



BIRD OF THE YEAR?

A code-3 rarity spotted at Bear Creek Lake Park hasn't been seen in Colorado in 30 years. See Bird Business on page 4.

EA BOARD ELECTION

Lisa Wald, Communications, was re-elected to the only open EA board of directors position at the Dec. 6 chapter meeting.

EA officers for 2013 remain Brad Andres, president; Jean Thayer, vice president; Heather Johnson, secretary; and Joan Ridgely, treasurer.

MEMBERSHIP IS DUE

Annual Evergreen Audubon dues are now payable for 2013. Cost is \$20 per individual and \$30 per family.

Please go to the EA website and click on Membership to pay online.

Or, fill out the membership form on the back of this newsletter and send it in with your payment.

Information on joining the National Audubon Society is available on the EA website or on the membership form in this newsletter.

The price to receive a hard copy of *The Dipper* in the mail is now \$15.

You must mail in this amount with your dues to continue receiving a hard copy.

LOCAL SIGHTINGS

The Local Sightings page on the EA website has been replaced by the evergreenbirders@evergreenaudubon.org email list.

Archived postings are available to view by members of the email list.

Bird—and bird diet—enthusiast Leatherman to headline banquet

David Leatherman, an avid birder and enthusiastic identifier of what birds eat, will speak at this year's Evergreen Audubon Annual Banquet on Friday, Jan. 18.

(Details and registration form are on page 7.)

David, who you may know from your birding adventures or from "The Hungry Bird" column he writes for the Colorado Field Ornithologist's journal, has collected a Colorado bird list of more than 440 species.

He played a part in

Continued on page 3



An American Robin with two halves of a cutworm. Photo by David Leatherman

Feb. 9 tuneup: All ages can be part of the Great Backyard Bird Count

Evergreen Audubon, in conjunction with the Evergreen Wild Bird Store and Hiwan Homestead Museum, will hold a special event to help children and adults get tuned up for the Great Backyard Bird Count that will be conducted Feb. 15 to 18.

The EA event will be Saturday, Feb. 9, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Hiwan Homestead Museum on Meadow Drive. All ages are welcome to participate in the many activities:

- making bird feeders with kids,
- going on a nature scavenger hunt,
- talking about the best food and feeders for birds,
- discussing placement of bird feeders in the yard,
- learning which birds to expect at feeders,

• using binoculars and spotting scopes to view birds at the museum.

Participants may also sign up to have Auduboners visit to help them identify birds during the GBBC.

The GBBC is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages and abilities in counting birds in their backyards, creating a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across North America.

Participants tally the number of individual birds of each species they see during the count period and then enter the numbers on the GBBC website. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or participants can count for as long as they like each day of the event.

It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds. For more info visit www.birdsource.org/gbbc.

2012 OFFICERS

President	Brad Andres	303-670-0101 president@evergreenaudubon.org
Vice President	Jean Thayer	303-670-9066 vicepresident@evergreenaudubon.org
Secretary	Heather Johnson	303-670-0101 secretary@evergreenaudubon.org
Treasurer	Joan Ridgely	303-526-2250 treasurer@evergreenaudubon.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bird Monitoring	JoAnn/Bill Hackos	303-670-8517 birdmon@evergreenaudubon.org
Communications	Lisa Wald	303-674-0417 communications@evergreenaudubon.org
Conservation	Chuck Aid	303-674-3331 conservation@evergreenaudubon.org
Development	Ginny Ades	303-674-7199 development@evergreenaudubon.org
Education	Kathy Madison	303-670-0209 education@evergreenaudubon.org
Social Events	Marge Petersen	303-670-4310 socialevents@evergreenaudubon.org
At Large	Barbara Klaus	303-674-1102 atlarge1@evergreenaudubon.org
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 Business	Marilyn Rhodes	303-674-9895 cloverlane@aol.com
Conservation	Chuck Aid	303-674-3331
Dipper Editor	Debbie Marshall	303-886-0593 marshallpublish@gmail.com
Education	Kathy Madison	303-670-0209
Field Trips	TBD	
Hospitality	Rachel Hutchinson	303-679-1503
Land Acquisition	Polly Phillips	303-674-7744
Membership	Jean Thayer	303-670-9066
Nature Center	Vanessa Hayes	303-330-0489 encdirector@evergreenaudubon.org
Program	Kathy Madison	303-670-0209
Publicity	TBD	
Ways & Means	Irma Wolf	303-670-3402 irmasonny@aol.com
Weeds	Cathy Shelton	303-674-8610 sheltonpublicaddress@hotmail.com
Webmaster	Lisa Wald	303-674-0417

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BRAD ANDRES

The EA board and I thank you for renewing your Evergreen Audubon membership for 2013. We look forward to growing programs at the Evergreen Nature Center and continuing our citizen science, education and conservation projects.

