman Wing, Phil Rogers

MARCH CALENDAR

April 1	Chapter Meeting	7 PM	Church of the Hills
April 10	Newsletter deadline	5 PM	
April 10	Nature Center opens		
April 10	Bird Atlas meeting	3-5 PM	Nature Center
April 22	Board Meeting	7 PM	
April 24	Earth Day Fair	10 AM-4 PM	Evergreen Lake House
May 2	Dawn Chorus	6 AM	Evergreen Lake
May 6	Chapter Meeting	7 PM	Church of the Hills

Please submit newsletter content to Lisa Wald: communications@evergreenaudubon.org. Call or email *Dipper* editor Debbie Marshall with questions or comments: marshallpub@skybeam.com, 303-674-3752.

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Please state if the material submitted has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to select suitable articles for publication and to edit any articles selected.

Audubon Colorado Office, 303-415-0130, www.auduboncolorado.org

Evergreen Audubon

Local Membership Application

Please enroll me/us in the Evergreen Audubon. I/we may participate in all chapter activities, receive *The Dipper* newsletter, and vote (both Family members may vote) on chapter issues. Dues remain locally.

Date _____

Individual (\$20) Family (\$30) Student (\$10)

I have included an additional donation of _____

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Address _____

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I DO NOT want solicitations from National Audubon.

Enclosed is my check payable to: **Evergreen Audubon
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P.O. Box 523
Evergreen, CO 80437**

If you would like to join or donate to the National Audubon Society directly and receive the AUDUBON Magazine, use chapter code C9ZD090Z and call 1-800-274-4201.

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IN THIS ISSUE
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