

THE DIPPER

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Editor: Peggy Durham

Assistant Editor: Margaret McDole

Ivory-billed Woodpecker

At the Oct. 5 chapter meeting, Louise and Bill Mounsey announced that they and another birder had seen and heard an Ivory-billed Woodpecker in Texas in May 1976. Because many people disparaged reports of seeing this bird, they did not go public with their sighting until now.

Bill is in the process of writing about their adventure in that swamp. He relates the bird's existence in that area to habitat preservation since the swamp was not degraded by human development.

Bill will keep us informed about their experience.

Wreath Deadline

Oct. 27 is the deadline for ordering holiday wreaths, Classic or Victorian. (See the October *Dipper* for details.) Call Marilyn Rhodes, 303-674-6580, or e-mail her at cloverlane@aol.com.

Kidney Suet

Don't forget to order your kidney suet before Nov. 13. Call Sylvia Brockner, 303-674-4851, to place an order of 5 pounds or more. Be prepared to pick up as soon as you are notified.

Program: Uncommon Eider

A Common Eider found in Southwest Denver on Feb. 25, 1932, became an accepted part of the rare-bird fauna of Colorado . . . until 1981 when it was purged from the state bird list.

Other birds have been likewise purged, many of them now so thoroughly ignored that many bird enthusiasts have no idea that the birds were ever considered part of Colorado's bird life. Particularly notable are Pale-spotted Tinamou and Pileated Woodpecker.

Still other birds—Bar-headed Goose, Mute Swan, Common Peafowl, Helmeted Guineafowl—have met an even grimmer fate: Though they live here year-round and have even bred wild in the state, they are completely ignored as if they are invisible or somehow are not real birds at all.

TENAS' Nov. 2 meeting will feature Kevin Cook's program, "An Uncommon Eider." Kevin will look at the histories of some odd birds in Colorado and suggest alternative ways to determine whether a bird should be included on a state list.

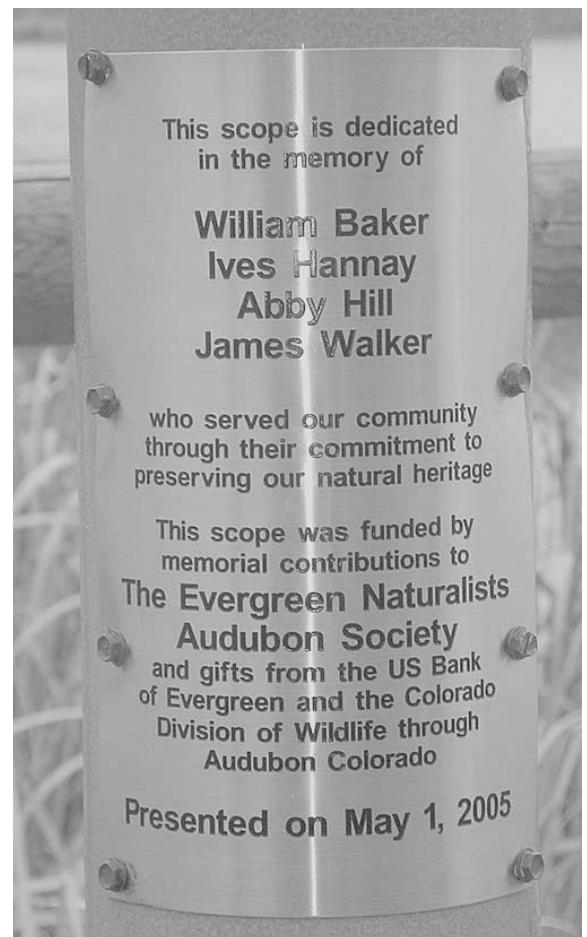
Kevin has worked as a writer-naturalist based in Fort Collins since 1980. While earning a bachelor of arts degree in biology (Western State College, Gunnison, in 1978) and a master of science degree in wildlife biology (Colorado State University, Ft. Collins, 1989), he served with the National Park Service and did consulting for the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

Since beginning his writing as a college student in 1975, he has published 6,000 newspaper and magazine articles, contributed to several books, and edited nearly 1,000 technical articles about wildlife for scientific publication.