Thanks to Jean and Tom Thayer for a great job producing the letter, printing 500 copies and bulk mailing the whole shebang.

We also thank the 31 of you who contributed to Colorado Gives Day, which raised \$3,315 for Evergreen Audubon. Coloradans made a spectacular show of support for their favorite local nonprofits on Dec. 4; more than 68,000 donations, totaling more than \$15 million, were made to 1,258 organizations.

First Bank has provided \$300,000 for an incentive fund that will be proportionately divided among participating organizations and cover all Internet payment fees for the day.

In mid-November, Heather and I attended the Rex Morgan Award reception, which is an annual award given to an outstanding nonprofit activist with the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District.

One of this year's nominees was Paul K. Worley, who was a member of the Jefferson County Council and lived in Evergreen. He was a strong supporter on the SCFD Council of Evergreen Audubon but died unexpectedly in August of 2011.

As many of you know, we lost Bill Mounsey, one of the creators and longtime supporters of Evergreen Audubon, in November. If you did not have the privilege of meeting Bill or would like to know more about one of our founders, you can read about his remarkable life at www.BillMounsey.com, as well as in this issue of *The Dipper*.

We will miss Bill at our meetings and events, and our thoughts are with Louise and their four daughters.

Thanks to everyone who came out to the December meeting and voted for Lisa Wald's second term as Communications chair. Lisa has done a great job with the website and all other forms of communication and publicity. I appreciate her dedication to Evergreen Audubon.

I look forward to seeing you at our Annual Banquet at Mount Vernon Country Club on Jan. 18. We guarantee good food, a great speaker and wonderful camaraderie.

As you have read, we will hold a public event at Hiwan Homestead on Feb. 9 to increase awareness about birds through the Great Backyard Bird Count. I hope you and your family can join us there as well.

Lastly, if there are any topics about conservation or Audubon you would like me to address in this column, please contact me at president@evergreenaudubon.org.



Evergreen Auduboners get around: Sherman Wing snapped these Sandhill Cranes near Delta during the last week of November.

Founder Bill Mounsey: Goodbye to a truly rare bird

William Bird Mounsey, one of Evergreen Audubon's founders, died Nov. 11 at the age of 94.

I always loved reading Bill's feisty and well-informed letters to the editor in *The Canyon Courier*. I also found Bill to be a treasure trove of history and loved listening to his stories.

My two favorites were his telling of his involvement with the 10th Mountain Division in the '40s and his experience in the Big Thicket of Texas when he and a small group of others, including his wife, Louise, saw the now likely extinct Ivory-billed Woodpecker.

I went on a pilgrimage to the Big Woods of Arkansas last year, not really expecting to find the woodpecker but rather to stand in the presence of its spirit.

I did some research on the bird before the trip, including reading the highly regarded book by Jerome Jackson, "In Search of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker."

Much to my surprise, although I don't know why, I saw William Bird Mounsey referenced in the acknowledgements and

again in a passage on page 189 of the book.

"Bill Mounsey and a team from the University of the Wilderness reported two sightings of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers near Steinhagen Reservoir in the Big Thicket area on May 21 and 22, 1976. (John) Dennis believed these records were valid."

