



THE DIPPER

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MAY 2015

EVERGREEN AUDUBON NEWSLETTER

www.EvergreenAudubon.org

DAWN CHORUS: FOR THE EARLY BIRDS

Our annual Dawn Chorus observance will be Sunday, May 3, at 6 a.m. at Evergreen Lake.

It is the 21st year for this wonderful event. Don't miss out on the great birding and socializing.

Please bring breakfast treats to share at the Nature Center; coffee will be provided by Evergreen Audubon.

If you have questions about the event, please contact Vanessa Hayes, encdirector@EvergreenAudubon.org or 303-495-5180.

- Kathy Madison
Director of Communications

Visit Evergreen Nature Center!

Spring Hours

10-4 Saturday and Sunday

Summer Hours

May 27-August 30
Noon-4 Wednesday-Friday
10-4 Saturday and Sunday

New in 2015!

Program Fees \$4/individual or \$10/family unless otherwise noted.

All ENC programs are free for Evergreen Audubon members!

Upcoming Programs

Stargazing at Evergreen Lake
May 9, 8:30 p.m.

Over the Moon!
May 30, 8:30 p.m.

Ubiquitous but controversial 'dogs' will be subject of May 7 meeting

Prairie dogs: Excavators for Burrowing Owl homes? Keystone species of short-grass prairie ecosystems? Cattle-crippling varmints?

However you think about them, black-tailed prairie dogs, once ubiquitous on the prairie landscapes of the Front Range, are now newsworthy and controversial.

Land development threatens what remains of their once massive colonies, and humans' attempts to relocate and accommodate prairie dogs to human desires for homes and stores always seems to bring out reporters, prairie-dog defenders and those who feel the prairie dog needs to "just go!"

But what do we really know about the lives of these highly social, communicative mammals, so much of which is spent out of sight?

Plan to join us on Thursday, May 7, at 7 p.m. at Church of the Hills for the Evergreen Audubon Chapter Meeting. Socializing will start at 6:30.

Mary Ann Bonnell and Lisa Kluesner of Jefferson County Open Space will present "Out on the Town, Going to the 'Dogs': *Things you never knew about prairie dog colonies.*"

Enjoy an interactive exploration into the complex biology and ecology of the black-tailed prairie dog. They will dispel common myths, reveal amazing facts and discuss the human psychology associated with this sometimes-controversial species.

Evergreen Audubon is particularly fortunate to have this lively pair of speakers. Many of you will remember Mary Ann's presentation on coyotes last June to

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A Dusky Grouse admonishes a visitor to steer clear of his territory at the Lookout Mountain Nature Center in March. See Bird Business inside. *Photo by Marilyn Rhodes*

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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

In the March *Dipper*, Peggy Linn discussed some of the benefits of being a member of Evergreen Audubon. Your individual donations have been the core of our ability to operate Evergreen Nature Center, and I appreciate everyone's sustained support!

I want to let you know that our development team is busy working on diversifying our revenue streams to maintain and grow the Nature Center.

We are working on an approach for building corporate and business sponsorships and will be involved with this year's Dam Duck Derby Festival sponsored by Downtown Evergreen. Fear not, all rubber duckies are retrieved from Bear Creek.

We will continue to foster our great partnership with Jefferson County Open Space through its Conservation Trust Fund. Since 2009, we have been approved for more than \$42,000 of exhibit work in the ENC. The Scientific and Cultural Facilities District has been a strong partnership, which we hope to continue. Since 2008, we have received about \$83,000 from the SCFD Jefferson County Cultural Council.

Because you, the members, are so vital to achieving Evergreen Audubon's mission, we are building a membership recruitment component into our 2015 "Explore More" outdoor challenge described in this *Dipper*.

We believe the link between good human health and time spent in nature is an emerging opportunity for Evergreen Audubon to engage our mountain community. As our director of Development, Ann Dodson, says, "Wellness . . . It's Natural!"