He is one of the 50 nationally recognized birders featured in Houghton-Mifflin's new book, "Real Birders Don't Wear White," due for release in spring 2007. Besides writing he conducts seminars, teaches classes and leads tours, all based on wildlife or natural history themes.

Though birds are his specialty group, he studies all wildlife and uses his writing and teaching to help people enjoy the natural world more by coming to understand it better.

This program will take place on Thursday, Nov. 2, at 7 p.m. at Evergreen Recreation Center, 5300 S. Olive Rd (behind the high school). Refreshments and the business meeting follow the program. Guests are welcome.



The newly installed plaque on the scope at Evergreen Lake. The scope is being used by the public; this writer had to elbow kids off to see a flock of ducks that had just landed.

Photo by Peggy Durham



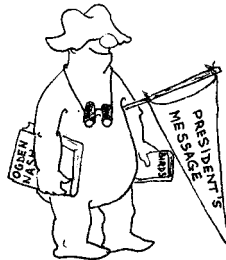
President's Message

"The Ivory-bill Woodpecker lives!" is the author's inscription in my copy of "The Grail Bird" by Tim Gallagher. He and Bobby Harrison simultaneously saw the Ivory-bill in 2004 as documented in the book. I believe them.

At the TENAS meeting this last week, two of our members stood up and said they were "coming out." Their secret: 30 years ago they also saw an Ivory-billed Woodpecker but never made their sighting generally known until now. Even so, I believe them, too.

Tim Gallagher describes in "The Grail Bird" other sightings made over the prior 60 years since the last "universally accepted" documented observation of this largest of all North American woodpeckers.

For various reasons some of the observers since then



have been reluctant to report what they saw. Sometimes their reluctance was due to fear for the safety of the bird if its location were to be disclosed.

Others did not want to face being discredited because of the lack of scientifically acceptable documentation or face public ridicule when their sightings were rejected by the scientific community.

As a scientist myself, I know the necessity of skepticism in the critical evaluation of all the facts, experimental results and conclusions. Experiments must be repeatable and open to independent testing to assure the validity of new discoveries so they may be confidently applied to further scientific advancement.

Skepticism is fundamental to good science. It is sometimes hard to accept and emotional disagreements can arise.

Ornithologists are perhaps some of the most skeptical when it comes to acceptance of rare bird sightings. Such sightings are not experiments that can be exactly repeated. Even a photograph of the bird can be questioned and be unacceptable as evidence.

What is often required is a trip to the field by an expert to spot the bird. In the case of the Ivory-bill, even experts are subject to doubt if they lack overwhelming evidence.

Continued on Page 3



• To **David Dolton**, a TENAS member, who gave a wonderful presentation on migratory birds at the October meeting. He also provided many very useful handouts.

• To the BIB leaders who led monthly trips to 12 different locations May through September: **Mike Foster, Bob Santangelo, Ruth Alford, Else Van Erp, Warren Roske, Sherman Wing, Brad Andres, Deb Callahan, Gil Schoonveld, Inga Brennan, Larry White and Kent Simon**. And to all the participants who joined the BIB trips, always looking for another bird to tally, helping make the count as good as possible.

• To **Walt Phillips** for following through on the installation of the plaque on the scope at Evergreen Lake. See photo elsewhere in *The Dipper*.

• To **Walt Phillips, Marilyn Kaussner and Sylvia Robertson** for staffing the TENAS table at the Beaver Brook Trails Fest. And **Kent Simon and Dave Balogh** for leading hikes.

• To **Jeff Geiger** for keeping the bird feeders filled at Evergreen Lake.

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President's Message

Continued from Page 2

Such was the case for George Lowery, a respected ornithologist at Louisiana State University, after he presented what he felt was credible evidence of an Ivory-bill sighting.

Our own Bill Brockner was present at the American Ornithological Society meeting in San Diego in the summer of 1971 when Lowery showed two photographs claimed to have been taken in May of that year in the Atchafalaya Basin west of Baton Rouge.

