

THE DIPPER

Published monthly by The Evergreen Naturalists Audubon Society, Inc.
Member of National Audubon Society

Volume 37 Number 7 September 2007

Editor: Margaret McDole

Assistant Editor: Mark Meremonte

Future Programs

October

Peter Link: "Antarctica Marine Birds and Mammals"

November

Dick Williams: "A Bird Life/Photography Journey to Specialty Habitats in the U.S."

December

Brad Andres and Sylvia Brockner: "Christmas Bird Count—Slide Show Identification and Preparation"

Change of Meeting Location

Through December, the chapter meetings will be held at Church of the Hills, 28628 Buffalo Park Rd. (across the highway from Evergreen Library) in the Fellowship Hall downstairs.

Looking Forward to Wreath Sales

It's almost that time again! Holiday wreath sales will begin soon and orders will be taken until the end of October.

Look for complete details in the next *Dipper*.

Reminder

Bring beverage cups to the meetings to cut down on waste Styrofoam.

Wandering in the Galápagos

Come join us for the September meeting, where Chris Blakeslee will share his wonderful wildlife adventures on the Galápagos Islands.

In August of 2004 Chris and Sue Blakeslee traveled to Peru and Machu Picchu, then rendezvoused with a small group of Coloradoans in Quito, Ecuador. The group spent eight days on a 75-foot yacht, visiting and exploring six of the largest of the Galápagos Islands, 600 miles off the west coast of South America.

The group tiptoed amongst hordes of Marine Iguanas, walked in the footsteps of Darwin, snorkeled with Green Sea Turtles and Galápagos Sea Lions, and photographed the famed Flightless Cormorants.

Without a doubt, this was a trip of a lifetime for the Blakeslees. Come and join us at the September meeting to hear all about their adventures!

Chris graduated from Evergreen High School and is a long-time former member of TENAS. He is a retired Jefferson County elementary school teacher and worked with sixth-graders during most of his career as well as being the first resident teacher at Windy Peak Outdoor Lab School.

For a number of years, he took sixth-graders to study archaeology in the Mesa Verde area and he took a small group of former sixth-graders to Australia for five weeks in 1986.

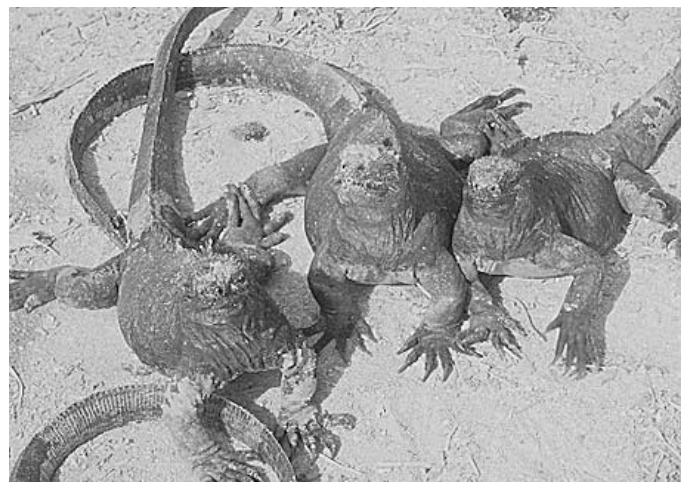
In 1982 he was selected National Environmental Conservation Teacher of the Year.

Chris has traveled in all 50 states, and in many countries across five continents. In the early 1970s he climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro twice. He holds a master's degree

in biology from Western State College, and is currently serving on the board of the Denver Field Ornithologists.

In his free time he is doing biological, geological and historical research in the Windy Peak Outdoor Lab School valley.

The Thursday, Sept. 6, meeting will be held at 7 p.m. at Church of the Hills, 28628 Buffalo Park Road. Refreshments and a business meeting will follow the program.



Galapagos Tortoise, top, and Marine Iguana Gang.
Photos by Chris Blakeslee



President's Message

I Don't Want a Fire!