I hope you can join us on Thursday, April 30, to hear Chris Smith's presentation on this connection between health and nature.

The Explore More! outdoor challenge is also about members. Nest-box monitoring and the Bear Creek Breeding Bird Atlas offer great opportunities to experience this connection between health and nature, and Chuck Aid also will be offering periodic field trips this summer. Remember the Watershed Birding Challenge? Get out and Explore More!

Besides your financial support, we also rely on our members to help with Evergreen Audubon events. In addition to volunteer assistants needed for the ENC, we will be having booths at the 50th celebration of the Evergreen Garden Club on June 27 and the Evergreen Town Race on Aug. 2. We will also assist with Team Evergreen's Triple Bypass bike race July 11 and 12.

Beyond all this service to our organization and community, be sure to get out and enjoy our many programs and outdoor events.

Save the date! Picnic is July 18

This year's Evergreen Audubon Picnic will be Saturday, July 18. Festivities begin at 4 p.m. at Dedisse Park.

Those attending need to bring a side dish to serve 10. EA will provide the main dish and beverages (3.2 beer and non-alcoholic drinks).

Join us and share your stories about birding adventures you've had this past year. Invite a new or prospective member to join you in the fun.

We need volunteers to help with setup and/or cleanup. Please indicate which you will help with when you RSVP.

Check the July *Dipper* and/or the EA website for further details, or call Janet Warner, 303-674-1636, or Peg Linn, 303-674-2239.

- Peg Linn
Director at Large

Weather, sentiment help sell out nesting boxes

What a difference a day makes. Friday, March 13, was cold and dreary. Evergreen Audubon members worried that the unlucky weather would carry over to the 14th, the appointed day for Evergreen Audubon's nesting box sales.

But Saturday turned out to be one of those sparkling Colorado days, reaffirming the reason why we live here. Sunshine infused the mood of King Soopers shoppers as they bought our boxes and reported their happiness at seeing bluebirds that very morning.

The sentimental among us wondered if Walt Phillips wasn't presiding over such a perfect occasion. In midafternoon, when the Bergen Park volunteers had sold nearly all their boxes, a King Soopers employee, happy to be outside even if it meant gathering carts, stopped by to chat.

"I miss the 'Birdman,' " she said, explaining the nickname that veteran clerks had lovingly bestowed on Walt. Then, she reached in her pocket, pulled out \$25 and purchased one of the last bluebird houses.

"I don't know where I'll put this," she confessed, "but it's something I feel moved to do."

Walt would be pleased that we thanked this person in his name, and as the provident ex-treasurer of Evergreen Audubon, he would want to thank the following volunteers who on this golden day added \$2,000 to his battered cashbox: Karel Buckley, Peggy Durham, John Ellis, Rachel Hutchison, Marilyn Kaussner, Barbara Klaus, Peg Linn, Frank Platt, Sylvia Robertson, Dwight Souder and Bud Weare.

Wingspread talk

Evergreen Audubon will host Christopher A. Smith, senior program officer for the Colorado Health Foundation, on Thursday, April 30, at 6 p.m. at the Bergen Park Firehouse.

Smith is one of 30 signatories to the Wingspread Declaration on Health and Nature, which affirms the positive health benefits of spending time in nature and the imperative to use health as an important lens in guiding conservation.



Left to right: Bud Weare, Jim Chiddix (bought six boxes), John Ellis, Sylvia Robertson, Peggy Durham. Photo courtesy of Linda Kirkpatrick, JustAroundHere.com

And thanks again to the nesting box builders: Chuck Aid, Brad Andres, Tom Boschen, Jim Shelton, Tom Thayer and

Bud Weare. It takes a village to raise a bluebird.

- Bud Weare

'Dogs' to be subject of May meeting

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a packed audience at Evergreen Nature Center.

Mary Ann's in-depth knowledge of mammal biology and behavior was on full display and May's presentation promises to be equally engaging, informative and fun!