Bill recalls the strong feelings of disagreement between two factions at the meeting: those who accepted Lowery's evidence and those who did not.

Tim Gallagher writes: "Lowery's pictures were met with immediate withering skepticism by most of the other ornithologists," and, "This was a heartbreaking experience for Lowery."

Lowery is quoted as saying in retrospect, "I wish now that I had said nothing about these birds [and] had not shown the photographs to anyone."

Bill believes this episode was a turning point in Lowery's career and damaged his reputation. George Lowery passed away in 1978 without disclosing the source of the photographs.

(Read "The Grail Book" for the rest of this fascinating story.)

Lowery, according to Gallagher, felt it was human nature to doubt the record of that sighting, saying, "If they can't see an Ivory-bill, they do not want to believe that anyone else has done so."

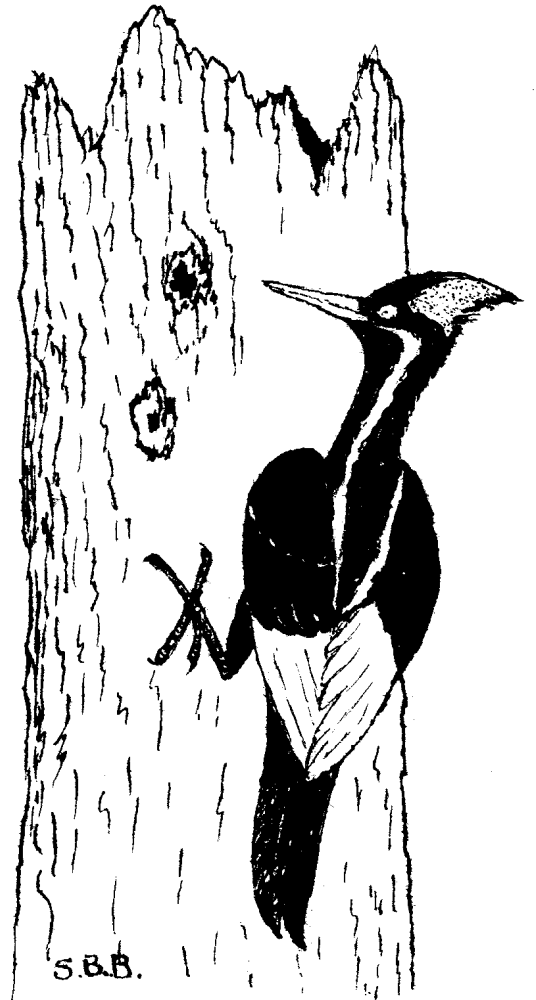
Sour grapes? Maybe, but his experience, or similar ones by others, likely convinced many subsequent observers of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker to keep the record to themselves—or wait 30 years to announce it in a less skeptical environment.

If you were waiting for more confirmations that the Ivory-bill lives where sighted in Arkansas by Gallagher and others, you may be disappointed.

Bill Brockner reports that birders who are permitted in the area now must sign an agreement not to disclose any sightings of the bird. I wonder what George Lowery would say about that?

Reference: "The Grail Bird" by Tim Gallagher, Houghton Mifflin, 2005

- Dave Balogh



Member Report

We thank new and renewing TENAS local members for their support.

NEW

Jane Stewart-Kittredge

NEW FAMILY

Jack & Linda Reed-Golden

RENEWING

Mary Arris-Evergreen

Christie Greene-Evergreen

Elaine McCoach-Evergreen

Murray & Judy Moulding-Evergreen

Cathy & Jim Shelton-Evergreen

RENEWING FAMILY

John & Ena Wason-Evergreen

2007 TENAS Officers, Directors Nominated

Dave Balogh, Carolyn Fraker and Bud Weare have agreed to serve on the Nominating Committee for the 2007 Officers and Directors.

The following people have agreed to have their names put forward on the slate to be voted at the Dec. 7 chapter meeting.

Officers: President, Peggy Durham; Vice President, Brad Andres; Secretary, Carolyn Fraker; Assistant Secretary, Kay Niyo; Treasurer, Walt Phillips.

