



THE DIPPER

VOL. 44 NO. 7
JULY 2014

EVERGREEN AUDUBON NEWSLETTER

www.evergreenaudubon.org

ENC will host Andres talk on breeding birds July 10



Green-tailed Towhee on May 24 in the backyard of a home on the Evergreen/Kittredge border overlooking Bear Creek. Photo by Trish Tofte

For the last seven years, Evergreen Audubon has implemented two major bird-monitoring projects during the breeding season—the Bear Creek Watershed Breeding Bird Atlas and nest-box monitoring at Elk Meadow and Alderfer/Three Sisters parks.

Evergreen Audubon President Brad Andres will give a presentation on the two projects at 7 p.m. Thursday, July 10, at Evergreen Nature Center. The monthly meeting has been moved to the second Thursday of the month due to the Fourth of July holiday.

Brad will describe the general methods of the atlas effort and discuss patterns of breeding bird abundance throughout the Bear Creek Watershed. Between 2008 and 2012, 44 public land sites were surveyed in the Bear Creek Watershed.

A total of 170 species were recorded during all surveys, of which 133 species were suspected of breeding in the Bear Creek Watershed. As most birders know, breeding bird communities change dramatically as Bear Creek descends 6,000 feet from Summit Lake to Bear Creek Lake.

Evergreen Audubon members assist in monitoring 35 nest boxes at Elk Meadow and 25 boxes at Alderfer/Three Sisters Park. Mountain and Western bluebirds are the most common nest-box occupants, but several other species, such as swallows, use the boxes in both parks. Productivity varies by year, but nest-box occupancy is high every year, especially at Elk Meadow.

Brad helped revitalize the nest-box monitoring program and helped develop the atlas project. He surveyed several blocks for the Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas II, conducts Breeding Bird Survey routes in the state each year and annually participates in Christmas Bird Counts.

EA Annual Picnic set for July 19 at Dedisse Park

Evergreen Audubon once again is hosting its Annual Picnic at Dedisse Park, Site 1, on Saturday, July 19. The chapter will furnish the main course (barbecued chicken/beef and portabella

mushrooms for a vegetarian option), 3.2 beer and non-alcoholic beverages.

To round out the picnic, please bring a potluck side dish to serve 10. To be sure we have variety, we'd like people to bring a dish according to the letter of the alphabet of your last name.

Appetizers	Board members
Desserts	A-K
Salad/Vegetable/ Vegetarian	L-Z

to cover the cost of the food, beer and non-alcoholic beverages.

- Denver Mountain Parks only allows 3.2 beer and does not allow glass containers.

- In keeping with our recycling ethic, please bring your own reusable utensils, plates and beverage cups.

- Bring a lawn chair or blanket in case you do not get a picnic bench.

- Please RSVP by July 16 to Janet Warner, coordinator, 303-674-1636.

When you RSVP, indicate if you will help with setup or cleanup.

Schedule of Activities

3- 4 p.m.	Setup
4 - 5 p.m.	Social Hour & Appetizers
5 - 6 p.m.	Potluck Supper
6 - 7 p.m.	Announcements and Entertainment
7 - 7:30 p.m.	Cleanup

Important

- We are asking for a \$7 contribution

EVERGREEN AUDUBON
www.evergreenaudubon.org

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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

Thanks to everyone who has responded to our annual appeal. With your help, we can continue the great programming at Evergreen Nature Center. If you set that piece of mail aside, please consider supporting Evergreen Audubon.

On my way back from conducting Breeding Bird Survey routes in northeast Colorado, I stopped by the wetlands at Lower Latham Reservoir. As you can imagine there is lots of water for breeding Black-necked Stilts, American Avocets and Blue-winged Teal.

I was surprised, however, by the appearance of a single White-rumped Sandpiper. This is one of the latest spring shorebird migrants, perhaps because they nest in the high Arctic. In just two weeks, we will be seeing the first southbound shorebird migrants.