Lisa is very knowledgeable about the prairie dog colonies present on JeffCo Open Space and has done much of the on-the-ground monitoring of our JeffCo Open Space colonies. She will be an amazing source for those detailed questions Audubon naturalists like to ask.

Mary Ann Bonnell is the Visitor Services supervisor and Park Ranger Program supervisor for Jefferson County Open Space. Prior to joining Jefferson County Open Space in 2014, Mary Ann was the lead naturalist for the Parks and Open Space Department in Aurora, Colo.

Bonnell earned her degree in environmental, population and organismic biology from the University of Colorado at Boulder in 1991. She is the co-principal Investigator for the Denver Metro Area Coyote Study. She was an invited speaker for the urban coyote symposium at the International Urban Wildlife Management and Planning Conference in 2012.

Lisa Kluesner received her bachelor of science in Natural Resources Management: Fish and Wildlife Conservation from Oregon State University and is completing her master's in environmental science from the University of Idaho.

She has been working as a natural resource specialist with Jefferson County Open Space since 2011. She has previously worked for such conservation organizations as the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Mountains and Plains, The Ecology of Wyoming Landscapes, second edition, by Dennis H. Knight, George P. Jones, William A. Reiners, William H. Romme. 2014, Yale University. Published by Yale University Press with assistance from the University of Wyoming Biodiversity Institute.

by Barb Gorges

Blame the pine beetles for decimating pages of the first edition of Dennis Knight's book, "Mountains and Plains, The Ecology of Wyoming Landscapes."

Blame the wolves, sage-grouse and climate change and all of the other changes and new information since the book was published in 1994.

They caused Mr. Knight, University of Wyoming professor emeritus of the botany department, to give up four years of his retirement to write the second edition, published at the end of 2014. He had help this time from three colleagues: George Jones, associate director of the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database at UW (where the book's royalties are going); William Reiners, professor emeritus, UW; and William Romme, professor emeritus, Colorado State University, an expert on Yellowstone's ecology.

Despite its academic authors, "Mountains and Plains" is not intended as a textbook, though this book should be required reading for everyone graduating from UW, just as is the course in the United States and Wyoming constitutions.

"The book was written for non-scientists who are interested in Wyoming's environment, natural resources and some of the controversial land-management issues that decision-makers are facing at the present time," Knight said. "My co-authors and I tried to provide an easy-to-read synthesis of peer-reviewed ecological research for people who don't have the time or inclination to read the journals themselves. "We hope the book is useful for those who enjoy spending time outdoors as well as teachers, students, and private, state and federal land managers."

How readable is this book? A background in the natural sciences is helpful. But that can be overcome with familiarity with any of Wyoming's landscapes—forest, grassland, sagebrush, sand dunes, alpine, meadows, wetlands, or the landscapes such as Yellowstone, the Black Hills or the Laramie Basin described in special chapters.

Any curiosity about Wyoming's landscapes will make this book a real page-turner, even if you don't know what occasional words like "herbivory" mean. Check the Internet.

My recommendation is to flip through, enjoying the new, full-color photography until you find a compelling subheading, maybe "Aspen Forest," on page 196. Find out where aspen trees grow and why. Find out why they spread by sprouting from roots rather than growing from seed. Did you know aspen bark has chlorophyll and can photosynthesize?

But the ecologist, and that is what Knight is—as well as a botanist, asks what happens to aspens after a fire. What causes different results in different locations? What triggered SAD, sudden aspen decline, beginning in 2000? What are the

implications for us and other animals and other plants? What techniques have land managers tried to maintain current aspen abundance?

If some of the book's statements seem hard to believe, look for the superscript number indicating the footnote at the back of the book that cites a study.

But studies in journals aren't always easily available, so you can ask your question at the book's website, which can be found at www.mountainsandplains.net.

Rather than wait another 20 years for the third edition, the website started updating the book's content in December. New studies are producing new information, but also, when the climate changes, and the way people interact with the landscape changes, ecologists must keep up.