Directors: Dave Balogh, Tom Boschen, Jeff Geiger, Sylvia Robertson, David Wald, Bud Weare.

The ballot will be printed in the December *Dipper*. TENAS members may vote by proxy or at the Dec. 7 meeting.



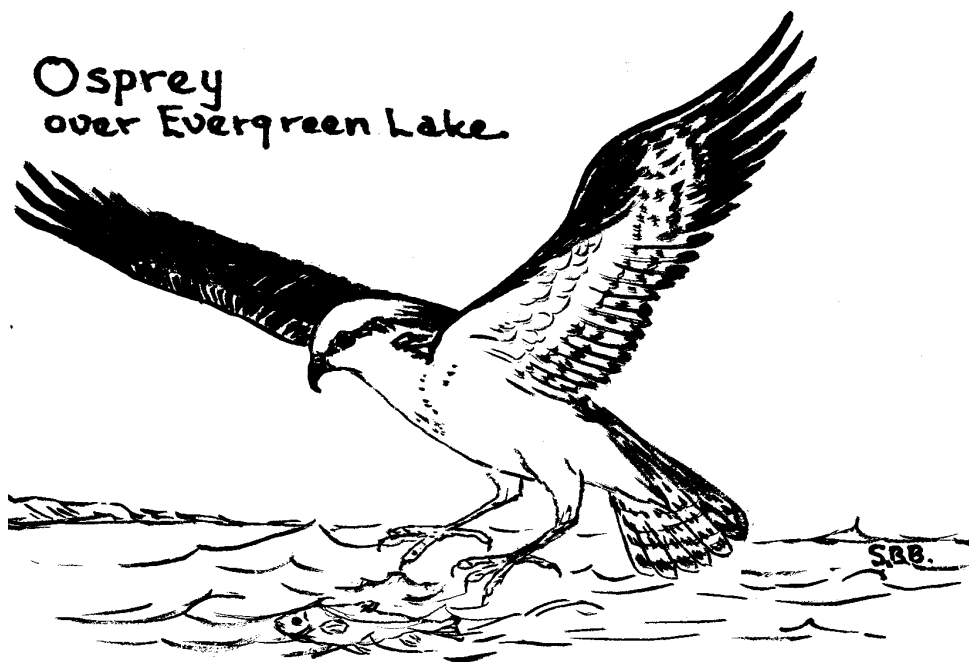
Bird Business

Weather-wise, September was not an average autumn month. It started out with threats of snow over the Labor Day weekend. Colder weather moved in from the middle of the month on. Around Evergreen the climate did not seem to have a big effect on bird migration.

On Sept. 7 a Great-horned Owl greeted Carmon Slater. The owl was calling from a tree in Carmon's back yard.

Interesting was a Three-toed Woodpecker in O'Fallon Park on Sept. 9. It was found by Sherman Wing. This was not too far from where a forest fire occurred a couple of years ago. This woodpecker likes to follow up on forest fires for food in the dead trees.

A flock of more than 30 Gray-headed Juncos settled in Else Van Erp's yard on Sept. 11. She also had 2 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers on the same day. Two days later the first Pink-sided Junco



showed up in her yard. This is a subspecies of the Gray-headed Junco.

First seen on Sept. 21, an osprey spent more than a week at Evergreen Lake. It was first discovered by Loie Evans. It preferred to land in a tree not far from the dam.

Very interesting was a Gray-cheeked Thrush in the yard of Ames Rau's house in Evergreen on Sept. 25. This is not a common bird in Colorado.

An Eastern Blue Jay visited Editor Peggy Durham on Sept. 28. This beautiful jay continues to increase in Colorado.

To close September in a blaze of glory, Inga Brennan had 2 Broad-tailed Hummingbirds on the last day and started out October with 1 on the 1st!

