



HAWKWATCH LOOKS FOR VOLUNTEERS

HawkWatch, the topic of the next EA chapter meeting (see adjacent story), is a volunteer program organized by RMBO.

It monitors the migration of raptors at the Dakota Hogback of Dinosaur Ridge in Morrison.

Volunteers collect data onsite and enter it online.

The data collected is part of a national citizen-science effort and contributes to the knowledge of raptor migration routes and populations.

Volunteers are trained in identification of raptors in flight and data-collection protocols.

There will be an indoor training session on Tuesday, Feb. 22, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. and a field training on Saturday, Feb. 26, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Volunteers are required to attend both of these days.

Requirements

- Volunteer one day a week (9 a.m.-4 p.m.) from mid-March through mid-May.
- Have birding experience.
- Possess knowledge of or willingness to study raptor identification.
- Record precise data at site and enter data online.
- Hike to viewing site, including during cold or muddy conditions.
- Work independently to collect and enter data.

For more information or to become a HawkWatch volunteer, please contact Abby Churchill, education and outreach volunteer coordinator, at 303-659-4348, ext. 11, or by e-mail at abby.churchill@rmbo.org.

Two projects, 'Best Bird' honored

President Brad Andres presented awards to two long-term Evergreen Audubon projects and the "Best Bird" spotter at the EA Annual Banquet Jan. 17.

Headlined by speaker David M. Armstrong, an expert mammalogist, the banquet drew EA members to an evening of fun, food and edification at Mt. Vernon Country Club.

The first group to be honored with the President's Award was the Community Weed Awareness Campaign, which has been led for 15 years by Cathy Shelton. Sylvia Robertson, Marilyn Kaussner and

Bud Weare are among those who have assisted Cathy over the years.

In his remarks, Andres noted that the Weed Awareness Campaign has held numerous weeding events such as Community Weed Day, Wake Up and Weed, and Weeds and Wine.

It has furnished displays and presentations at home and garden shows, local garden clubs, the International Sportsmen's Expo in conjunction with Pulling for Colorado, and even the Wal-Mart Garden Center opening.

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Learn about raptors on Feb. 6

Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory's outreach biologist, Jeff Birek, will offer an exciting presentation on Colorado's birds of prey at the Feb. 6 Evergreen Audubon chapter meeting.

The talk will focus on the identification and ecology of local raptor species.

Jeff coordinates the Dinosaur Ridge HawkWatch project and hopes to inspire some of our members to participate in this citizen science program. (See adjacent story.)

Jeff has worked as a hawk counter at several sites in North America, including Veracruz, Mexico, where more than 4 million migrating raptors are counted every fall.

In addition to his HawkWatch activities (see adjacent story), he coordinates Bald Eagle Watch and several bird monitoring projects in the Dakota Badlands and Nebraska's Prairies Bird Conservation Region (BCR 17).

Jeff is also involved in outreach and education programs for the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory. He has a bachelor's degree in environmental biology and management from the University of California at Davis and joined RMBO in 2011.

The February chapter meeting will be held Thursday, Feb. 6, at 7 p.m. at Church of the Hills, 28628 Buffalo Park Road (across from Evergreen Library) in the downstairs Fellowship Hall.



Northern Harrier. Photo by Jeff Birek



Jeff Birek scopes out Veracruz. Photo by Alberto Martinez

EVERGREEN AUDUBON
www.evergreenaudubon.org

2013 OFFICERS

President	Brad Andres	303-670-0101 president@evergreenaudubon.org
Vice President	Jean Thayer	303-670-9066 vicepresident@evergreenaudubon.org
Secretary	Lisa Wald	303-674-0417 secretary@evergreenaudubon.org
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At Large	Peggy Linn	303-674-2239 atlarge2@evergreenaudubon.org

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

National Audubon	Dick Prickett	303-674-0217
Bear Creek Atlas	Brad Andres	303-670-0101
Bird Box Sales	Bud Weare	303-679-8889
Bird Monitoring	Brad Andres	303-670-0101
Conservation	Chuck Aid	303-674-3331
Dipper Editor	Debbie Marshall	303-886-0593 marshallpublish@gmail.com
Education	Ed Furlong	303-956-8321 cogoshawk@gmail.com
Field Trips	Chuck Aid	303-674-3331
Hospitality	Rachel Hutchinson	303-679-1503
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Weeds	Betsy Kelson	720-219-7165
Webmaster	Kathy Madison	303-670-0209

Meetings first Thursday, 7 p.m., Church of the Hills, 28628 Buffalo Park Road, Evergreen, except January. Meetings in June, July and August are held at Evergreen Nature Center.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BRAD ANDRES

I hope everyone had a great holiday season. Thanks go to the 30 donors who contributed to Colorado Gives Day 2013.