I would add our state legislators to Knight's list of recommended readers. This is especially so for the ones who will be on the committee studying how the state can wrest control of federally owned lands in the state—despite the unpopularity of the idea with 70 percent of Wyoming citizens—and the other federal landowners, the U.S. citizens living in the other 49 states who might also enjoy this book.

Barb Gorges writes the monthly bird and garden columns for the Wyoming Tribune Eagle, in which this review was published April 8.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Birding With Mike



"Spring Hotspots"
Classes, 6 - 8 pm,
on May 27,
June 3, 10, 17

Field trips,
mornings of May
30, June 6, 13, 20

Details:

www.BirdingWithMike.com

Questions:

Mike1.foster@comcast.net

Explore More Outdoor Challenge: 'It's Natural'

Evergreen Audubon and Evergreen Nature Center are excited to announce a 2015 Explore More Outdoor Challenge to run from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

The program is designed to create sustainable individual and community

wellness through mindful, respectful experiences in nature. We hope the program will increase awareness and involvement with ENC and EA.

The theme is "Wellness . . . It's Natural." In particular, we want participants to "Live It . . . Learn It . . . Love It!" The

challenge will involve hiking, Respectful Recreation activities and species identification (plants/trees, birds, and other fish and wildlife).

To successfully complete the challenge, participants will need to explore the Bear Creek Watershed and surrounding areas over the course of the summer.

A registration fee of \$15 per individual and \$25 per family will cover:

- A passport-style journal with challenge specifics, such as number of hikes required and number of species to identify.

The journal also will contain information about hiking areas, common species and suggested Respectful Recreation activities.

- Water bottle with logo.
- Prizes/charms for accomplishing goals in each category.
- Kick-off and wrap-up parties.

Start telling your mountain-area friends and families about this great way to improve their health, well-being and love of the great outdoors.

Look for more details in the June *Dipper*, on our website and at our chapter meetings.

- Kathy Madison
Director of Communications

Third-Saturday bird walks set

Chuck Aid, Evergreen Audubon director of Bird Monitoring, will lead monthly bird walks in Evergreen and surrounding areas starting in May. These walks, scheduled for the third Saturday of the month, are to encourage Evergreen Audubon *members* to get out to enjoy the foothills and of course see the birds.

Participants will look at all aspects of the natural world, with birds as an emphasis, and perhaps will be introduced to some new areas for their personal enjoyment.

The first walk will be to Birch Hill Park on Saturday, May 16, from 7:30 a.m. to noon. The walk will pass through various foothill habitats at 7,600 to 7,900 feet elevation.

Bring water and a snack; lunch is optional. Meet at Evergreen Library, where participants will consolidate into as few cars as possible for the 20-minute drive.

The walks are for Evergreen Audubon members and their guests. Non-members won't be turned away, but will be encouraged to join Evergreen Audubon. To reserve a space, please contact Chuck Aid, caid@ecenral.com or 303-503-2973.

CONSERVATION DAVID WALKER, EA DIRECTOR OF CONSERVATION

Water is in the news.

California has extreme drought and new emergency conservation measures.

Colorado's mountain snowpack is at 69 percent of normal, not a crisis but a reminder that annual renewal is not a sure thing.

The draft Colorado state water plan projects significant future shortfall unless we make changes to more efficiently manage our supplies.

Why not just take more water from our major rivers? Use of water in Colorado is controlled by our water-rights system. Also, our major rivers are shared with downstream states and allocated among them by interstate agreements.

Colorado's share is already over-

committed and there simply is no more water to claim. The Colorado water plan is expected to deal with anticipated shortages and conflicts.

So what can we expect? Demand will exceed supply, so we should find ways to do more with less. Can we reduce demand?

More efficient use has already been achieved in many cities, and in irrigation, but we can do more. Some say we must stop trying to make Colorado lawns look like Ohio.

Use outside the home for lawn watering is already the primary urban use and the most costly. Xeriscape was invented in Colorado and demonstrates a feasible, attractive alternative to bluegrass. Are we willing to require its application everywhere?