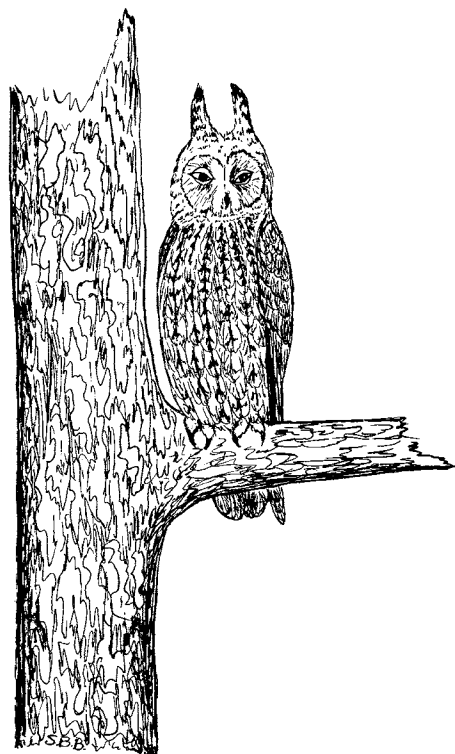
The last bird of the month for her was a Common Nighthawk. Inga birds on Lookout Mountain.

Dick Conrad died on Sept. 15. We miss him and join his wife in this loss.

Cathy and Jim Shelton had a wonderful time in Mongolia during the month. Cathy reports, "The birds have been spectacular, especially the raptors."

Now is the time to make sure your bird feeders are cleaned and ready for the birds.

- Bill Brockner



This is a Long-eared Owl as seen by Inga Brennan and reported in the October *Dipper*.

Audubon Colorado websites:

www.auduboncolorado.org
www.coloradobirdingtrail.com



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Watershed Trails Fest

On a beautiful October day, TENAS joined with the Mountain Area Land Trust in sponsoring the Beaver Brook Watershed Trails Fest. This event helped spread the word to the public about this wonderful piece of land now available to the public.

Since funding for the purchase and management is still needed, this fundraising event brought in needed money from the many people who came to enjoy the trails, to watch the artists at work and to join one of the planned hikes (nature, historical).

Wildlife Websites

David Dolton, our speaker in October, provided the following websites regarding wildlife:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

www.fws.gov
www.fws.gov/migratorybirds
mountain-prairie.fws.gov

U.S. Geological Service—Bird Banding Lab

www.pwrc.usgs.gov/BBL
Report a band: 1-800-327-BAND (2263)

Colorado Division of Wildlife

www.wildlife.state.co.us

Avian Influenza

www.avianflu.gov
www.fws.gov/home/avianflu
www.cdc.gov/flu/avian
For bird die-offs:
CO HELP 1-877-462-2911

Ethical Wildlife Use

Report problems:
1-877-265-6648 or 303-291-7227



Marilyn Kaussner helps children make bird feeders from pinecones, peanut butter and birdseed donated by Evergreen Wild Bird Store. *Photo by Peggy Durham*



Kent Simon leads a nature hike at Beaver Brook Watershed Trails Fest. *Photo by Peggy Durham*



In Memory

Dick Conrad

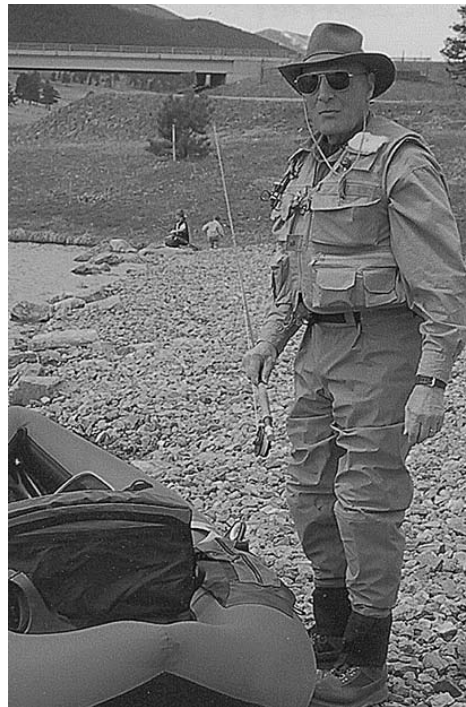
Our good friend, Dick Conrad, passed away last month after a long illness. He was buried with military honors at Ft. Logan Cemetery in a lovely service, which several of our members attended.