Moving to this mountain community of Evergreen five years ago made me think that I could put my defenses aside, with no muggers or bandits to be concerned about. Then, in that dry summer, the Hayman fire could not be ignored.

For years I had read about the controversy of the Forest Service deliberately starting fires to burn the accumulated fuels in a controlled operation, though that procedure sometimes went awry as we saw around Los Alamos not too long ago.

And I followed the various wildfires in the West, especially since I was tromping through the charred remains around Yellowstone a few years ago.

Gradually I have made myself face up to the possibility of a wildfire in my neighborhood. I went to a meeting about four years ago sponsored by Evergreen Fire/Rescue that informed us about two important aspects of fire mitigation:

- 1) actions homeowners can take for protecting their own

properties and 2) actions that EFR can do to protect people and properties.

Since then, I have diligently weed-whacked the grass and weeds, removed the most obvious tree hazards and prayed. After much thought and too little action, I pursued an article in the Canyon Courier by Einar Jensen of EFR that offered free consultations on fire mitigation of individual homes.

Einar inspected my property this morning and made numerous suggestions that I can pursue to minimize the risk of losing my house if a fire sweeps up the hill or an ember blows onto a vulnerable place.

Of course, I balked at removing all the dead trees since those with holes and snags are bird friendly. So I will judiciously thin.

He said that a small fire could come up to and go around a house with little damage to the home if fuels close to the house, such as foundation plantings and ladder fuels, are removed. And small fires are actually healthy for a forest.

Among my concerns regarding a fire is the possibility of losing wildlife habitat if the fire gets out of control. Normally a healthy Ponderosa Pine will withstand a grass fire around it,

Continued on Page 3

2007 Officers		
President	Peggy Durham	303-674-8648
Vice President	Brad Andres	303-670-0101
Secretary	Carolyn Fraker	303-679-2799
Assistant Secretary	Kay Niyo	303-679-6646
Treasurer	Walt Phillips	303-674-7744
Board of Directors		
Dave Balogh	303-679-2799	
Ginny Boschen	303-674-3438	
Jeff Geiger	303-674-4595	
Sylvia Robertson	303-674-1715	
David Wald	303-674-0417	
Bud Weare	303-679-8889	
Committee Chairs		
Audubon Colo. Rep.	Dave Balogh	303-679-2799
Bird Business	Bill Brockner	303-674-4851
Birds in Balance	Kent Simon	303-674-3017
	ksimonbib@earthlink.net	
Conservation	Brad Andres	303-670-0101
Dipper Editor	Margaret McDole	303-679-1779
	mem2@earthlink.net	
Education	Dave Balogh	303-679-2799
Field Trips	Mike Foster	303-456-2647
	Mike1.foster@comcast.net	
Hospitality	Jane Conrad	303-674-5133
Land Acquisition	Polly Phillips	303-674-7744
Membership	Kent Simon	303-674-3017
	ksimonbib@earthlink.net	
Program	Heather Johnson	303-670-0101
Publicity	Barbara Klaus	303-674-1102
Way & Means	Irma Wolfe	303-670-3402
	irmasonny@aol.com	
Weeds	Cathy Shelton	303-674-8610
	sheltonpublicaddress@hotmail.com	
Webmaster	Natasha Currlin Japp	
	jappnc@terra.com.br	



- To **John and Diane Sears**, owners of Evergreen Wild Bird Store, for their generous donation to TENAS.
- To **Sylvia Robertson** for acting as coordinator for the annual picnic. And to **Bill and Sylvia Brockner** for welcoming us to their terrace for the event. To **Dave Balogh** for organizing the slide show, with the submissions of great bird pictures from **Kay Niyo, Brad Andres, Sherman Wing, Ron Harden** and **Dave** himself. And to **Marge Peterson** for arriving early to help set up and to her and all those who helped clean up.
- To **Cathy Shelton** for leading Community Weed Day at the lake. Once again we had a good turnout despite the heat. And to the 40-odd (so to speak) people who gave up their Saturday morning to fight the noxious weeds and improve the environment at the lake. County **Commissioner Kathy Hartman** was among the weeders.
- To **Jane Conrad** for offering the use of the workshop in her garage for the construction of nesting boxes and for donating tools for this purpose.
- To **Mike Krieger** for spending many hours with **Bill Brockner** putting his bird records on computer files. A great contribution by both of you.