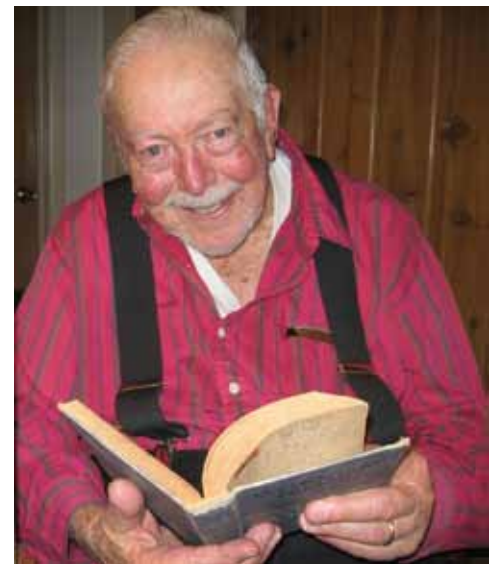
I had heard Bill and Louise tell the story a few times and seeing it in print from such a credible source sure made a believer out of me.

I wrote to Jerome Jackson, who is a professor of ecological sciences at Florida Gulf Coast University, to inform him of Bill's death. Here is an excerpt from his response.

"My career has been focused on the behavior and ecology of woodpeckers. Bill was one of the first to give us hope that the Ivory-bill might still be out there.

"I spent many days searching in the Big Thicket where he had made his observations. He gave me hope and encouragement and introduced me to a wonderful wild area."

Bill enriched the lives of all who knew



Bill Mounsey. Photo courtesy of Canyon Courier

him and the communities he touched. He truly will be missed. I fear that men such as Bill, like the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, are becoming extinct. They were rare birds indeed.

- Marilyn Rhodes

Banquet speaker has ties to Evergreen Audubon

Continued from page 1

the discovery of three first state records: Slaty-backed Gull, Tropical Parula, and Brown-crested Flycatcher.



A Yellow-rumped Warbler with his catch: The moth (probably the adult of the severed worm pictured in the robin's beak on page 1) is an Army Cutworm (aka, THE "miller moth"). Photo by David Leatherman

Besides birding, particularly trying to figure out what birds are eating, his favorite hobbies are nature photography and insect collecting for the Gillette Museum at Colorado State University in Fort Collins.

After we've had a lovely meal at Mt. Vernon Country Club, we'll sit back and listen to David talk about the fascinating food habits of birds. He'll discuss bird anatomy, energy requirements, seasonal diet shifts, foraging strategies and landscaping for the birds.

David will share anecdotes that illustrate how the study of food habits can add to the enjoyment of our birding, make us better at finding/understanding

them, and maybe even help in the fight to conserve birds and all biodiversity.

A retired forest entomologist with the Colorado State Forest Service, David grew up in Columbus, Ohio, where he apparently was always drawn to nature.

His interest was affirmed and encouraged by his parents. His dad took him on lots of outings while his mom was OK with salamanders in the bathtub.

He earned a bachelor's degree in biology (with a minor in basketball) from Marietta College in Ohio and a master's in Forest Protection from Duke University.

He's currently working on a book about "the LIFE of our local cemetery" in Fort Collins, which will feature the double-nesting of White-winged Crossbills.

David has many ties to Evergreen Audubon. "Showing William Winston Brockner his first Swainson's Warbler in Colorado is one of my fondest memories," he said. "His beloved Sylvia has been an inspiration to all of us."

- Kathy Madison

Yardbirds

John Sears of Evergreen Wild Bird Store reported to evergreenbirders.org on Nov. 12 that **Rosy-Finches** had “arrived a few weeks back with our first snowfall. This week’s flock features fewer Black Rosys but it seems like more of the Hepburn’s. All subspecies are here. The flock is easily over 100 at this time.

“Evergreen Audubon members are welcome to come and see the Rosys at our place in Conifer. Please call the bird store first for directions and permission.

“Anyone who wants to visit to see our winter flock would be best advised to do so in early morning hours on a snowy day or when snow is on the ground.”

After checking with John and Diane, Cynthia Madsen and I visited the Sears’ home on Nov. 21, the day before Thanksgiving.

Although the snow had melted, John assured us the finches would show . . . and show they did! We saw all three species of North American Rosy-Finches, the **Gray-crowned**, the **Brown-capped** and the **Black**, plus the Gray-crowned subspecies, **Hepburn’s**.

John and I are considering offering a field trip to his home this winter. Let us know if that would interest you.

VERY Rare Sighting

Mike Henwood of Morrison located a rare Eurasian finch on Nov. 19 near the boat launch at Bear Creek Lake Park, among a mixed flock of **Tree Sparrows**, **House Finches**, juncos and **Black-capped Chickadees**.