More than 88,571 donations amounting to \$20.9 million dollars were generated for Colorado non-profits on Dec. 10. FirstBank was again the primary corporate sponsor of Colorado Gives Day.

Also thanks to all of you for sending in your Evergreen Audubon membership for 2014. It seems like we just closed up the Warming Hut, but Vanessa is already scheduling events for Evergreen Nature Center for the spring! Please consider including volunteering at the Nature Center as you plan out the New Year.

In this issue, you will find the summary of our windy 45th Evergreen-Idaho Springs Christmas Bird Count. Dick Prickett and I enjoyed much better weather and some great birds on the Fort Morgan count two days later.

Thanks to all count section leaders and participants and Barbara Jean Gard for coordinating the feeder-watchers. Thanks also to the Walds for hosting the Tally Rally, Bill and JoAnn Hackos for making the meat-eaters chili, Bob Santangelo for providing the veggie chili, Marge Petersen for organizing the dinner, and all of you for contributing to the potluck. Let's wish for calmer weather in 2014.

I look forward to seeing you at our general meeting on Feb. 6. As for the next bird event, the Great Backyard Bird Count will be held Feb. 14-17 (see birdsource.org/gbbc). To launch the count, we are planning a public event at Hiwan Homestead on Saturday, Feb. 15, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. to increase awareness about our winter birds.



Count organizer JoAnn Hackos, left, and EA co-founder Louise Mounsey with her great granddaughter, Hannah Crangle, participate in the Kids' Christmas Bird Count on Dec. 21 at Kittredge Park. Photo by Bill Hackos



Evergreen Audubon
presents:

Great Backyard Bird Count Event

Saturday, February 15

11am- 3pm

at Hiwan Homestead Museum

Free Event, All Ages

Meet Backyard Birds

Enjoy a Scavenger Hunt & Crafts

Find and Fill the Perfect Feeder

Be a Citizen Scientist for the World



**Hiwan Homestead
Museum**

Christmas Bird Counts

Our attention shifted from our own backyards to various territories in Colorado as we joined tens of thousands of others in the longest-running citizen science survey in the world.

The 114th Annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count was conducted from Dec. 14 to Jan. 5. Data from more than 2,300 circles are entered after the count and become available to query on the National Audubon website.

The CBC provides critical data on population trends and it is also a lot of fun, as evidenced by the photos below.

The 2013 Idaho Springs-Evergreen CBC is summarized in this issue of *The Dipper*.

Denver Field Ornithologists CBC Indian Hills, Dec. 14

Sherman Wing has led the Indian Hills CBC for at least 10 years; it is often held the day before the Evergreen-Idaho Springs count.

He always attracts a large team and sends them off with a yummy breakfast to start the day.

At the end of the count, participants have enjoyed a hot lunch during the Tally Rally at Sherman's home.

The count this year was bittersweet as it was the last time Sherman will lead it. He has purchased a home on the Big Island of Hawaii and plans to retire, or at least semi-retire, and move there next year.

Sherman spent the holidays there this year and, already in the birding groove, participated in his first Hawaii CBC.

Evergreen-Idaho Springs CBC Dec. 15

If you've never participated in this count, you've missed a great opportunity to learn more about the birds in our community and, perhaps, in your own neighborhood.

At the end of the day, participants gather for the Tally Rally where teams get to boast or commiserate about their findings or lack thereof. It's always a fun, and sometimes rowdy, affair.

Each CBC is different. This year wind and cold was a major deterrent. Species

and individual counts were below average.

Chuck Aid shared this about his count: "An interesting phenomenon occurred on Tuesday, Dec 10; an ice dam broke, I believe, up on Fall River.

"The subsequent surge of water coming down Clear Creek broke, and popped up, all of the roughly foot-thick ice created during the extremely cold temps we've had.

"This resulted in totally open water for the CBC with HUGE piles of ice up to 8 feet above the water level on either bank for miles and miles.

"Last year I had nine **Dippers** along Clear Creek, this year only one.