Learning to Live with Wildfire

Wildfire is part of our ecosystems and has created the ecosystem we love in the Evergreen area, including the meadows dotted with Ponderosa Pine and a diverse list of fauna.

We humans need to adjust our thinking to accept fire and “welcome” it into our neighborhoods. The key is making our properties and structures less vulnerable to damage from fire. To accomplish these goals, we need to understand what fire does and how it behaves.

For example, most structures DON'T ignite from direct flame contact. Wildfires tend to ignite structures via radiant heat or embers. As a fire burns, it produces radiant heat that passes through air to objects that warm to the point of ignition.

Radiant heat also passes through windows and may ignite materials inside a home, bypassing the exterior walls altogether. Firefighters (across the country) are learning to return to burned over neighborhoods to extinguish these smoldering fires before they turn into structure fires.

As a homeowner, your role includes making the house more resistant to radiant heat. Use a non-combustible roofing material, non-combustible siding and prevent woody debris from accumulating under decks and in gutters.

Also, move furniture away from windows if a fire approaches and remove

lacy curtains from windows. Use heavier fabrics or shingles to protect windows and keep the radiant heat out.

As fires burn, they also suck in oxygen and push heated air upward. That column of rising air contains embers—chunks of burning material—that can be tossed anywhere, sometimes several miles downwind, usually onto unburned fuels.

Embers can get stuck in “traps” on roofing, such as beside chimneys or in gutters. If the roofing material is non-combustible, the risk is minimal. If the roofing is wood shake shingles . . . disaster. When those shingles ignite, they can become embers and start dozens of new fires.

You also should clean pine needles out of gutters and off roofing, and rake them from the yard.

Evergreen Fire/Rescue has started its Community Wildfire Protection Plan to develop tactical plans and mitigation strategies for wildfires. If anyone is interested in helping with the process, please contact me or attend the public meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 5, at 7 p.m. at our headquarters at 1802 Bergen Parkway.

I'm also available for property wildfire assessments during regular business hours. Simply call me at 303-679-4749 or e-mail me at ejensen@evergreenfirerescue.com and set an appointment. We'll discuss fuels surrounding the home as well as the structure itself.

The assessments are a free service of Evergreen Fire/Rescue provided through the Fire Prevention Division.

- Einar Jensen, Community Educator
Evergreen Fire/Rescue

BIB is Reorganizing

After 13 seasons of observing birds and plants in the Bear Creek watershed, it is time to evaluate and revise our effort. The leaders of the program will meet on Tuesday, Oct. 9, to discuss options for the future.

The membership of TENAS is invited to attend. This is your opportunity to learn more about the program, make comments, and perhaps become affiliated with one of the groups that does

regular fieldwork in the Bear Creek watershed.

The meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. in the conference room at Evergreen Library, Highway 73 and Buffalo Park Road.

Note: the library closes at 9 p.m., so have an early supper and come prepared to work efficiently.

If you have questions, call Mike Foster at 303-456-2647.

President's Message

Continued from Page 2

but if a fire gets too hot or crowns, then we lose the trees and the wildlife dependent on them.

Practicing good fire-mitigation techniques falls within our mission of conserving natural resources.

Anyone who would like to have Einar schedule an appointment for a free consultation can reach him at ejensen@evergreenfirerescue.com. I learned a lot and recommend it.