If you haven't had a chance to get out to the Nature Center to volunteer a few hours, we can use your help. As Vanessa gets closer to becoming a mom, Pam could use your skills as a visitor assistant. Please see the website for upcoming programs and events at Evergreen Nature Center.

As you see in this *Dipper*, I will be presenting results from the nest-box monitoring project and the Bear Creek Breeding Bird Atlas at the next chapter meeting on July 10. Please drop me a note if you would like to get involved with these projects.

Please mark your calendars for our annual picnic at Dedisse Park on July 19 and our annual Bird House Bash on Sept. 27.

EPRD protects Evergreen Lake

Editor's note: A slightly different version of this letter was submitted to the Canyon Courier.

Under the leadership of Scott Robson, Evergreen Park and Recreation District has made some fantastic improvements in 2014 to keep visitors and wildlife safe at Evergreen Lake.

I hope you have noticed several of these new illustrations of EPRD's commitment to balancing outdoor recreation with natural resource protection. If not, Evergreen Nature Center and our parent organization, Evergreen Audubon, are thrilled to highlight a few.

Physical additions include new park regulation signs and a fence to protect the northwestern shore and islands, which are important nesting sites and elk calving grounds.

In the past, extensive fishing in this section has prevented and disturbed nesting, and caused some dangerous close encounters between visitors and very protective elk mothers during spring calving season.

Since the fence installation, and its promotion by EPRD's new park ranger, Jason Garner, ENC has observed more Great Blue Herons and waterfowl on the northwestern shore. Fewer standoffs with encroaching paparazzi have made the elk nursery a much calmer, safer place for everyone.

Jason, the EPRD ranger, has been an invaluable presence in 2014, educating and redirecting lake guests that might overlook new signs and fences. EPRD's new volunteer Park Steward program gives the whole mountain community an opportunity to personally resolve problems at the lake and sustain Evergreen's beautiful outdoor recreation areas for many years to come.

To top it all off, EPRD thoughtfully responded to community concerns

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View fellow EA members' photos or post your own



Fairy Slipper, Rocky Mountain National Park, June 20. Photo by Alistair Montgomery



Tree Swallow juvenile, Wheatridge Greenbelt, June 5. Photo by Alistair Montgomery

Evergreen Audubon members have been recording their sightings from far and wide this spring.

Most of these photos, and many others, can be viewed by clicking on the Photo Gallery link at the Evergreen Audubon website, evergreenaudubon.org.

The Photo Gallery is hosted by Flickr. To post your own photos, sign up for a free Flickr account at Flickr.com.

Photos also are distributed through the Evergreen Birders email list— visit the website and click on the Local Sightings link to sign up.



Cordilleran Flycatcher June 13 Indian Hills. Photo by Sherman Wing



Lewis's Woodpecker, June 15, Idledale. Photo by Annette Calvi

EPRD thanked for protecting Evergreen Lake

Continued from page 2

about documented wear and tear at Evergreen Lake after frequent large events, and in 2014 it has significantly decreased concerts and relocated some of the most popular festivals to parks with higher capacity.

Evergreen Lake has been the heart of community recreation since its construction in 1928, and the risk of being loved to death has accompanied that popularity ever since.

Here at Evergreen Nature Center, we are especially grateful to witness and aid

in EPRD's hard work to maintain Evergreen Lake as a natural hub of outdoor fun for residents and guests- two and four-legged alike.

Thanks, EPRD!

- Vanessa Hayes
ENC Executive Director

Fallout! Wild mountain spring has a silver lining for avid birders

Mother's Day Fallout

It's been a wild spring in Evergreen with heavy snows, thunderstorms, hailstorms and tornado warnings.

Of course, for birders there's more than calm after a storm, there's a silver lining. Harsh weather in the spring or fall usually means . . . fallout!!

Migrating birds seek refuge anywhere they can to rest and refuel for their journey north.

This year, local yards and ponds in Hiwan and Soda Creek and Evergreen Lake were the beneficiary of this phenomenon.