We have a healthy, safe and attractive place to live. Vital to maintaining that is water supply.

The draft water plan shows that there will be significant shortfall unless we adopt a final water plan that firmly provides guidance for future water management.

P.S. Did you know that rain barrels to collect rainwater from roofs are illegal? How can that be? Because capturing water that would run off into a stream is an illegal taking of water allocated to users downstream.

That may change this year after the General Assembly considers the issue, but this small issue illustrates what a challenge we face in deciding what measures we need in the state water plan.

Spring arrivals are ahead of schedule this year

Seems everything happened a bit ahead of schedule this spring. Bears began coming out of hibernation and male **Williamson's Sapsuckers** were declaring territory in March.

Pasque flowers bloomed well before Easter and **Broad-tailed Hummingbirds** arrived closer to April Fool's Day than Tax Day.

Williamson's Sapsuckers Galore!

Male **Williamson's Sapsuckers** are back in Genesee Park, competing for territory and calling and drumming loudly. I heard four and saw three on March 30, with my friend Kiki Widjaja. They were very vocal, running through their entire repertoire of drums and calls.

Next, the females will show and select a nest site in one of the many apartment trees in the park. Around mid-June, you'll be able to observe the adults feeding young at the nest sites. I'll be leading a field trip to Genesee Park on June 13. Let me know if you'd like to join me.

Kathanne Lynch, who lives on the southern flank of Genesee Mountain, commented, "I think of the male **Williamson's Sapsuckers** starting to drum in Genesee around April 15. My earliest record is April 8. If you heard one on March 31 that is distinctly early. They are one of my favorite birds here at Genesee, and your June trip is timed nicely to see young being fed."

Pasque Flower

The name "pasque" comes from a French word 'passefluer' (or Latin pascal) meaning Easter, which is exceptionally fitting since the flower begins blooming in March and is one of the first signs of spring. The purple or lavender blooms of pasque flowers were once used to dye Easter eggs, and that is a good way to remember when they bloom.

For plains Indians, pasque flower represented the cycle of life that all humans go through: the forming flower bud as the infant, blooming flower as the adolescent and developing into the adult, and lastly the "old man" that has shaggy



Williamson's Sapsucker. Photo by Marilyn Rhodes

gray hair when the flower goes to seed. The plant is unpalatable and poisonous if eaten raw.

Broad-tailed Hummingbirds

Dick Prickett saw his first-of-season **Broad-tailed Hummingbird** at his feeder in Evergreen Highlands just before 9 a.m. on April 5.

Susan Blansett of Golden said a friend of hers on Lookout Mountain had a male hummer zip through her yard about the same time, prompting Susan to hang up her feeders.

Karel Buckley, Herzman Mesa, heard her first **Broad-tailed Hummingbird** mid-morning April 6 and called neighbor Sylvia Brockner to share the news.

Bluebirds

Pi Day, 3/14, marked the return of bluebirds to our area. Larry White posted, "We saw our first **Mountain Bluebird** yesterday in the Upper Bear Creek Meadows. Been looking all week."

Mark Meremonte and Margaret McDole had a similar experience the same day: "Two male **Mountain Bluebirds** and a female and male pair seen Saturday in Elk Meadow."

Inga Brennan followed with a sighting at her home March 15: "Just had the first **Western Bluebird** this morning!"

Melissa Leasia reported March 22, "Saw my first **Mountain Bluebird** in Alderfer's Bluebird Meadow yesterday."

Falcons, Owls, Eagles

While observing **Prairie Falcons** and **Canyon Wrens** at Park Cave Rock in Red Rocks Park March 12, I was surprised by a red fox parading his kill down the road.

Soon he crossed the road to hunt some more. The field must've been chock-full of little rodents, most likely meadow voles, because he nabbed a half-dozen of them while I was watching him.

Since he walked away with a mouthful, I suspect he was taking it to his mate and kits in their den. I shared a video of the hunt with EvergreenBirders.