"However, I had two **Belted Kingfishers** cruising upstream, which, of course, was unusual because normally they would not be able to do any "fishing," to speak of, in that area at this time of year. In fact, eBird asked me to confirm the sightings."

Evergreen East team member Shirley Casey had 14 **American Goldfinches** at her feeders on count day, the most recorded for that area in the last 11 years, and they've only been seen on two other counts.



Continued on page 5 *American Goldfinches. Photo by Shirley Casey*



The Indian Hills CBC team: Front row, left to right, leader Sherman Wing, Sharon Powers, Elaine Lockey, Susan Harper. Back row, Megan Miller, Jordan Spa, Sue Summers, Dick Prickett, Karen von Saltza, Rob Raker, Marilyn Rhodes, Bob Holmes, Jeanette Strom. Not pictured are team members Warren Roske, Caroline and Michael Gilbert. Photo by Bill Eden

Two projects, 'Best Bird' honored at EA banquet

Continued from page 1

Weed Campaign members have tirelessly written ads and articles focusing on problem species for local newspapers, and provided material for a changing weed display at Evergreen Nature Center.

"Thanks to Cathy and the team for untiring efforts to maintain the naturalness of our mountain community," Brad said in presenting the coveted Royal Order of the Dipper to the group.

The second President's Award went to the Nest Box Program, with a specific acknowledgement of Tom Boschen's efforts in the construction of nest boxes for EA's annual sale.

The Nest Box Program combines elements of habitat creation, public outreach and citizen science, Andres pointed out. Bud Weare, Walt Phillips, Mike Wilson and many others have helped Boschen with construction, sales and monitoring.

Each year, about 90 boxes are made for sale at local grocery stores. The process begins with the best lumber handpicked at Rocky Mountain Forest Products, followed by cutting 630 separate pieces, assembling the boxes, transporting them to the sales sites and finding volunteers to staff the sales.

The construction process has been improved over the years, with Boschen creating forms that make assembly fast and easy.

The outcome of this effort is increased nesting sites for bluebirds, swallows and other species and a great way to reach out to the public.

"For all the years Tom has dedicated his shop to the construction of the boxes and done so much of the preconstruction work, we acknowledge him and the whole Nest Box Program with the Royal Order of the Dipper," Andres told the banquet audience.

Next up was presentation of the Best

Bird of the Year award. "It seemed like an easy task until Marilyn (Rhodes) sent me her monthly column," Andres said, "and then I realized how many good birds we saw in 2013, many of which were only vagrants in our area."

Among the contenders for Best Bird were "gobs" of Common Redpolls in January and February, a Winter Wren, a Slate-colored Fox Sparrow, Barrow's Goldeneyes, and an Eastern Blue Jay.

"With all these possibilities, I had to decide on a species absent from the Bear Creek Watershed Checklist," Andres said. "The grand prize winners were Marilyn Rhodes and Dick Prickett for Hoary Redpoll.

"Marilyn saw the species in January on Squaw Pass and I reached back to December 2012 when Dick had the bird on our annual Christmas Bird Count. Both observations were made in our count circle."

- Debbie Marshall, Dipper Editor

BIRD BUSINESS MARILYN RHODES, ASGD MASTER BIRDER

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Denver Urban CBC New Year's Day

EA members Bob Santangelo and Marilyn Rhodes led this count, and member Margo Constable of Idledale was one of the participants.

The count was negatively impacted by snow the first part of the day at the Denver Botanic Gardens and the last hour of the day at Harvard Gulch.

Like the Evergreen-Idaho Springs count, species and individuals counted were below average.

Yard Birds

A few yard birds were reported last month. On Jan. 5, JoAnn Hackos posted, "A **Cooper's Hawk** nabbed a junco right in front of our breakfast table window this morning."

The next day she and Bill had a leucistic junco at their feeder—a **Gray-headed** with a white back where the red belongs.

Record Bird at Aurora Reservoir

The new birding year started with a bang in Colorado. On Jan. 1, a **Slaty-backed Gull** was reported at Aurora Reservoir. This is only the second time this gull has been recorded for Colorado.

This rare winter visitor is the same size as the Western Gull, which it also resembles in structure and general appearance.

A coastal resident of the northwest Pacific, the Slaty-backed Gull breeds from Siberia to northern Japan and winters from Japan south to Taiwan and east through the Bering Sea region to Alaska.