Hiwan Ponds

Dave Wald saw some special birds at the Hiwan Ponds the afternoon of May 11.

- Hiwan Pond #6: **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** in reeds near west end.
- Hiwan Pond #1: **Wilson's Phalaropes, Audubon's Yellow-rumped Warblers, Say's Phoebe, Mountain Bluebirds, Western Bluebirds** and a muskrat!

- Hiwan Telemark Pond: More bluebirds and more yellow-rumps.

- JoAnn and Bill Hackos stopped by on Mother's Day, too, and added a **Brewer's Blackbird** to the list of great birds seen.



Composite photo reveals classic field marks of a Magnolia Warbler seen at the Soda Creek pond May 12.
Photo by Shirley Casey

Evergreen Lake

Dave Wald's next stop on Mother's Day afternoon was Evergreen Lake.

The snow grounded some beautiful birds, including **American Avocets, Spotted Sandpiper, Blue-winged Teal (many), Green-wing Teal, Cinnamon Teal, Northern Shoveler** and **White-crowned Sparrows**.

Larry White stopped by the lake that

morning and saw a poor shivering **Western Kingbird** in the alders.

Later in the week, on the evening of May 15, Mark Meremonte and Margaret McDole made a drive-by and brief stop in the Lakepoint Center parking lot.

They saw a **Hooded Merganser** below the parking lot downstream, a **Lark Sparrow** next to hiking trail feeding in grass and a **Red-tailed Hawk** with very buff breast sitting in willows being dive-bombed by an **American Crow**.

Soda Creek Pond

JoAnn and Bill surveyed the Soda Creek pond May 11 and had an **American Wigeon** and **American Pipits** among many regulars.

JoAnn's report on evergreenbirders.org enticed Shirley and Allan Casey to drive over to the Soda Creek pond the next evening between snow showers.

They saw **Audubon's Yellow-rumped Warblers** and one warbler they couldn't identify but photographed.

Their photos captured the classic field marks of the **Magnolia Warbler**—strong black streaking attached to a black neck band, black back, a broad white wing patch, bright yellow underparts and

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This was the scene Mother's Day morning, May 11, in Hiwan Hills, Evergreen. *Photo by Marilyn Rhodes*



Yellow-breasted Chat, left, in Red Rocks Park May 31. Photo by Bob Santangelo. Below, a Lark Bunting, Colorado's state bird. Photo by Marilyn Rhodes



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throat, a black mask, white supercilium, white under eye arc and a black tail with the broad white band.

GREAT find, Shirley and Allan. Another candidate for Bird of the Year!

JoAnn and Bill looked for the warblers the morning of May 13, but, alas, they had departed.

Yard Birds

Inga Brennan had a **Pinyon Jay** at her home on Lookout Mountain the morning of May 11.

The same day, Larry White observed lots of drowned worms on local roads

in his neck of the woods on Upper Bear Creek Road. Dozens of **American Robins** were feasting along with a **Hermit Thrush**.

Peggy Durham came across a flock of **Cedar Waxwings** feeding in a bush in front of Dr. Larsen's office on Stage Coach Boulevard the morning of May 13, oblivious to cars parking inches from them.

Larry White saw a male **Lark Bunting**, our state bird, in the willows on Upper Bear Creek near Tallgrass Spa later that afternoon.

Later in the month, on May 21, Debbie Marshall saw a **Green-tailed**

Towhee pecking in the shrubs outside her house near the top of Independence Mountain—a Life Bird for Debbie!

On May 26, JoAnn and Bill had a flock of **Band-tailed Pigeons** return to their feeders: “regular visitors this time of the year.”

Dennis Rothernaier saw a **Bald Eagle** the morning of May 22 at the upper end of Upper Bear Creek Road, flying northeast. “Hope it means a nest in the area,” he said.

Lair o’ the Bear

Sherman Wing reported that few birds were seen or heard at the park the evening of May 22, following the rains.