Melissa and Todd Leasia got a fantastic view of the **Prairie Falcon** at Red Rocks March 17. They returned to the area March 26, striking out on the **Golden Eagle** nest and **Canyon Wrens**, but scoring on another bird. "YES! We met a very friendly and vocal **Rufous-sided Towhee** who posed and sang for us for several minutes."

On March 30, Kiki Widjaja and I observed three **Prairie Falcons** near Frog Rock and Park Cave Rock at Red Rocks. I assume two are a nesting pair and the third possibly an immature falcon from last year's brood. Kiki also reported seeing a pair of **Peregrine Falcons** at Red Rocks March 27.

Rob Raker confirmed that a pair of **Great Horned Owls** is nesting again at Red Rocks at the same nest site they used

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last year near the Trading Post. In addition, on April 1, Rob said he was following eight **GHOWs** on nests, each with a chick on two.

I stop frequently to observe the nesting **Golden Eagles** east of Idledale. I could see the heads of two eagles on the nest April 10 through my scope. Barbara Jean Gard was driving through the canyon at the same time and stopped to enjoy them with me. Kathanne Lynch and I were unable to see any activity on the nest the day before.

Don't give up if you've missed them, though. When resting, they sit low in the nest, but they're there. **Golden Eagles** mate for life and average one or two chicks per year. This year's egg(s) likely hatched in early April, so activity in the nest should be more visible soon. Last year their lone chick hatched April 3 and fledged on June 25.

Red Crossbills, Evening Grosbeaks and Cassin's Finches

On March 25, Shirley Casey mentioned, "We have had a small flock of crossbills at our feeders for a couple days. Nice to see them again." The next day she counted 15 of them.

Barbara Klaus reported two **Evening Grosbeaks** at her feeders the morning of April 2. I had a pair of **Red Crossbills** and some **Evening Grosbeaks** at my feeders on April 8. The crossbills returned April 10 with some **Cassin's Finches**, **Pine Siskins**, nuthatches and chickadees.

Mark Meremonte and Margaret McDole had **Evening Grosbeaks** visit their feeders on April 10, the first time since last fall. Other visitors included **Cassin's Finches**, **Mountain** and **Black-capped chickadees**, **American Goldfinches**, **Pygmy**, and **White-breasted Nuthatches** and **Pine Siskins**. Earlier in the week, Margaret heard a meadowlark in Elk Meadow.

Dusky Grouse

A pair of **Dusky Grouse** were observed at the Lookout Mountain Nature Center in March. They hung out around the parking lot and roosted in the trees



Canyon Wren. Photo by Marilyn Rhodes

between the Nature Center and Boettcher Mansion at night.

The male met me as I drove in the parking lot late March 23. He was admonishing another visitor to steer clear of his territory by following him and pecking at his legs and toes.

I observed him until he flew into a tree to roost for the night around 7:15. By far the easiest **Dusky Grouse** I've ever gotten.

Shirley and Allan Casey were able to watch the male and photograph him the following day.

White-tailed Ptarmigan

On March 27, Larry White wrote, "Excellent cross-county ski/snowshoe conditions and gorgeous alpine weather enabled me to find about 16 of those snow-white birds up in the Guanella Pass area today.

"I skied up from the point of winter closure at the Naylor Lake Trailhead. About 1.5 mile to the pass, then about one-half mile to the east."

Brown Creepers

On March 17, Tim Stechert said, "We have noticed more **Brown Creepers** in our area (Evergreen Park Estates) this year and we are curious if other folks have noticed the same.

"On a bike ride around sunset tonight, I was hearing lots of them (certainly a subjective sampling with no good opportunity to spot them) from Wilmot up to our location on Joan Lane."

Dave Wald responded, "Yes, I have seen **Brown Creepers** much more regularly around my house (Hiwan) in the past few months than in years past."

