

THE DIPPER

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

Volume 40 Number 1 January/February 2010

Editor: Margaret McDole

Assistant Editor: Mark Meremonte

Field Trip Planning

A committee composed of Karel Buckley, Heather Johnson, Warren Roske and Sherman Wing will meet to plan a revitalized schedule of field trips.

If you would like to suggest a possible locale for a field trip or would like to lead a trip, contact Karel, 303-670-8859, or one of the other committee members.

Silent Auction

Please let Irma Wolf know by the end of the year (303-670-3402) if you have any items to donate to the banquet's silent auction. She needs time to get a description and value, and prepare bid sheets for them.

Next Chapter Meeting

There will not be a chapter meeting in January. The next meeting will be Feb. 4.

March Meeting

March 4 Evergreen Audubon Meeting: Lightning Safety and Awareness. Prepare for the upcoming field season! John Snook of the Colorado Avalanche Information Center will present the essentials of lightning safety and awareness.

Banquet will feature Gobi Desert Expert as Speaker

Richard Reading, Ph.D., of the Denver Zoo will be the featured speaker at Evergreen Audubon's Jan. 15 Annual Banquet.

(For banquet details and a reservation form, see Page 5.)

Dr. Reading will present an overview of conservation biology at the Denver Zoo, efforts to conserve wildlife in Mongolia's Gobi Desert, and his own fieldwork over the last 15 years with Mongolian ungulates, carnivores and raptors. He also will describe future conservation projects in Colorado.

Mongolia's Gobi Desert may seem harsh to humans, but numerous species call it home, including the last wild two-humped, Bactrian Camels and some of the world's largest vultures.

Much of this wildlife is threatened by loss of habitat, illegal or over-hunting, and over-grazing by domestic livestock. Conservationists are working hard to reverse these threats and safeguard endangered species.

Dr. Reading is the founder and director of Denver Zoo's Department of Conservation Biology. He holds a doctorate in wildlife ecology and master's degrees in environmental



Dr. Richard Reading holds a vulture at his study site in the Gobi Desert.

studies, wildlife ecology and philosophy from Yale University.

In addition to his position with Denver Zoo, Dr. Reading is an associate research professor at the University of Denver and holds

Continued on Page 1

Feb. Program: Playa Wetlands

Playas are wetlands of the Great Plains formed by shallow depressions that fill periodically from heavy rainfall and runoff. The wet-dry cycling creates variable conditions supporting diverse plant and animal species.

Our Feb. 4 program will feature an expert on these biodiversity hot spots, which are an essential component of the Shortgrass Prairie ecosystem.

The shallow waters of playas are significant food sources, providing important stop-over habitat for migratory shorebirds, waterfowl and other birds.

Today, playas are primarily found on farm and ranch land, and many are threatened by sedimentation, pit excavation, road construction, urban development, livestock grazing, and deliberate filling.

Conservation efforts, such as the Conservation Reserve Program, are aimed at protecting and restoring playa wetlands through the voluntary participation of landowners.

Effective conservation of playa wetlands requires knowledge of playa locations and threats, as well as understanding how wildlife

Continued on Page 3



President's Message

What a ride these past three years have been!

When I succeeded Dave Balogh as president, he made it look so easy. All the work he did was excellent preparation for what the board and the membership were about to embark upon.

Three years ago when I assumed the presidency, I was in awe of the numerous ongoing activities and projects. Monthly chapter meetings, twice monthly (on average) field trips, educational programs such as weed education (plus the actual weeding), bluebird nesting box construction and sales, Earth Day festivities, Dawn Chorus, annual picnic, and the Christmas Bird Count made for a busy calendar.

I was mindful of the early Audubon members, Sylvia and Bill Brockner, Louise and Bill Mounsey, Miriam Marshall, Carl and Mildred Keiser, Bob and Mary Pugh, and Cal and Jo Gib-

bons, who devoted so much time and effort to make Evergreen Audubon the worthwhile organization it was.

These visionaries set the tone for their followers, in sometimes grungy work, such as weeding with the snakes, and in social situations that brought us together so we could enjoy a camaraderie shared by common goals.

When the opportunity arose for us to lease from the Evergreen Park and Recreation District the Old Warming Hut at Evergreen Lake to use as a nature center, we eagerly pressed our case.

After numerous public presentations, we finally reached agreement with the rec board and started the long but gratify-

Continued on Page 3



• To **Brad Andres** for another splendid chapter meeting presentation preparing us for the Christmas Bird Count. Surely our numbers will be enhanced by his birding-by-ear quiz, in addition to the more familiar photographs of birds we are likely to see or hear. And thanks again to him for coordinating the Christmas Bird Count on Dec. 20.