Best birds: two **Great Blue Herons**, seen at the upstream portion of the Creekside Loop; a pair of **Bullock’s Orioles**, male singing; **American** and **Lesser goldfinches**.

Mount Falcon

Sherman made some interesting finds on the Parmalee Trail June 6 at the park. “The forest was full of songs and there were birds everywhere,” he said.

The good birds: **Green-tailed Towhee**, **Virginia’s Warbler**, **Plumbeous Vireo**, **Western Tanager**.

The next day, Mike Foster reported some additional species at the park: **Western Wood-Pewees**, **Olive-sided Flycatchers**, **Cordilleran Flycatchers**, **Dusky Flycatchers** and **Cedar Waxwings**.

Mount Goliath

Bill and JoAnn made an Atlas visit to Mount Goliath the morning of June 7 and saw some nice birds, including **Hermit Thrush**, **White-crowned Sparrow**, **Wilson’s Warbler**, **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**, **Common Raven** and a marmot running across a snow field.

Red Rocks

Mike Foster reported lots of singing chats, orioles and **Black-headed Grosbeaks** the morning of May 18. He also found a **Blue Grosbeak**.

Bob Santangelo and I led a field trip at the park on May 31. Highlights of the

Continued on page 6

Enjoy this terrific guide to birds that may or may not exist. Not only is it fun to read but it also introduces you to the fanatical world of keen birders.

Just consider the precision of the directions for finding the Prairie Molter:

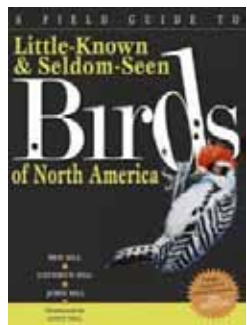
“Observation Hint – Drive 3.26 miles south on Highway 211, turn right and continue for 1.572 miles on County Road SR763 (SR 46 in metric). Immediately past a small unnamed stream, stop at a large pasture on the right. Check the eighth fence post. A Prairie Molter was seen here last year.”

Many directions we’ve received when birding sound just like this one, especially one that told us to turn right at the red barn that burned down last year.

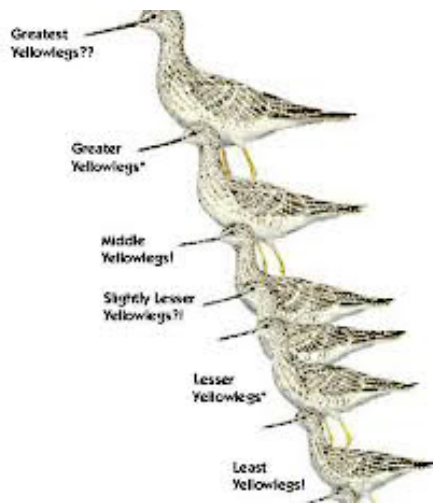
By the way, the Prairie Molter, in case you spot one, is always molting. It is identified by a trailing stream of “dislodged feathers.”

My favorites, one I’m sure we’ve spotted without knowing it, are the Middle Yellowlegs and Least Yellowlegs, two new species in size between the Greatest Yellowlegs and the Very Least Yellowlegs.

The authors, Ben, Cathryn and John Sill, give excellent advice to find these species. “To estimate sizes, it is helpful to insert yardsticks (meter sticks) in mudflats where Yellowlegs feed.”



Little-Known & Seldom-Seen Birds of North America by Ben, Cathryn and John Sill. 2013. Peachtree Publishers, Atlanta, Ga.



That is also good advice for distinguishing the more common Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs that occur frequently in Colorado.

We are currently on the lookout for

the White-Lined Roadrunner, which has a white stripe down the center of its back and tail. We are aware, however, that it is potentially endangered since it runs at speeds up to 35 mph (103,500 furlongs/fortnight).

Unfortunately, it travels exclusively on interstate highways where the average speed of 65 mph (192,214 furlongs/fortnight) leads to high mortality.

