



THE DIPPER



VOL. 40 NO. 9
NOVEMBER 2010

EVERGREEN AUDUBON NEWSLETTER

www.evergreenaudubon.org

Where are the Dippers?

Evergreen Library is no longer allowing non-profit organizations to put their publications in the library.

The hard copies of *The Dipper* newsletters can now be found at the following locations:

- monthly Evergreen Audubon chapter meetings
- Wulf Recreation Center
- Buchanan Recreation Center
- Evergreen Wild Bird Store

Can the Owners be Found?

A white casserole and small spatula were left at the Evergreen Audubon picnic in July.

A yellow casserole with a sunflower on the lid was left at Evergreen Nature Center after the Bird House Bash.

Please call Sylvia Robertson, 303-674-1715.

November Food Drive support for Church of the Hills

Please bring canned food or non-perishable food items with you to the November chapter meeting.

We would like to support the church and show them our appreciation for allowing us to hold our meetings there.

Nebraska Sandhills: Sea of Grass

Boulder teacher and author Steve Jones will share a multimedia presentation about the Sandhills of Nebraska at the Nov. 4 EA chapter meeting.

Encompassing more than 20,000 square miles, the Nebraska Sandhills comprise the largest remaining expanse of mixed- and tall-grass prairie in North America.

Sharp-tailed Grouse, Long-billed Curlews and badgers roam the hills. Bald Eagles, Trumpeter Swans and Black Terns nest around thousands of shallow lakes and ponds.

With a human population of less than one inhabitant per square mile, the Sandhills may resemble the prairie of the Cheyenne, Pawnee and Lakota.

The enduring beauty of this landscape, 97 percent of which is under private ownership, demonstrates that rural communities practicing sound land stewardship can preserve native ecosystems.

Steve Jones is a graduate of Stanford and Boston universities and a longtime resident and teacher in Boulder County. He is author of "The Last Prairie, a Sandhills Journal" and "Owls of Boulder County." He co-authored



American Avocets

"The Shortgrass Prairie," "Colorado Nature Almanac" and "The Peterson Field Guide to the North American Prairie."

Steve was recognized by the National Wildlife Federation as "one of 10 volunteers who make a difference."

Don't miss this great presentation and an opportunity to learn more about the Nebraska Sandhills. Everyone is welcome.

The Thursday, Nov. 4, program will be held at 7 p.m. at Church of the Hills, 28628 Buffalo Park Road (just west of Evergreen Library), in the downstairs Fellowship Hall. Refreshments and the Evergreen Audubon business meeting will follow.

CBC and Tally Rally

The Christmas Bird Count will be on Sunday, Dec. 19, with dinner and the Tally Rally to follow that evening at David and Lisa Wald's house in the Hiwan Country Club area across from Elk Meadow.

Directions will be given to all participants in the package that is handed out at the December chapter meeting, or you can call or email the Walds for directions: communications@evergreenaudubon.org or president@evergreenaudubon.org.

CBC refresher

At the Dec. 2 chapter meeting, Brad Andres will present an overview of species and methods for Evergreen Audubon's 42nd Christmas Bird Count.

Be sure to attend this important refresher about our winter birds.

The 2010 Christmas Bird Count is scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 19. Watch for more information in the next *Dipper* and at evergreenaudubon.org.

EVERGREEN AUDUBON
www.evergreenaudubon.org

2010 OFFICERS

President	David Wald	303-674-0417 president@evergreenaudubon.org
Vice President	Mike Wilson	303-697-9445 vicepresident@evergreenaudubon.org
Secretary	Peggy Durham	303-674-8648 secretary@evergreenaudubon.org
Treasurer	Diane Sears	303-883-0810 treasurer@evergreenaudubon.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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At Large	Sylvia Robertson	303-674-1715 atlarge2@evergreenaudubon.org

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE DAVID WALD

It's not pleasant to think about the potential demise of some of our most beloved and endangered species of birds in America, such as the Whooping Crane, Kirtland's Warbler and Piping Plover, among others.

But we all know that without a sufficient replacement—new members of the population—there is little hope. What's true in nature is potentially true in any organization.