Canyon Wrens

I had the opportunity to photograph a **Canyon Wren** behind the Red Rocks Trading Post on March 13. I was also able to video it singing and shared the video with EvergreenBirders.

I returned with a group of friends March 15 and we saw/heard five of the wrens, three near the Trading Post, one

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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 www.EvergreenAudubon.org
and click on the Local Sightings link.

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near the South Lot and one near Park Cave Rock.

On March 25, Melissa Leasia posted, “One of Todd’s favorite things to do is to climb Elephant Butte. He has been hearing a bird often and comes home and tells me about it. He whistles it for me.

“We try looking it up. We troll the Cornell Ornithology pages listening to birdcalls. We’ve been doing this ever since he first heard it more than three years ago.

“I watched your **Canyon Wren** video and thought, “Oh my goodness this is Todd’s bird.” Just played it for him. It IS HIS BIRD! He’s been hearing a **Canyon Wren!**”

Mergansers

On the morning of March 17, John Witter saw four **Common Mergansers**, two male, two female at a pond next to The Island at Hiwan. On April 3, Ron Belak said that he and Peggy Linn “were out strolling around Evergreen Lake last week and saw this **Hooded Merganser** near shore. I don’t see many of these so I was impressed.”

American Dipper

I observed and videoed an **American Dipper** foraging for food in Bear Creek, near the Highland Haven Creekside Inn, March 12. I shared the video with EvergreenBirders and the inn’s owner, Gail Riley, thinking she might like to share it with her guests.

I got an enthusiastic response from Gail: “I love your dipper video! I am in Indiana and shared with my mom and forwarded to my birder sisters. Thank you and come often. We had exquisite tanagers last summer and I so hope they come back. Got my grandkids hooked too.”

Highland Haven is in my CBC territory and Gail has always welcomed us to count there.

Wood Ducks, Eastern Screech Owl

Kiki Widjaja and I visited Ketring Park in Littleton on March 30. It has a small lake and we got great views of **Wood**



Eastern Screech Owl. Photo by Marilyn Rhodes

Ducks, which are frequently seen there, and an **Eastern Screech Owl** that has been nesting there the last few years.

Sandhill Cranes

Barbara Klaus was among a small group that went to Monte Vista with Mike Foster March 17–19. “Great birding. Great cranes. Weather sketchy, but that didn’t seem to bother the birds.” Barbara also spotted a rare **Greater White-fronted Goose** among a large flock of **Canada Geese** and a **Great Horned Owl**.

Wild Evergreen

Info and photos by Shirley Casey

Elk and Deer Babies

It’s the time of year when elk and deer start having their young. During the winter and early spring, both the female elk and deer may hang out in groups. As they get closer to delivering their young, the female elk and deer tend to separate out from the group.

One would like to hope that they would deliver their offspring in a nice quiet and hidden place. That does hap-

pen in some cases. However, there are times when the mother elk or deer deliver their babies in much more public places—like on the lawn just outside the front door.

Don’t panic. After a short while to let the baby learn to stand and walk, the mother elk and deer generally lead the baby away to a nearby site—which may still be visible.

The mother elk and deer then instruct their newly born offspring to drop down and stay—hopefully in a fairly safe place.

Unlike many other species, the new infants do just that.

The lack of scent on the elk calves and deer fawns reduces the chance of predators noticing them. Their white spots on their brownish coats help them blend into the environment: They can look like a brown rock or grass with some whitish areas.

The mothers don’t stay too close so if a predator sees the mom, it doesn’t see the baby. But the mothers do pay attention to the baby!

If a wild predator, dog, or even a person gets too close to the baby, the mother may charge. Every year, some people are charged—and some injured—by these protective moms.

And every year, people worry that the elk calves and deer fawns that they see lying alone are abandoned. These youngsters are doing what they are supposed to do: resting, growing and hiding in plain sight. They are not abandoned and they do not need rescue.