On state or county roads, you might find the subspecies, the Yellow-lined Roadrunner.

Predicted to occur in Colorado within the next millennia is the Spoon-billed Hummingbird, which uses its unique spoon-shaped bill to squeeze nectar from flowers.

It is distinguished from the Fork-billed Hummingbird because it moves its wings at 62 beats per second whereas the Spoon-bill moves its wings at 58 beats per second. As the Sills advise, “it helps to count by twos.”

The guide contains many interesting new species to include on your “hoped for” life list. In fact, you could easily include them already since the chances of seeing them are nil. Be certain to pick up the second edition, which is “partially revised and somewhat updated.” Will make a wonderful gift for the Fourth of July.

BIRD BUSINESS

Continued from page 5

day were views of both adult **Peregrine Falcons**, both adult **Prairie Falcons**, the first of the three **Great Horned Owl** owlets to fledge plus one of the adults and a singing **Yellow-breasted Chat**.

On May 25 Sherman birded the riparian area behind the elementary school. He heard lots of singers in the flower shrubs and reported a single **Townsend’s Warbler** in a small group of **Yellow Warblers**.

The next day he posted, “For the last two days I have seen a **Gray Flycatcher** near the riparian area, behind the elementary school.”

Susan Harper and Warren Roske did a Breeding Bird Atlas count at the park

June 10 and discovered that all of the **Great Horned Owlets** had fledged. All three were perched behind the Trading Post on their parents’ favorite roost.

Susan reported that the dominant singers at the park that day were **Black-headed Grosbeaks**.

Up the canyon from Red Rocks near Idledale is an active **Golden Eagle** nest that I have been following this year. There is one eaglet in the nest that hatched around April 3. It will probably leave the nest by mid-June.

On June 6 I was lucky enough to observe all three eagles at the same time. One of the adults was perched near the nest, the other was flying over the nest site and the eaglet was moving around on the nest spreading his wings.

Sherman saw one of the adults soaring and then fly to the nest on June 9.

Not far from Red Rocks, the morning of June 3, Sherman saw a dark raptor above Soda Lake, being harassed by smaller birds:

“The most distinguishing feature that I saw was the rich reddish color, under the wings, along the leading edges. I did not see the tail.

“Checking the guidebooks, this bird is likely a **Harris’s Hawk**. There have been a few reports of this bird, in this general area, for several years now.”

After the Storm . . .

The snow melted quickly and spring reappeared.

I drove through Hiwan Country Club May 14 to find the ponds empty and a red fox basking in the sun.

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JULY ENC LEARNING ADVENTURES

Join Evergreen Nature Center for an exciting season of nature and learning.

Unless otherwise noted, the cost for classes is \$4 per participant or \$10 per family. Evergreen Audubon members enjoy a 50 percent discount.

Register for programs at
www.evergreennaturecenter.org

Wednesday Wild Ones:

Butterfly Flutter By

Wednesdays, July 2 & 16, 10–11 a.m.
Ages 2–5 with adult

Gliding on wings of sparkly scales, butterflies are tougher and smarter than most people know!

Discover how these salt-loving critters live and grow across hundreds of miles.

Evergreen Music Fest

Friday, July 4, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

Free Event

Listen! Nature is singing all around you. Stop by the ENC booth to celebrate nature in music and make a sweet sound of your own.

BIRD BUSINESS

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I assisted with a field trip in Genesee Park May 14, and it did not disappoint.

Most of the apartment trees were alive with hungry chicks, **Williamson's Sapsuckers**, nuthatches, bluebirds, wrens and swallows.

Wildflowers were in bloom and I was delighted to find pasqueflowers and spring beauties along the trail.

June Was Bustin' Out All Over

Melissa and Todd Leasia live near Alderfer/Three Sisters Park. On June 3, Melissa let me know that the wild iris were at peak bloom in the park.