He and Cynthia Madsen were able to identify it as a **Brambling** and observers knowledgeable about the species determined it was a first-winter male.

The Brambling is a Eurasian species, common but irregular as a migrant in the Bering Sea region, including the Aleutians. It regularly strays into southern Alaska during migration and may continue as far south as the western United States.

This might very well be the ‘bird of the year’ in Colorado since it hasn’t been reported here in 30 years.

The code-3 rarity stands to be the state’s third accepted record, with the



This Brambling may be the bird of the year in Colorado. Photo by Marilyn Rhodes



Rosy-Finches at the home feeders of John and Diane Sears. Photo by Marilyn Rhodes

prior two both occurring in the fall/winter of 1983 (an irruption year for the species across much of the U.S.).

When word got out late Nov. 19, scores of birders from all over the United States came to Bear Creek Lake Park

to observe the bird coming to scattered seed and associating with the same loose flock. I immediately posted information from cobirds for evergreenbirders.org subscribers.

Continued on page 5



The Downy Woodpecker

Colorado, with its great habitat diversity, is home, at least for part of each year, to 10 of North America's 23 species of woodpeckers.

Here in the Evergreen area we have three that regularly occur.

One is the large and well-known Northern Flicker, famous for its loud drumming on buildings and stovepipes during breeding season.

A second is the medium-sized Hairy Woodpecker found primarily in our coniferous habitats.

The third is the diminutive Downy Woodpecker, which at less than seven inches in length and weighing less than an ounce, is the smallest woodpecker in Canada and the United States.

In its naturally occurring habitats, the Downy Woodpecker is primarily found in lowland and foothill deciduous forests dominated by cottonwood, willow or

Continued on page 6

The Downy Woodpecker, one of three woodpeckers that regularly occur in the Evergreen area, is the smallest woodpecker in the United States and Canada. Photo by Sherman Wing

BIRD BUSINESS MARILYN RHODES

Continued from page 4

As a result of both posts, several of our members reported seeing the bird, including John Sears, Dick Prickett, Bob Santangelo, JoAnn and Bill Hackos, Margaret McDole, Mark Meremonte, Sherman Wing and me. The bird was last seen Nov. 23 and is believed to have moved on.

If you missed this bird, please consider subscribing to ever-

greenbirders.org. Instructions may be found on the EA website under Local Sightings.



Location of Brambling sighting at Bear Creek Lake Park. Photo by Marilyn Rhodes



A Lifer for all of us! From left: Laurie Duke of Elizabeth (an EA wreath customer), John Sears of Evergreen Wild Bird Store and Judy Henderson, an Evergreen East area Christmas Bird Count recruit. Photo by Marilyn Rhodes

The diminutive Downy Woodpecker

Continued from page 5

aspen trees. If you have planted deciduous trees in your backyard, then you may be creating good habitat for them.

John James Audubon's book, "The Birds of North America," was published in 1840. In writing about the Downy Woodpecker, he said: "I have found it pretty generally distributed from the lower parts of Louisiana to Labrador, and as far to the westward as I have traveled. It seems, in fact, to accommodate itself to circumstances, and to live contented anywhere."

It can be a wonderful treat to watch the acrobatic Downy feeding. As it clings to a tree, it is constantly moving, flaking off pieces of bark to dig out a grub or a batch of insect eggs, spiraling around a branch, hitching its way down a trunk, slipping to the opposite side of a branch to avoid detection by a small hawk, OR YOU, then quickly flying to the next tree, in a generally quiet, undulating flight.

As you watch, you may notice that males tend to forage on smaller branches, while females are seen more often on larger branches and trunks. Of course, the presence of trees helps encourage them to visit you, but the addition of some available suet will really add enticement.

You may also notice, especially through the winter months, that Downys will tend to show up in your yard in conjunction with other birds, such as chickadees and nuthatches. There are many thoughts as to why this occurs, but two of the main ones are that more eyes will spot a predator more quickly, and that food resources will be found more quickly by a greater number of individuals.

Roughly 80% of the Downy's diet is insect based, with an occasional bit of fruit, berries, seeds or sap thrown in for variety. Putting out suet is a great supplement for this insectivore. In the spring it helps it meet the increased energy demands of breeding and nesting, providing a ready food supply when insects may still be scarce, and in the winter suet can help provide the nutrients necessary to help a Downy make it through the cold months.