As a group founded more than 40 years ago, it's difficult to ignore the fact that our society is aging. As a famous comedian in the Poconos once said, looking out over his crowd, "My God, the median age of this audience is deceased."

An aging membership is no joking matter, but like our favorite species of bird, it's something we darn well better take notice of and do something about.

We can see it in our Evergreen Audubon chapter meeting attendance and field-trip participation. Luckily, we don't have to sit around and worry; we can all act, individually and collectively.

Looking at ways to increase our membership is vital. In fact, to some large degree, we've already bet on our future growth by our investment in the Evergreen Nature Center.

This is a different direction for our society, and it is a risk to be sure. So is extinction. And though we like to think of our society as invariant, we know it will survive only if it evolves.

Primarily through the ENC, motivated and like-minded individuals are slowly joining our ranks. However, we need long-term funds to keep the ENC viable, to actively promote our organization in the community, and to attract members that will provide the group with new genetic materials, ideas and awareness of the birding, conservation and environmental issues of the day.

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VIP VOLUNTEERS DAVID WALD

- **Diane Sears** has shed light on our complex, combined Audubon/Nature Center budget. Diane has worked intently on redesigning and modernizing our bookkeeping, which is greatly needed since our budget has increased by more than a factor of 5 over the past four years!

We are now in great shape to fully track all aspects of our budget and report regularly to the board and the membership. Great job, Diane!

- **Warren Roske** has been switching out the posters and bird lists at the boardwalk near Evergreen Lake House. Thanks for keeping these up-to-date, Warren!

- **Arne Ward** brought a wonderful selection of magnetite nodules to Evergreen Nature Center, with a magnet to boot! These are there for the enjoyment of visitors, and those interested can take home a piece. Arne has collected these pieces locally and we are so pleased to have him drop them by the Nature Center!

- Also Nature Center-related, kudos to Executive Director **Michael Stills** for scoring a like-new full-sized wood and glass display case offered up online by the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Michael was the first to the draw and it's ours!

- Thanks to EA Nominating Committee members **Bud Weare** (chair), **Mike Wilson**, **Michael Stills** and **Brad Andres**. Selecting and rounding up new board members is critical for the future of our society!

Bird House Bash benefit was a lot of fun!

More than 90 EA members and guests turned out on a beautiful late August evening to enjoy the festivities at Evergreen Audubon's first Bird House Bash.

After having cocktails at the Nature Center, guests sauntered over to the Lake House for a dinner catered by In Good Taste, silent and live auctions, background music by Brad Andres, and entertainment by Bob Santangelo.

Excitement was in the air when guests began spirited bidding on the handsomely decorated bird houses created by Evergreen artists Betsy Buckner, Carl Chapel, Dana Cuin, Gail Frasier, Kerry and Ana Griess, Debbie Kerr, Lynn Millikin, Laura Mehmert, Chris Orlikowski, Mike Ray and Tom Ware.

Live auction items were headlined by EA board president David Wald, a seismologist with the Earthquake Hazards Program of the U.S. Geological Survey, who offered an exclusive tour of the Earthquake Center at the Colorado School of Mines.

Not to be outdone, EA board members will cook and serve a dinner for eight at the Nature Center, dressed in its Halloween finest on Oct. 30, for Tom and Else Van Erp and their friends.

The net proceeds of \$6,000 will benefit the Nature Center. The party planners were Marilyn Kaussner, Mimi Nelson, Marge Petersen, Joan Ridgely and Jean Thayer.

- Mimi Nelson



Bird houses created by local artists were auctioned at the Bird House Bash. Photos by Lisa Wald



Food was provided by In Good Taste, a catering company owned by EA development director Mimi Nelson

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS DAVID WALD

Sept. 23 EA Board Meeting

Comprehensive Evergreen Audubon and Nature Center budgets will be provided to the membership in late January after we close our books in December, along with an Annual Chapter Report.

In addition to the annual profits and losses, the budget will document the three-year funding history of the Evergreen Nature Center, which is still operating at a loss, but is closing in on becoming balanced.

The board began to take up the issue of the ENC running deficit, and these

discussions will continue at the October board meeting.