The Slaty-backed Gull is the fourth-largest species of gull in the world and is

considered the North Pacific equivalent of the largest gull species, the Great Black-backed Gull.

Celebrate the ABA Bird of the Year!

Every year, the American Birding Association selects its "Bird of the Year" to highlight a single species.

This year, on Jan. 9, the ABA announced its 2014 Bird of the Year will be the Rufous Hummingbird.

The feistiest hummingbird in North America, these copper-penny bullets migrate through the Rocky Mountains in July and August.

They show without fail in Evergreen around the 4th of July.

**To contact Marilyn Rhodes, call 303-674-9895
or email cloverlane@aol.com.**

**To subscribe to the Evergreen Birders email list
to report and view local sightings, go to
evergreenaudubon.com and click on the Local Sightings link.**

Winds put a damper on 2013 Christmas Bird Count

On Dec. 15, observers braved gusty winds to undertake the 45th Evergreen-Idaho Springs Christmas Bird Count. This was definitely the windiest Evergreen count I have ever participated in!

As a result of the windy conditions and the deep freeze we experienced in early December, both the number of species observed and the total number of the individuals was down from counts in the last few years.

Our tally of 46 species was well below the average of 52 species we recorded in the last five years preceding 2013. Similarly, our total count of 5,729

individuals was down 17% from 2012. We did not get any new species or high counts of regularly occurring species.

In 2012, our counts of Mountain Chickadees and Pygmy Nuthatches were the highest in North America, but our high count status for Mountain Chickadees might be in jeopardy this year!

The deep freeze and ice dam breaking on Clear Creek likely pushed Dippers downslope. We recorded only a measly five Dippers compared to an average of 19 birds.

There were a few highlights, including a single Northern Goshawk, two

Rough-legged Hawks, 376 Steller's Jays, 879 Pygmy Nuthatches and 139 Cassin's Finches.

Participation in 2013 was above average, with 61 field observers and 23 feeder-watchers. The conditions, however, lead to shorter field forays for a total of 112 party-hours.

The species and numbers we counted in 2013 are presented in the table beginning on page 7, as are the averages from 1969 to 2012. Let's hope for better weather next year.

- Brad Andres
Bird Monitoring Chair

Summary of birds observed on the 2013 Evergreen-Idaho Springs Christmas Bird Count, the average number seen from 1969 to 2012, and the high count and year recorded.

Common Name	Number per Year		High Count	
	1969-2012	2013	number	year
Cackling Goose	<1		2	08
Canada Goose	8	1	70	90
Wood Duck	<1		2	93/07
Gadwall	<1		1	10
American Wigeon	<1		2	96
Mallard	56	180	248	12
Northern Pintail	<1		1	96/98
Green-winged Teal	<1		1	81
Chukar	<1		1	80
Blue Grouse	<1		12	94
Wild Turkey	40	24	110	04
Great Blue Heron	<1		1	88/90
Black-crowned Night Heron	<1		1	09
Bald Eagle	1		5	10
Northern Harrier	<1		2	04
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	1	3	06/11
Cooper's Hawk	<1		2	09
Northern Goshawk	1	1	3	72/87/11
Red-tailed Hawk	14	20	44	11
Ferruginous Hawk	<1		2	98
Rough-legged Hawk	1	2	11	85
Golden Eagle	3	3	8	89
Wilson's Snipe	1	2	4	78/91/00
Rock Pigeon	76	30	212	81
Eurasian Collared-Dove	3	31	66	12

Common Name	Number per Year		High Count	
	1969-2012	2013	number	year
Mourning Dove	<1		2	10
Great Horned Owl	1	2	5	09/12
Northern Pygmy-Owl	1		4	95
Long-eared Owl	<1		1	74/82
Northern Saw-whet Owl	<1		1	70
Belted Kingfisher	2	3	6	04
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	<1		1	80
Downy Woodpecker	29	21	51	08
Hairy Woodpecker	45	51	81	11
Am. Three-toed Woodpecker	<1		3	79/89
Northern (Red-shafted) Flicker	15	18	39	09
American Kestrel	1	1	4	87/12
Merlin	<1		2	10
Prairie Falcon	<1		1	82
Loggerhead Shrike	<1		1	several
Northern Shrike	4	4	13	86
Gray Jay	14	1	53	77
Pinyon Jay	5		200	72
Steller's Jay	264	376	446	00
Blue Jay	<1		1	95/00
Western Scrub-Jay	3	5	18	11
Clark's Nutcracker	26	63	108	78
Black-billed Magpie	188	289	370	12
American Crow	664	1,279	1,519	00
Common Raven	116	99	200	72