Really, don’t worry if you see a young elk calf or deer fawn alone. Eventually the mother will approach the area where the baby is hiding in plain sight

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and make a high-pitched sound to let the baby know it's safe to get up, go to her and nurse. Then the mom will lead the baby to a new area to rest and hide once more.

It is not uncommon for the elk or deer to leave her offspring in the same place for six to 12 hours before approaching the baby. So if you notice a baby elk or deer, do not approach it.

Keep other people and pets away from it. If you want to watch, observe from a window of a car or building, but don't do anything to disturb the baby or mom.

It certainly is possible that a calf or fawn may be injured, such as tangled in a barbed wire fence or hit by a car. If you see such a severe injury, contact Colorado Parks and Wildlife, 303-291-7227, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

If it is outside those hours, contact the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department or the Colorado State Patrol and ask for the district wildlife officer on call.

Avoid Causing Harm to Wild Babies

At this time of year, many people return to yard and home tasks that they didn't do during winter, such as trimming trees, moving woodpiles, gardening and even mowing the lawn.

Before starting those activities check the area for nests or young animals. Such simple checks *before starting* the activities can prevent damage to nests or animals.

If you are concerned about the location where a wild bird or mammal is preparing a nest, there are tips available about effective and humane ways to discourage such nests, such as at cpw.state.co.us/learn/Pages/LivingwithWildlife.aspx and in the book "Wild Neighbors" (Haddidian).

Keeping cats indoors can significantly reduce the number of wild critters that are injured and killed and reduce risks of injury, disease and more to the cats.

Think it Needs Rescue? Maybe Not
If you see a young wild animal, such

as a bird, squirrel or chipmunk, that is alone and you think might be orphaned, it might not be. Rather, the bird may be a fledgling that is just out of the nest, spreading its wings or being fed by the parents.

The young squirrel or chipmunk that is alone and active may be exploring and learning its environment. Again, keep people and pets away from young animals.

If the young wild animals are bleeding, moving in an odd manner due to a fracture, or lying collapsed, still keep people and pets away.

Effective and safe capture, rescue and caring for these wild creatures requires special knowledge, skills, facilities, supplies—and licenses. If you believe that a wild creature needs help, contact Colorado Parks and Wildlife for the name of a rehabilitator that works with those species.

If someone decides to rescue a wild animal, remember that it is possible for even young and small wild animals to cause harm, including injuries, parasites

and diseases. People should minimize handling, including during capture.

The animal would be contained in a small, quiet, warm, dark and secure box with a small amount of bedding. It should NOT be fed or given any liquids since the wrong feeding method or diets can cause harm.

If you find a wild raptor, contact Birds of Prey Foundation or Rocky Mountain Raptor Program. The Wild Bird Rehabilitation of Denver was unable to open this year and Greenwood Wildlife in Longmont rehabilitates birds from Boulder County, not Jeffco.

Contact Colorado Parks and Wildlife about such bird questions.

If you find an injured or orphaned squirrel or chipmunk in the Evergreen area, contact WildAgain at wrehabproject@me.com.

If you find a wild mammal in the Denver area, contact Colorado Parks and Wildlife at 303-291-7227.

For more information on bird rehabilitation resources, visit www.EvergreenAudubon.org and click on the Rescue/Rehabilitation tab.



Hiding in plain sight. Photo by Shirley Casey

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 30	Chris Smith Talk	6 pm	Bergen Firehouse
May 3	Dawn Chorus	6 am	Evergreen Lake
May 7	EA Chapter Meeting <i>Doors open at 6:30 for socializing</i>	7 pm	Church of the Hills
May 9	Stargazing	9:30 pm	Evergreen Lake
May 10	<i>Dipper</i> deadline		
May 16	Third Saturday Bird Walk	7:30 am–noon	Birch Hill Park
May 30	Over the Moon!	8:30 pm	

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.

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Audubon Rockies Office, Rockies.Audubon.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	\$ 25	\$ 40
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 _____

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(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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Nesting Boxes Sell Out
 Bird Walks Start in May

IN THIS ISSUE

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THE DIPPER