Among other activities such as treasurer, Dick made birdhouses for the TENAS annual sale for several years. His help was greatly appreciated.

His wife, Jane, asked that any contributions made to TENAS in lieu of flowers be given to Clear Creek Open Space to help with the mil levy drive for funds for their open-space projects. Dick would have liked that.

We will miss him and offer Jane our heartfelt sympathies.

- Polly and Walt Phillips



Dick Conrad

Dear Bill and Syl,

Q What accounts for the movement into this area of a species not previously known here, such as the Eastern Blue Jay?

A Eastern Blue Jays have been gradually moving west, into our area, since the 1900s. They were recorded west of the Mississippi in the 1890s. The first recorded sighting in Colorado was in Yuma in 1905. A man named Felger recorded seeing Blue Jays in Jefferson County in 1917.

As habitat in the eastern part of our country has been developed, the birds have moved toward territory with fewer buildings and more trees that would yield a greater source of food.

The westward movement has sped up in recent years. They nested in our yard two years ago. Someday cardinals will be here also! Watch for them!

- Bill Brockner

Gas and Grouse Don't Mix

In the last *Dipper*, Carolyn Fraker reported on the efforts of the San Miguel Basin Working Group and the Black Canyon Audubon Society to stop the declines of the Gunnison Grouse.

Quite coincidentally, the monthly periodical Wyoming Wildlife ran a feature article (September 2006) that examined the decade-long effects of energy development on grouse, elk, mule deer and fish.

Editor Chris Madson used scientific information gathered by the University of Wyoming and the University of Montana to build a compelling case for how oil and gas development has negatively affected the Gunnison Grouse's sister species in Wyoming, the Sage Grouse.

From information gleaned from interviews with the scientists and peer-reviewed publications, Madson reported findings that hen grouse moved away from disturbance to make nests, and, in areas of even minimal traffic disturbance, a third of the hens refused to nest.

Thus, traffic disturbance of one to 12 vehicles per day altered the behavior of hens and reduced nesting. Breeding territories (leks) close to traffic and drill pads had fewer males than territories remote to traffic and drill pad disturbances; the decrease was likely due to the observation that few young males tried to court females near traffic routes and drill pads.

In general, Sage Grouse avoid breeding in areas of developed gas fields. It even appears that grouse avoid high-quality winter habitats that are near developed gas fields.

The saga continues. Unfortunately, Sage Grouse are highly vulnerable to West Nile Virus. In Wyoming, Montana and Alberta, as much as 25% of the breeding Sage Grouse population has been lost to the disease.

Coal-bed natural gas production produces large quantities of wa-

ter, and if left on the surface, could provide nursery grounds for the West Nile Virus vector—mosquitoes.

Clearly, Gunnison and Sage Grouse face myriad challenges to their existence. Conservation of the "Sagebrush Sea," whether in Colorado or Wyoming, is a major conservation issue of this decade.

We need to remain vigilant to the threats that face these western North American endemic birds and contribute to their conservation where we can.

- Brad A. Andres

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New Tool for BIB Gets Good Use

This past winter Audubon Colorado granted \$450 for Birds in the Balance to purchase a Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver, which is getting good use. BIB has just completed GPS map-

ping of all of our bird survey routes, which is significant because these routes have been used consistently for the duration of study.

GPS receivers use 24 satellites to locate latitude, longitude and altitude. Receivers can be used to guide vehicles and track hiking, boating and flying routes. In addition to the 12 original sites, we have added routes at the Turkey Creek inlet to Bear Creek Lake Reservoir, the Genesee Dam site and timberline on Bear Creek.

We received the grant because of our continuous survey efforts along Bear Creek. That effort led to the Important Bird Area designation for BIB for its educational and research potential.

IBA is an international project man-

aged locally by Audubon Colorado with goals that support data collection, collaborative decisions, and habitat maintenance and enhancement for bird species.