Table continued on page 7

Table continued from page 6

Common Name	Number per Year		High Count	
	1969-2012	2013	number	year
Horned Lark	<1		15	86
Black-capped Chickadee	74	92	170	95
Mountain Chickadee	486	441	786	75
Hybrid Mt.-B.c. Chickadee	0	1	1	13
Juniper Titmouse	<1		1	82
Bushtit	<1		15	09
Red-breasted Nuthatch	48	21	127	93
White-breasted Nuthatch	70	73	123	10
Pygmy Nuthatch	403	879	1,046	12
Brown Creeper	13	9	23	75
Canyon Wren	1	1	5	81
Winter Wren	<1		2	75
American Dipper	19	5	37	87
Golden-crowned Kinglet	3		18	84
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	<1		2	83/91
Mountain Bluebird	<1		2	92
Townsend's Solitaire	68	46	202	82
American Robin	134	14	1,500	72
Brown Thrasher	<1		1	several
Northern Mockingbird	<1		1	78
European Starling	129	66	301	00



One of the special birds seen on the Indian Hills and Evergreen East CBCs was a Northern Shrike. This one was seen at Lane Ranch in Indian Hills. Photo by Marilyn Rhodes

Common Name	Number per Year		High Count	
	1969-2012	2013	number	year
Bohemian Waxwing	42		580	80
Cedar Waxwing	8		163	87
Spotted Towhee	<1		4	75
Cassin's Sparrow	<1		1	71
American Tree Sparrow	3		37	84
Chipping Sparrow	<1		1	12
Clay-colored Sparrow	<1		1	83
Fox Sparrow	<1		1	several
Song Sparrow	4	8	15	11
White-throated Sparrow	<1		1	84/06
Harris's Sparrow	<1		2	80
White-crowned Sparrow	<1		1	several
Golden-crowned Sparrow	<1		1	93
Dark-eyed (Gray-headed) Junco	160	176	293	76
Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco	89	35	232	74
Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco	18	49	276	80
Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco	84	60	413	82
Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco	53	69	70	07
Dark-eyed (Cassiar) Junco	0	1	1	13
Dark-eyed Junco (All subspecies)	551	494	699	08
Red-winged Blackbird	54	48	586	91
Brewer's Blackbird	<1		15	12
Common Grackle	<1		3	93
Great-tailed Grackle	<1		1	07
Brown-headed Cowbird	<1		1	09
Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch	130		429	84
Black Rosy-Finch	7		70	04
Brown-capped Rosy-Finch	16		140	04
All Rosy-Finches	164		429	84
Pine Grosbeak	12		51	07
House Finch	171	256	443	11
Cassin's Finch	155	139	474	88
Red Crossbill	64	11	643	82
White-winged Crossbill	1		16	70
Common Redpoll	4		30	70
Hoary Redpoll	<1		1	12
Pine Siskin	220	106	723	08
American Goldfinch	17	14	176	00
Evening Grosbeak	131	89	420	95
House Sparrow	102	19	377	00
Number of Species	47	46	55	09/10

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Feb. 6	EA Chapter Meeting	7 pm	Church of the Hills
Feb. 10	Newsletter deadline	5 pm	
Feb. 14–17	Great Backyard Bird Count		
Feb. 15	GBBC Event	11am–3pm	Hiwan Homestead

Please submit newsletter content by the 10th of the month to **Kathy Madison** at communications@evergreenaudubon.org, and *Dipper* editor **Debbie Marshall** at marshallpublish@gmail.com, 303-886-0593.

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I/we would like to join the Evergreen Audubon. I/we may participate in all chapter activities, receive *The Dipper* newsletter electronically, and vote (two Family members may vote) on chapter issues. Dues remain locally.

Date _____

	Individual	Family
Annual dues	\$ 20	\$ 30
Electronic <i>Dipper</i>	\$ 0	\$ 0
Hard-copy <i>Dipper</i> (members only)	\$ 15	\$ 15
Additional donation	\$ _____	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____	\$ _____

Name _____

Family member(s) name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Email _____

(must include for electronic *Dipper*)

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

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Christmas Count Results
 Great Backyard Bird Count Event
 Annual Awards

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