Another reminder of the impact of habitat loss was the recent report by

National Audubon about the decrease in numbers of certain birds. After keeping records of bird numbers in specific areas for many years, NAS reported that loss of prairie habitat resulted in vastly fewer local birds in parts of Iowa.

Nature Center

Our board met with Kit Darrow, member of the Evergreen Park and Recreation District board, and Pat Callahan, EPRD staff member, in June. Kit said the EPRD board wanted more details about our proposed use of the warming

hut at Evergreen Lake as a nature center.

We will submit a revised proposal to the rec board for its consideration at its Aug. 21 meeting.

We are still in the planning stages and cannot make concrete plans without approval from the rec board. But we would welcome ideas and offers of help from our members. If we go forward with our proposal, we will need many volunteers. Please contact any board member if you can help.

- Peggy Durham



Bird Business

This Bird Business report covers the heart of the nesting season in our area. This is especially true of the birds that have migrated back to Colorado, such as warblers, vireos and flycatchers.

As was found with national research on bird populations, we too had noticeable decreases in number of birds.

Spring migration wasn't too bad, but we did not find very many uncommon species passing through. Thrushes and woodpeckers were about average in numbers.

Of more than passing interest was the Dusky (formerly Blue) Grouse seen east of Kittredge, close to Genesee Dam being built up in the hills. Warren Roske discovered this bird on June 15. Hope this grouse can compete with this sudden invasion of its habitat.

Loie Evans reported a Wilson's Snipe and an Osprey at Evergreen Lake on June 23. This is a late date for the "Fish Hawk." On the same date nine young Pygmy Nuthatches came out of their nest in Marilyn Rhodes' yard. They stayed for a few days.

Fall migration started early. On June 25, Larry White saw a Rufous Hummingbird near Upper Bear Creek. The next one was seen by Mike Krieger on July 1, near Bailey.

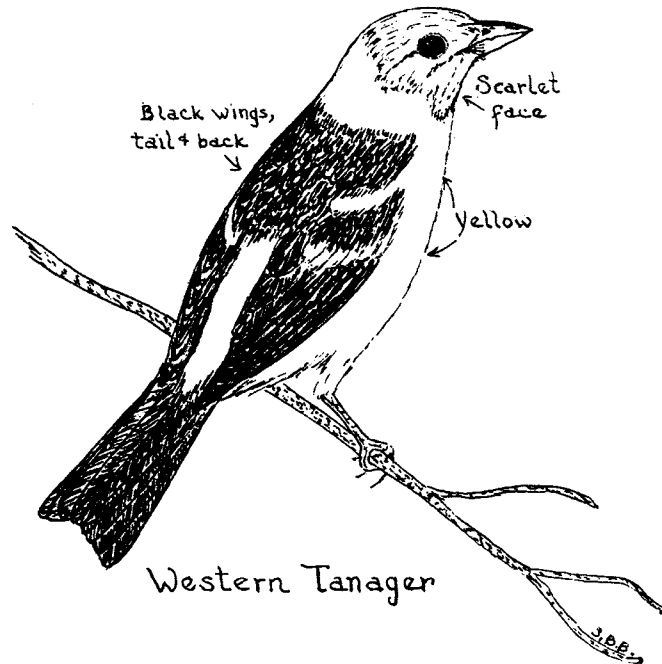
July was welcomed with three young Soras at Evergreen Lake marsh. They were discovered by Loie Evans and Karel Buckley. They were studied daily by many birders.

Interesting were two White-faced Ibis located by Loie Evans at Evergreen Lake on July 2. Where did they come from?

Warren Roske watched a Lazuli Bunting along Wilmot Creek near Evergreen Lake on July 9. This species nests as near as Lair o' the Bear Park.

A Virginia Rail skulked in the marsh at Evergreen Lake on July 11. Loie Evans studied it there. On the same day, Suzie deDisse had a Western Tanager feeding two young just out of their nest.