Board President David Wald appointed Bud Weare (chair), Mike Wilson, Brad Andres and Michael Stills to the Nominating Committee to fill the slate for 2010 retiring board positions: secretary, director at large, and conservation.

The committee took suggestions and continued discussing potential nominees; they will report to the membership in November. Elections will be held at the December chapter meeting. The board is still looking for a new publicist to help our Communications director,

and a Programs chair to take over for Mike Wilson and Barbara Nabors.

Oct. 3 AC Board Meeting

Chapter President David Wald attended the quarterly Audubon Colorado meeting in Cañon City, hosted by the Arkansas Valley Audubon Society.

Among other presentations, AVAS Conservation Chair SeEtta Moss provided detailed background on the potential impacts of Christo's "Over the River" project; the AC board agreed to present her inquiries to the Bureau of Land Management. AC will next meet in Denver on Feb. 5.

BIRD BUSINESS COMPILED FROM EVERGREENAUDUBON.ORG: LOCAL SIGHTINGS

The **American Wigeon** first spotted by Michael Stills and Susan Clasen on Sept. 15 was still at Evergreen Lake four days later and had been joined by a female **Northern Shoveler**.

Eight **Western Bluebirds** were going to town in the birdbath at the Don and Debbie Marshall home high on Independence Mountain Sept. 21. A **Townsend's Solitaire** is a constant presence.

For several weeks, large groups of **Western Bluebirds** had been massing in grassy areas and getting ready to head south. Sherman Wing saw more than two-dozen the evening of Sept. 22 in Indian Hills.

While driving past Evergreen Lake the morning of Sept. 23, John Sears saw a soaring **Osprey** daring to interrupt an otherwise "elk moment" typical of Evergreen this time of year.

Larry White reported **Pinyon Jays** flying above Upper Bear Creek Canyon near Hicks Mountain on Sept. 27.

John and Diane Sears viewed dozens of **Evening Grosbeaks** at their home feeders in Kings Valley near Conifer on Oct. 1, pronouncing it a "rare treat."

Approximately two-dozen **Evening Grosbeaks** and about a dozen **Lesser Goldfinches** descended on Marilyn Rhodes' feeders Oct. 4. An **Abert's**

Squirrel had been hanging around the last couple of weeks, too. Twenty years ago she saw them regularly in her yard but today they are quite unusual.

Dick Prickett saw **Sandhill Cranes** circling high overhead in the North Turkey Creek area on Oct. 11 and Brad Andres witnessed about 20 of the **Sandhills** flying over his house on Oct. 13. Brad also had **White-crowned Sparrows** in the yard that day.

MEMBERSHIP KENT SIMON

We thank the new and renewing EA local members for their support.

New

Omer Humble—Idaho Springs

Renewing

Susan Clasen—Golden

Kim Goedeke—Evergreen

Delores Hoisington—Golden

Cindy Miller—Morrison

Ed Steinbrecher—Evergreen

Jane Wilson—Golden

Renewing Family

Susan & Mark Harper—Evergreen

Lori, Eric & Pearl Hogan—Evergreen

Ron & Nancy Huston—Riverview, FL

Barbara & Alistair Montgomery—
Lakewood

Walt & Polly Phillips—Evergreen

John & Diane Sears—Evergreen



Rufous Hummingbird, photographed in Indian Hills by Sherman Wing

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE DAVID WALD

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We expect that over time the ENC will provide not only enough new members, but actually will allow us to grow. After all, if we are not growing, we are probably shrinking. Nothing stays the same.

While it's difficult enough to ask for donations, it's even more difficult to ask for bequests. Regrettably, I'm not sure this topic gets as much of an audience as it should.

To set the stage, Lisa and I, betting on the future, have changed our will by adding Evergreen Audubon to our beneficiaries. The elements of donating long-term to EA are simple: First, make sure you *have* a will, and second, make sure you specify Evergreen Audubon as a beneficiary (not just "Audubon" or your contribution will end up in National Audubon's hands in Washington!).

Thanks in advance for your consideration. Please let any of our board mem-

bers with whom you are comfortable discussing this know what you're thinking, including me or Development Director Mimi Nelson. We've posted information on bequests online. We'll be glad to help advise you on how to make a difference to our society.