• To **Cheryl Manning** for hosting at her home the chili supper after the Christmas Bird Count. And to **Lori Hogan** for making the chili for this wonderful event following the count.

• To **Emily Wald** for tallying the bird counts so efficiently.

• To **Margaret McDole** and **Mark Meremonte** for their tireless efforts as editors of *The Dipper* for the past three years. Our thanks to you both for keeping us informed with interesting articles.

• To **Marilyn Rhodes** for taking charge of the wreath sales again this year, a job she loves because she doesn't have to go to a single meeting to do it. Her efforts contribute a significant amount of money to Audubon, in excess of \$1,900. The wreath choices this year were beautiful.

• To **Warren Roske** for organizing the Turkey Trot again. And to **Marge Petersen** for allowing the viewers inside her lovely home, so they could see the wild turkeys up close in comfort.

• Again, looking ahead, to **Ginny Boschen** and **Irma Wolf** for taking charge of the Annual Banquet to be held Jan. 15. And to **Marilyn Kaussner** for helping with the table decorations that she does so well. And to **Kent Simon** for keeping track of the ever-changing reservations and providing nametags.

• And finally, to the 2009 officers who are going off the board—**Kay Niyo**, **Marilyn Kaussner** and **Doug Kieswetter**—our thanks for their dedicated service to Evergreen Audubon. And to the board members who are continuing (see election article), we look forward to another year of energy, new ideas, wise counsel and accomplishment.

2009 Officers

| | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|
| President | David Wald | 303-674-0417 |
| Vice President | Mike Wilson | 303-697-9445 |
| Secretary | Peggy Durham | 303-674-8648 |
| Treasurer | Diane Sears | 303-883-0810 |

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| | |
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| Mark Meremonte | 303-679-1779 |
| Mimi Nelson | 303-674-3192 |
| Marge Peterson | 303-670-4310 |
| Sylvia Robertson | 303-674-1715 |
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Committee Chairs

| | | |
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| Bear Creek Atlas | Brad Andres | 303-670-0101 |
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| Land Acquisition | Polly Phillips | 303-674-7744 |
| Membership | Kent Simon | 303-674-3017 |
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Feb. Program: Ecology of Playa Wetlands

Continued from Page 1

responds to conservation efforts and the impact of surrounding land use.

Thanks to the staff at the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, these critical questions are being answered in eastern Colorado and southwestern Nebraska.

The ecology and conservation of playa wetlands and the value of the Conservation Reserve Program will be the

program topic of Evergreen Audubon's February general meeting.

Our presenter will be Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory's David Pavlacky. Dr. Pavlacky, a biometrician, began working with RMBO on playa spatial ecology in April 2008.

A Colorado native, David received a bachelor's degree in wildlife biology from Colorado State University (1995) and a master's in zoology and physiol-

ogy from the University of Wyoming (2000). He earned a doctorate in zoology from the University of Queensland, Australia (2008), where he studied landscape genetics and ecology of rainforest birds.

The meeting will be Feb. 4 at 7 p.m. at Church of the Hills, 28628 Buffalo Park Road, in the downstairs Fellowship Hall. Refreshments and a business meeting will follow.

President's Message

Continued from Page 2

ing process of assembling or creating the displays and programs for the public.

I can't tell you how many talented and creative people stepped up to the plate with both ideas and exhibits to fill our nature center with information that fulfills our mission of educating the public regarding conservation of the environment.

We are fortunate to have many knowledgeable members who have conducted classes and programs that have been well attended. I am grateful to be in the company of all those (too numerous to name) who contributed so much to the success of our endeavor.

We have now completed our second year. Over the course of our two seasons, we had more than 26,000 visitors. We have received three grants (one a renewal), we have a paid executive director and we are extending our outreach to the greater Evergreen community and to the many visitors to the lake from all over the world.

This effort was possible because so many Audubon members and volunteers have devoted many hours and much expertise to our cause. It has been my good fortune to be associated with Audubon at this time.

Nothing could be more gratifying than to serve in the company of so many intelligent, productive colleagues who are selfless in their dedication to Audubon's mission. I consider that I am

the beneficiary of my term as president to have worked with such talented, committed comrades.

I thank you all for volunteering for jobs that needed to be done or for answering our call to take on a task that needed help. I marvel at the high level of volunteer service that keeps Audubon rolling.

As I pass the baton to David Wald (he has been known to run home from

meetings), I cannot think of another person better suited to lead our group in the upcoming year.

Whatever changes in style and substance he makes will be for the better. I wish him and the new board my best for 2010. And I am looking forward to going to a meeting where I can slouch in the back row and over which I don't have to preside.

- Peggy Durham

Changes for Web, Dipper

Website

Our website, dipper.org, will be under construction in the near future. Please bear with us as we undergo a design change. We ask that you check it often for all information regarding programs, field trips, personnel, cancellations, news items and reports.