Band-tailed Pigeons are doing reasonably well around Bailey. Mike



Our president, Peggy Durham, found a Lewis' Woodpecker in her yard on the 27th. Watch for this bird around Evergreen.

I am very sorry to report the passing of longtime member Jo Gibbons, wife of Cal Gibbons, on June 29. Jo was born in Piqua, Ohio, on March 31, 1922. She married Cal in 1944 in Dayton, Ohio. We join Cal and their two sons in sorrow over her passing.

Sherman Wing and his wife, Margie Bailey, had an

enjoyable trip to the Denali region of Alaska in June. They relished seeing an Arctic Warbler, many other birds and 15 Grizzly Bears!

Larry White and his wife spent a week in Maine in July. Larry was happy to find a Parula Warbler, Magnolia Warbler and Bobolinks.

Fall is on its way. It will be in full swing when you read this!

Bill Brockner

- Bill Brockner

Custom Colorado Wild Birdseed Blends



Wild Birds Unlimited®
Your Backyard Birdfeeding Specialist®

www.wbu.com/denver

2720 S. Wadsworth at Yale • 303-987-1065

- Hummingbird Feeders
- Birdfeeders
- Birdhouses
- Birdbaths
- Binoculars
- Field Guides & Books
- Wind Chimes
- Garden Accents
- Nature Inspired Gifts
- Friendly Advice



Sylvia Brockner and other TENAS members enjoy the annual picnic. *Photo by Mark Meremonte*

Picnic Wrap

About 50 people enjoyed the picnic on the Brockners' terrace. The weather threatened but failed to drive us inside. Our thanks, especially to Bill and Sylvia for their hospitality again, and to all others who helped clean up.

After the picnic last year, someone borrowed Bill's slide screen and forgot to return it. Would that person please call Bill and then take it to him.

Membership

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

New

Ellen Leak-Golden
Michael Weideman-Evergreen

Renewing

Cindy Miller-Conifer
Barbara & Alistair Montgomery-Lakewood
Ed Steinbrecher-Evergreen

Renewing Family

Heather Johnson & Brad Andres-Evergreen
Tom & Ginny Boschen-Evergreen
Ruth Gabreski-Evergreen
Bill & JoAnn Hackos-Evergreen
Ken & Nancy Lerner-Evergreen
Dan & Rachel Norton-Evergreen
Walt & Polly Phillips-Evergreen
Kate Hart & Cheryl Pieper-Buffalo Creek
John & Diane Sears-Evergreen
Sherry & Tom Walker-Evergreen
Felicity Hannay & James Wood-Golden

Dear Bill and Syl,

Q. Are house finches native to Colorado or the United States?

A. House finches were first found in Mexico by a German named Muller. They were next noted in California and are native to the area. They were and still are a pest to fruit growers and are especially fond of cherries, raspberries and other fruit.

Some growers get permission from the Fish and Wildlife Service to shoot them.

In 1889, house finches arrived in Colorado and went no farther east. In 1940, people in Mexico began trapping them and selling them in New York City as exotics.

When this practice was halted the birds from pet shops were released into Central Park and Long Island and from there they migrated west. They

can now be found in every state in the U.S.

The house finch is a distant relative of the Cassin's finch. The house finch builds a messy nest of dog and cat hairs and grass. The Cassin's finch builds a much tidier nest.

The house finch outnumbers the Cassin's finch in our area and can be found in open woods and suburbs while the Cassin's prefers montane pine forests.



Local & Independent

"Helping to create wild bird habitat."

TENAS Members Save 10% Every Wednesday
on any regularly priced items.
Not to be combined with other offers.

303.679.2786

Located at 32156 Castle Ct. #111 Evergreen
(across from Fire Station #2)



A Word about Weeds

As summer winds down, weeds gear up to spread their seed far and wide. Needless to say, it is our goal to make sure that as few seeds as possible survive.

Our volunteers did a great job toward that goal at Community Weed Day on June 23. More than 50 volunteers, including County Commissioner Kathy Hartman, weeded around Evergreen Lake and into DeDisse Park.