The scientific name for the Downy is *Picoides pubescens*, meaning "woodpecker having downy plumage," referring specifically to the soft white feathers of the back. It is primarily a black and white woodpecker, very similar in plumage to its larger relative, the Hairy Woodpecker (which has hair-like feathers on its white back).

The male has a small, intensely red patch on the back of the head, and juvenile birds briefly sport a red forehead before obtaining their adult plumage in the early fall. A Downy can be distinguished from a Hairy by its overall smaller size, its relatively much smaller bill, and by the alternating black bars in the white of its outer tail feathers.

When nesting, Downys generally excavate a cavity in a dead branch or a snag, preferring softer wood—not your house! Similarly, in the fall, both sexes excavate separate fresh cavities for winter roosts. A Downy will occasionally use a nest box for roosting, though it apparently never uses one for nesting.

- Chuck Aid



Photo Caption Contest

Each month in *The Dipper* we'll print a photo that needs a caption. The cleverest ones will be published in the following month's newsletter.

Please send your captions to Lisa Wald, Communications director, at communications@evergreenaudubon.org, or call 303-674-0417 if you do not have email.

If you have a photo you'd like to contribute for a caption, send that to Lisa too. Have fun!

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

BIRDING WITH MIKE

Mike Foster has a new set of birding courses for 2013. Evergreen Audubon members get a 10% tuition discount on any of his courses, any year.

Enroll now for Ducks and Winter Birds, beginning January 29.

Please check the website (www.BirdingWithMike.com) for dates and topics of all new courses, plus answers to most of your other questions.

Annual Banquet will feature buffet, speaker, awards

The Evergreen Audubon Annual Banquet will be Friday, Jan. 18, at Mt. Vernon Country Club.

The cash bar and silent auction will begin at 6 p.m., with dinner at 7.

The speaker will be David Leatherman (see story on page 1).

The banquet will be in the downstairs Canyon Room, which has been completely remodeled with a fireplace and many more heat registers to make it a warm and inviting venue.

Irma Wolf is once again organizing the silent auction, so please contact her if you have items to donate.

She can arrange pickup and must make bid sheets in advance. Her phone number is 303-674-3402, or you can email irmasonny@aol.com.

Please fill out and return the reservation form below.

Banquet Buffet Menu

(Non-ambulatory persons will be served.)

Full Cold Salad Bar with Condiments & Toppings

Beef Stroganoff over Egg Noodles

South West Grilled Breast of Chicken

Mediterranean Rice Mix with Olives, Tomato, Squash and Feta Cheese
(Vegetarian Fare)

Chef's Freshest Vegetable Medley

Assorted Rolls, Flatbreads and Butters

Dessert: Flourless Chocolate Torte with Whipped Cream and Strawberries

EA Annual Banquet Reservation Form

Number in your party _____ Contact name and phone number _____

Mount Vernon Country Club will plate meals for any guests who prefer to be served at their table.

Names (for name tags).

Print first and last names clearly for each guest attending.

Check box for table service.

_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>

Cost is \$36 per person. Make check payable to EA Banquet and please write "Banquet" on the memo line of your check. Payment must be included with your reservation.

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____

*Reservations must be received by Friday, Jan. 11, 2013.
Mail to EA Banquet, P.O. Box 523, Evergreen, CO 80437-0523.*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Jan.. 10	Newsletter deadline	5 pm	
Jan. 11	Banquet reservation deadline		
Jan. 18	EA Annual Banquet	6 pm	Mt. Vernon Country Club
Jan. 24	EA Board Meeting	6 pm	Church of the Hills

Save the Date:

Feb. 9	GBBC Tuneup	10 am-2 pm	Hiwan Homestead Museum
Feb. 15-18	Great Backyard Bird Count		

Please submit newsletter content by the 10th of the month to Lisa Wald: communications@evergreenaudubon.org. Contact *Dipper* editor Debbie Marshall with questions or comments: marshallpublish@gmail.com, 303-886-0593.

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

Evergreen Audubon Local Membership Application

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>	\$ 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.**

I DO NOT want solicitations from National Audubon.

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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Colorado Bird of the Year?
 Bill Mounsey Remembered
 The Diminutive Downy

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