The Dipper

Unfortunately, this issue of *The Dipper* will probably be the last hard copy available and mailed to our membership. This change is necessary for two reasons.

Our editors, Margaret McDole and Mark Meremonte, have done a wonderful job for the past three years, but they now have other commitments that require them to step down from these responsibilities. And no member has agreed to be the editor.

Also, the board feels that it is pos-

sible to inform our membership of all news and events by the Web and email, both of which give immediate access to information that allows for changes to schedules and programs, especially cancellations.

By going with the email and web information, we are saving a substantial amount of money each year. And we are being environmentally correct by saving many pages of paper.

To be sure all notices and up-to-the-minute schedules reach you, check that your email address is current by sending an update to Kent Simon at ksimon-bib@comcast.net.

Anyone who does not have access to a computer should contact any board member so we can make an arrangement that will keep our members informed.

- Peggy Durham



Bird Business

Rosy-Finches

John and Diane Sears report that Rosy-Finches abound at their feeders at their home on Conifer Mountain. Anyone who would like to visit their yard to view the birds is welcome, but please call first (303-679-2786) to let them know and to get directions.

Counting Bird Watchers

The just-released report on Bird Watching offers a great opportunity to build awareness of the Audubon mission and local efforts to connect people with birds and nature and to convey the importance of protecting the environment.

Released July 15 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the report shows that an astounding 1 of out of every 5 Americans watches birds. It reveals that bird watchers contributed \$36 billion to the U.S. economy in 2006 alone, the most recent year for which economic data are available.

The report, "Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis" (http://library.fws.gov/Pubs/birding_natsurvey06.pdf), shows that total participation in bird watching is strong at 48 million, and remaining at a steady 20 percent of the U.S. population since 1996.

Participation rates vary, but are generally greater in the northern half of the country. The five top states with the greatest birding participation rates include Montana (40 percent), Maine (39 percent), Vermont (38 percent), Minnesota (33 percent) and Iowa (33 percent).

The report identifies who birders are, where they live, how avid they are and what kinds of birds they watch. In addition to demographic information, this report also provides an estimate of how much birders spend on their hobby.

That's very good news, and birding has no doubt grown since 2006 because Baby Boomers and retirees have continued to grow in numbers, and many Americans have chosen not to travel abroad for their vacations this year, but are looking for inexpensive ways to relax.

Who better than your chapter to reach out to the public to explain why this is good news for our communities and for our future? You can discuss bird watching as the first step toward discovering and conserving nature.

It is a prime opportunity to cultivate stewardship and support of regional Important Bird Areas, as well as the Audubon At Home program, with tips on how people can create bird-friendly backyards.

Bird watching is often described as the second-fastest-growing hobby in the United States, after gardening. You can tell people how Audubon combines the two.

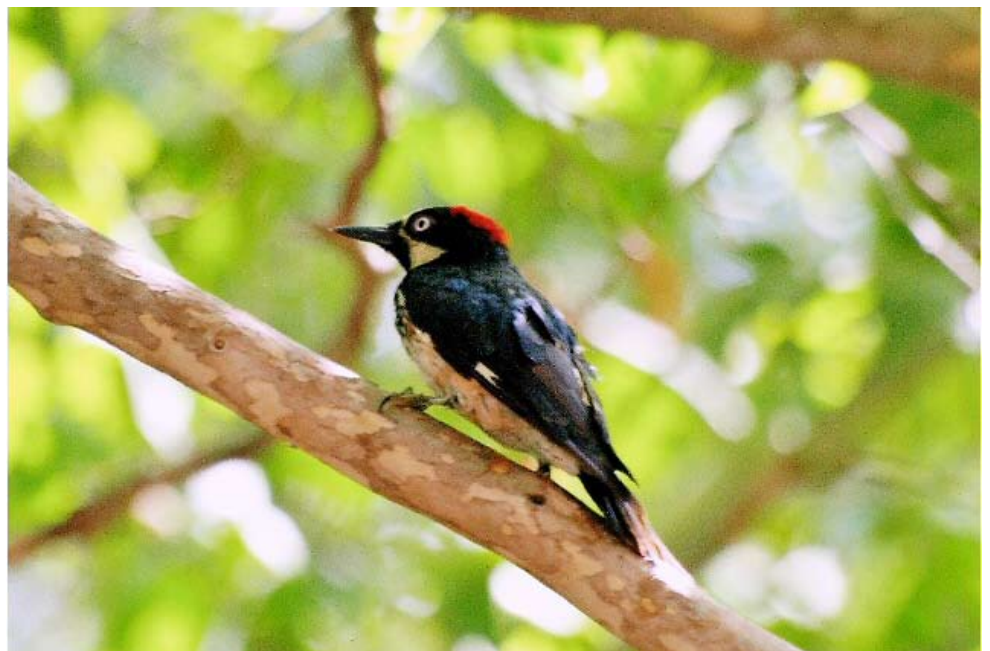
Finally, urge people to join Audubon as a way

to learn more about birds, help protect the environment we share and work with Audubon to diminish climate change.