Indeed they were, sprinkled through all of the meadows in the park. Another favorite, golden banner, was in peak bloom, too. I also saw these lovelies blooming in Elk Meadow and Genesee parks.

Evergreen Audubon Presents:

Bear Creek Watershed Birds

Thursday, July 10, 7 p.m.

Free Event

Learn more about the bird populations in your neighborhood.

It is sure to be an exciting night as we learn more about our chapter's premier citizen-science effort and how it is contributing to our understanding of bird population trends in the Colorado foothills!

Night Boating and Nature Exploring: Evening Frog Chorus?

Saturday, July 12, 7–10 p.m.

Free ENC Event, regular boat rental fees apply

As dusk rolls over Bear Creek Watershed, amphibians sound their final call.

Hop along and explore the curious world of our "ribbetting" neighbors, big and small.

Stargazing at Evergreen Lake,

Mars and Saturn visible

Saturday, July 19, 8:30–10 p.m.

Bring a blanket or camp chairs. Join amateur astronomer Pam Little each month for a tour of the night sky.

Meet on the west side of the lake parking lot.

Bear Creek Dipper

Family Adventures:

Woodpeckers Galore

Wednesday, July 23, 1–3 p.m.

Hardworking woodpeckers debug, build and peck away homes for many wildlife.

On this family exploration of wonderful woodpeckers, we'll also learn tricks for peck-free houses.

Bear Creek Nature Walk:

Echo and Summit Lakes

Saturday, July 26, 9 a.m.

Meet at Bergen Park n-Ride.

Follow spring green up through the Bear Creek Watershed.

Night Boating and Nature Exploring: What Do Birds Do at Night?

Saturday, July 26, 7–10 p.m.

Free ENC Event, regular boat rental fees apply

Some will snooze, some will hide, and some will use the night to glide.

Find out what your bird neighbors are up to when the moon is high!

The Critics Have Spoken . . .

On May 22, Larry White offered this review.

"Hey, birders! We watched a good movie last night: *Birding—the Central Park Effect*.

"We streamed it from Netflix. I think you can also see it on YouTube and other sources.

"A lovely story as well as an opportunity to practice some realistic bird ID, especially for those pesky Eastern warblers.

"Maybe I'll finally be motivated to visit NYC."



Great Horned Owlets on their parents' favorite roost behind Red Rocks Trading Post. *Photo by Susan Harper*

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 2	Wednesday Wild Ones	10–11 am	Nature Center
July 4	Evergreen Music Fest	10 am–2 pm	Evergreen Lake
July 10	EA Chapter Meeting	7 pm	Nature Center
July 10	Newsletter deadline		
July 12	ENC Program/Night Boating	7–10 pm	Evergreen Lake
July 16	Wednesday Wild Ones	10–11 am	Nature Center
July 19	EA Annual Picnic	4 pm	Dedisse Park
July 19	Stargazing	8:30–10 pm	Evergreen Lake
July 23	Bear Creek Dippers	1–3 pm	Nature Center
July 26	Bear Creek Nature Walk	9 am	Meet at Bergen Park-n-Ride
July 26	ENC Program/Night Boating	7–10 pm	Evergreen Lake

Please submit *Dipper* newsletter content by the 10th of the month to dipper@evergreenaudubon.org. Your submissions will be forwarded to both *Dipper* editor **Debbie Marshall** and **Kathy Madison**, EA Director of Communications.

VOLUME 44, NO. 7. Evergreen Audubon, P.O. Box 523, Evergreen, CO 80437, publishes *The Dipper* every month. Evergreen Audubon is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Members may receive an electronic copy of *The Dipper* without charge or may pay \$15 a year for a mailed hard copy (members only). Evergreen Audubon encourages readers to submit original articles, creative nature writing or art to *The Dipper*. 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

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.**

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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Artwork: Sylvia Brockner, Mildred Keiser

Fallout!

Thanks, EPRD

Photo Gallery

IN THIS ISSUE

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THE DIPPER