This GPS mapping took some 100 hours to record in the field and organize the documentation. Documenting the actual study routes reveals that each month BIB teams cover approximately 40 miles that encompass more than 420 acres.

We have been documenting bird sightings on our routes five times each season for 12 years now.

Again this season a huge thank you goes to all the volunteers and especially the leaders who have done all the work to get BIB to where we are.

TENAS Exhibit at Library

Don't forget to check out the library display case in November. TENAS has use of the space for the month and Carol Goldstein is putting together the display.

This exhibit represents a great opportunity for TENAS to reach the public, demonstrating our mission and activities. Give Carol a call, 303-567-2720, if you wish to help with the planning or setup on Nov. 1.

Contact Info for Paul Cary

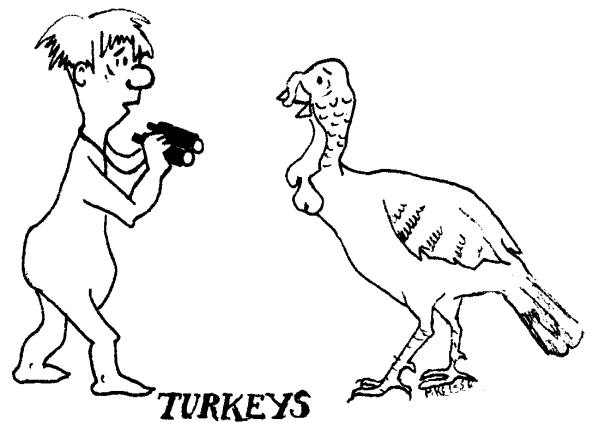
Mike Foster reported that Paul Cary, who regularly participates in TENAS field trips in the Denver/Lakewood area, recently broke his hip and is a rehab hospital (as of Sept. 15).

If anyone would like to be in touch with Paul, his direct phone number is 720-963-4583. His address is 5027 S Oak Ct., Littleton, CO 80127.

Thanksgiving Turkey Trot

Don't miss the annual Thanksgiving Turkey Trot led by Warren Roske. Meet at the Bergen Park 'n' Ride at 6 a.m. If history is any guide, Warren will anticipate where a flock of turkeys will be that morning as the landscape lights up.

It is a fantastic sight to see dozens of these large birds wander by, usually very close. Enjoy hot coffee and cold coffee cake afterward. Call Warren, 303-526-9725, if you plan to attend.



Field Trips and Outings

Sunday, Nov. 5

Jefferson County Lakes and Ponds
Leader: Brad Andres, 303-670-0101

Thursday, Nov. 23

Turkey Trot
Leader: Warren Roske, 303-526-9725

Meet at the Bergen Park 'n' Ride at 8 a.m. for a half-day excursion to lakes and ponds around Golden. We will be back by lunch. For those with a Jefferson County list, we will try to augment your waterbird tally.

We will meet at 6 a.m. on Thanksgiving Day, at the Bergen Park 'n' Ride for our annual excursion to see the turkeys. Warren will scout the area the week before. He will have an alternate site in mind, if the turkeys leave their normal location. Please call if you plan to attend so he knows how many people are coming.

Always call the leader on the Thursday before the trip to confirm arrangements!

Calendar

Oct. 27	Wreath Order Deadline
Nov. 2	Chapter Meeting
Nov. 5	Jefferson County Lakes & Parks
Nov. 13	Suet Order Deadline
Nov. 23	Turkey Trot
November TBA	Board Meeting

Upcoming Events:

Dec. 17	Christmas Bird Count
Jan. 19	Annual Banquet

Monthly Meetings (except January and July)

Evergreen Recreation Center, 5300 S. Olive Road, 7 p.m.

**Audubon Colorado Office 303-415-0130 www.auduboncolorado.org
TENAS website www.dipper.org**

***The Dipper deadline for the
December issue is Thursday, Nov. 2.***

Submit articles to:

***Peggy Durham, peggy.durham@comcast.net
AND Margaret McDole, mem2@earthlink.net***

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THE DIPPER

In This Issue

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- Board Nominations

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