As I know from writing this column, this is a difficult topic to broach. Yet, rest easy knowing you've helped protect a particularly wonderful species—the one that reads this newsletter!

MEET THE BOARD: MIMI NELSON, DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

by *Debbie Marshall*

Mimi Nelson has her fingerprints all over Evergreen. From punching down the dough for her signature Sugared Orange Butter Rolls to tying on a bandana for a long-beloved elementary school fundraiser, Mimi has had a hand in a lot of good things going on around town.

She is the owner of In Good Taste catering and recently brought her professional fundraising expertise to Evergreen Audubon by throwing a little shindig known as the Bird House Bash.

As EA's development director, "My whole purpose for being here is to raise money," she said. She used her cooking expertise to prepare the dinner for the event as well.

A Commitment to Community

Mimi came to Evergreen from Michigan as a little girl and basically never left. She and her two brothers went to Evergreen High School and Mimi went on to study art, psychology and education at the University of Colorado.

She left an imprint on Wilmot Elementary School decades ago with the creation of the still-popular Bandana Days carnival.

Those who value public open spaces may know her work on A Night in the Park, a benefit for Mountain Area Land Trust held each year at Alderfer-Three Sisters Park.

She designed the Starry Western Night benefit for Art in the Mountain Community, and her most recently created benefit is the Bird House Bash, which successfully raised funds for Evergreen Audubon in August.

About a year and a half ago, Evergreen Audubon realized it needed some help to raise funds for the newly approved Evergreen Nature Center. Then-president Peggy Durham turned to her friend, Mimi, who she knew had fundraising experience.

That is something of an understatement, considering Mimi worked for 25 years professionally raising funds for non-profits, and has served as a volunteer on many Evergreen nonprofit boards. She is currently finishing a six-year term on the Mt. Evans Hospice and



Home Health board of directors, where she organized the group's first annual appeal for donations.

She was the resource development director for Catholic Charities of Denver for years, until its focus changed and she moved on to Habitat for Humanity.

At Habitat, she was the regional director for Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming, guiding affiliates in how to be successful.

"All the traveling was about to do me in," she said, so in 2001, after five years, she left that organization. She is proud of her work there, saying, "It changes children's lives forever to have a permanent home."

Since that time she has worked for the national organization Trust for Public Land and for the Donor Alliance in Colorado.

Joining the EA Board

After her discussion with Peggy about raising money for Evergreen Audubon, Mimi joined the EA board as director of development, despite what she describes as a birding deficit. "I know the names of six birds, but I'm not sure about three of them," she laughed.

She wanted the annual Nature Center benefit to attract more guests, so she added some pizzazz by approaching local artists to create unique birdhouses to be auctioned at the event.

A tragedy in Mimi's life led her to a job at the Donor Alliance, Colorado's organ donation organization. Her 20-year-old daughter, Emily, died in 1993 after a car accident and her organs were donated.

"Since her death I've become a better person," Mimi said, haltingly trying to explain the impact of dealing with her grief. "Everyone has trauma in their life; we can't escape it."

Mimi, who has been single for several years, has two other children, Lisa, 45, and Grant, 42, and three grandchildren, who love that their "Mimi" is a caterer.

The idea was so well received that there was heated bidding on the cleverly decorated birdhouses, and the 98 people in attendance had a blast at the Bash. "I love to see people have fun," Mimi said, "and the artists really enjoyed the opportunity to show off their talents."

Four years ago Mimi decided it was time to turn her lifelong love of cooking into her next career. She is a versatile cook, catering weddings, business events and private parties. Through her love for her hometown, she often donates food for area nonprofit events.

She hopes to see Audubon conduct more outreach in the mountain community. She believes that many mountain residents have no idea what can be learned through Audubon. She'd like to help change that and is working to get business sponsorships and government grants, as well as coordinating EA's two annual fundraising drives.

Mimi credits the Junior League of Denver with giving her the tools she needed to have a professional career. She became their first member from Evergreen in 1968 and used the mentoring she received to become community relations director for Mercy Hospital, her first job in the field of fundraising and public relations.

Her career, and her support for worthy causes, has headed onward and upward from there.