An additional 30 people stopped by our Education table to learn about noxious weeds from Sylvia Brockner, Diana Martin and Alicia Doran.

We celebrated the 10th anniversary of Weed Day with refreshments and cake provided by TENAS and local businesses. Volunteer gifts were provided by Evergreen Park and Recreation District.

Each year for the last 10 years, TENAS members have been integral to the success of this event. So thank you all, especially our team leaders and organizers: Jane Conrad, Renee Cormier, Susan Harper, Marilyn Kaussner, Betsy Kelson, Mark Meremonte, Margaret McDole, Sylvia and Bob Robertson, Jim Shelton, Else van Erp, Bud Weare, Larry White and Irma Wolf.

Adopt-a-Plot continues to be one of our most successful endeavors. We welcomed four new adopters this summer, which leaves only two lonely plots needing adoption!

Joy Schumacher, Al and Wendy Jewsbury and John Canny join our team of adopters, so we thank them, along with Jonelle Balais, Linda Gallup, the Garrison Family, Wild Rose Church, Dickie Langworthy, Brock Schwartz, Deb Callahan, Mercedes Smith, and Ann and Gerry Saul.

In July, weed-team volunteers talked to about 50 interested shoppers in front of Evergreen Safeway. Folks were so interested in weeds that we were barely able to get the weed display set up.

And by the time you read this, Weed and Wine on Aug. 16 will have been a great success (weather permitting, of course). We will close out our 2007 weed events in September, with an education outreach in Idaho Springs.



Noxious weed-eating goats on a break from munching Canada thistle at the Frisco Willow Preserve Open Space. *Photo by Jim Shelton*

If you were in the vicinity of the Dillon Reservoir in early August, you may have seen the weed-eating goats. It was a sight to behold: 448 goats munching their way through the dense stands of invasive Canada thistle.

I had an informative conversation with goat wrangler Lou Colby of Golden Hooves. Turns out that goats LOVE to eat Canada thistle and especially Leafy Spurge. The goats were accompanied by four herding dogs and one Great Pyrenees, who kept them safe from predators.

Using goats is a great alternative for folks who prefer not to use chemicals, but they can also be used to stress the weeds prior to chemical application and to prevent weeds from going to seed.

I hope you all saw Sylvia Robertson's article on Russian olive in the July Mountain Homes and Lifestyles, an insert in the Courier, High Timber Times and Clear Creek Courant the second week of each month.

Be sure to check the August issue for Oxeye Daisy and Chamomile by Renee Cormier. Don't be shy in letting the newspaper know that you want to see articles like this on a regular basis.

For more information on upcoming weed events, contact me at 303-674-8610 or sheltonpublicaddress@hotmail.com.

And finally, I would like to thank Peggy and the TENAS Board for their ongoing support.

- Cathy Shelton
Community Weed Awareness Campaign



TENAS President Peggy Durham makes short work of a stubborn knapweed. *Photo by Cathy Shelton*



Field Trips and Outings

Sunday, August 26

Shorebirds on the Plains

Leader: Brad Andres, 303-670-0101

Migrant shorebirds are moving through eastern Colorado in large numbers by the end of August. Depending on water conditions, we will seek the best shorebird sites in Weld or Morgan County. As many as 33 species of migrant shorebirds are annually recorded on the eastern Plains during fall migration. Meet at the Bergen Park Park 'n' Ride at 7 a.m. Bring a lunch and plan to return to Bergen Park by 3 p.m.

Saturday, September 8

Lookout Mountain Area

Leader: Mike Foster, 303-456-2647

We'll ascend Apex Gulch, explore Lookout Mountain Nature Center, then descend Chimney Gulch, comparing our results with those earlier in the spring at Chimney Gulch. Another car shuttle. Beginners welcome. Bring binoculars, bird guide and lunch/water. Expect a hike of 7 miles, gaining around 1,500 feet of elevation. Call Mike for meeting time and place.

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

Naturalist on the Boardwalk Launched

Former TENAS president and naturalist Dave Balogh initiated the Naturalist on the Boardwalk program one Sunday afternoon amidst the smoky aromas from family grills on the open space around Evergreen Lake.

Dave, a combination of a Kris Kringle and a trusted professor, set up his tools (Sibley's bird book and a spotting scope) on the boardwalk near Evergreen Lake House.

Dressed in a classic all-weather khaki vest with appropriate Audubon badges and a pair of binoculars around his neck, Dave disarmed the casual visitor to the boardwalk by asking, "Hi, where are you from?"

So disarmed were they, visitors began asking multiple questions about our birds, the wetlands and the lake. Considering Dave's background and solid bird reference book (Sibley's), he was able to answer the visitors' questions.

However, one still lingers in his mind. A visitor from Denver said, "I've got a question for you: What is that Pterodactyl-like bird that hangs out in the rocks down at Lair o' the Bear?"

Heron and cranes were ruled out, but Dave thought cormorants might fit the description. Not too quick to settle on an ID, the visitor said he would return with more information!



Dave Balogh inaugurates the Naturalist on the Boardwalk education program. *Photo by Ginny Boschen*

Thanks to Heather Johnson, Program chair, and her husband, Brad Andres, who themselves were "naturalists on the boardwalks in Alaska," for their encouragement and suggestions for this program new to TENAS.

Dave wanted to try being the meandering naturalist, answering and encouraging questions, as a way to gauge how this volunteer program might take hold.

From the initial responses, we are serving those who desire to visit the peace and harmony of a natural wetlands and want to know more. On Sunday, there were families from Aurora, Denver, Iran, Mexico and Israel.

Thanks, Dave.

Do you suppose it was really an Archaeopteryx?

- Ginny Boschen

September Calendar

August 26	Shorebirds on the Plains Field Trip
September 6	Chapter Meeting
September 8	Lookout Mountain Field Trip
September 15-23	Birds in the Balance Surveys
September	Idaho Springs Weed Awareness
September 27	Board Meeting
October 4	Chapter Meeting
October 9	Birds in the Balance Planning Meeting

Monthly Meetings (except January and July)
Church of the Hills, 28628 Buffalo Park Road, 7 p.m.

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

TENAS website
www.dipper.org

The Dipper deadline for the October issue is Thursday, Sept. 6. Please submit articles to: Margaret McDole, mem2@earthlink.net

The Evergreen Naturalists Audubon Society
Local Membership Application

Please enroll me/us in The Evergreen Naturalists Audubon Society. I/we may participate in all chapter activities, receive *The Dipper* newsletter, and vote (both Family members may vote) on chapter issues. Dues remain local.

Individual (\$20) Family (\$30) Student (\$10)

I have included an additional donation of _____

Name _____ Family member _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

(optional) (optional)

I DO NOT want solicitations from National Audubon.

Enclosed is my check payable to TENAS
P.O. Box 523
Evergreen, CO 80437

If you would like to join or donate to National Audubon Society directly and receive the AUDUBON Magazine, please call 1-800-274-4201.

VOLUME 37, NO. 7. *The Evergreen Naturalists Audubon Society, P.O. Box 523, Evergreen, CO 80437, publishes The Dipper every month but February and August.* The Evergreen Naturalists Audubon Society is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Members automatically receive *The Dipper*. Annual subscription for non-members is \$10. TENAS 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. ***Dipper design and layout by Marshall Desktop Publishing***

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Artwork: Sylvia Brockner, Mildred Keiser

- Learning about Wildfire
- Naturalist on the Boardwalk
- A Word about Weeds

In This Issue

Time Dated Material

Evergreen, CO 80437
P.O. Box 523

The Evergreen Naturalists Audubon Society, Inc.

THE DIPPER

Non-profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 21
EVERGREEN, CO