- Delta Willis
Senior Communications Manager
Audubon www.audubon.org/vv



Donna Forrest spotted this Black-headed Grosbeak at her feeder in Evergreen.



Sherman Wing photographed this Acorn Woodpecker on a trip to southern Arizona.



Banquet will feature Gobi Desert Expert

Continued from Page 1
affiliate positions with the University of Bristol (England) and the University of Colorado-Denver. Dr. Reading also serves on the board of trustees for several environmental organizations.

Dr. Reading's areas of interest include grasslands conservation, endangered species conservation, species reintroductions, values and attitudes toward

wildlife and conservation, and improving policy approaches to conservation.

Currently Dr. Reading's research focuses on a wide range of native Mongolian species, including Argali Sheep, Eurasian Black Vultures, Lesser Kestrels and hedgehogs. He is also heavily involved in the conservation of Black-tailed Prairie Dogs and species associated with them.

Reserve your place at this always-congenial gathering and hear Dr. Reading's fascinating presentation by sending in the reservation form in this issue by Friday, Jan. 8.

Annual Banquet Details

The Annual Banquet will be at Mt. Vernon Country Club on Jan. 15 at 6 p.m., with a cash bar and a silent auction. The buffet dinner will begin at 7 p.m.

The president's remarks and awards and the featured speaker will follow dinner. The price for the buffet dinner is \$35 per person and features choices for various diet requirements, with a plentiful variety of vegetables, fish and meat again this year.

Don't miss out on the multi-event

evening of fun, good food, interesting speakers and an auction that always bears repeating!

Irma Wolf reminds us all: "Don't forget the Audubon banquet silent auction. Bring money and come early to shop."

Just use the reservation form inside this issue of *The Dipper* to reserve your place. We need to have all of the information filled out, with payment included, and in the Audubon post office box by the deadline of Friday, Jan. 8.

Officers Elected

At the Annual Meeting Dec. 3, the membership elected the proposed slate of officers and directors unanimously.

Executive Committee: President, Dave Wald; Vice President, Mike Wilson; Treasurer, Diane Sears; Secretary, Peggy Durham.

Directors: Education, Cheryl Manning, Bird Monitoring, Brad Andres; Conservation, Mark Meremonte; Development, Mimi Nelson; Communications, Lisa Wald; Social Events, Marge Petersen; At Large, Sylvia Robertson; At Large, Heather Johnson.

The new board members will be installed at the Annual Banquet Jan. 15.

Here's My Reservation for the Banquet

Names: (Print first and last names clearly for each guest attending.)

The Country Club will plate meals for any guests who prefer to be served at their table.

_____ I request that my meal be served _____ I need a ride to the banquet

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Cost is \$35 per person. Enclosed is my check for \$_____.

Make check payable to TENAS Banquet. Payment must be included with your reservation.

Reservations must be received by Friday, January 8, 2010—Mail to:

TENAS Banquet, P.O. Box 523, Evergreen, CO 80437-0523



Take a Midwinter Break to Count Birds

Bird watchers coast to coast are invited to take part in the 13th annual Great Backyard Bird Count, Friday, Feb. 12, through Monday, Feb. 15.

Participants in the free event will join tens of thousands of volunteers of all levels of birding experience to count birds in their own backyards, local parks or wildlife refuges.

Each checklist submitted by these “citizen scientists” helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how the birds are doing—and how to protect them.

Last year, participants turned in more than 93,600 checklists online, creating the continent’s largest instantaneous snapshot of bird populations ever recorded.

“Taking part in the Great Backyard

Bird Count is a great way to get outside with family and friends, have fun, and help birds—all at the same time.

“Anyone who can identify even a few species can provide important information that enables scientists to learn more about how the environment is changing and how that affects our conservation priorities,” said Audubon Education Vice President Judy Braus.

“Everyone who participates in the GBBC—families, teachers, and young people—will get a chance to hone their observation skills, learn more about birds, and make a great contribution to the future!”

Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from novice bird watchers to experts. Participants count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the event and report their sightings online at www.birdcount.org.

“The GBBC is a perfect first step toward the sort of intensive monitoring needed to discover how birds are responding to environmental change,” said Janis Dickinson, director of

Citizen Science at the Cornell Lab.

“Winter is such a vulnerable period for birds, so winter bird distributions are likely to be very sensitive to change. There is only one way—citizen science—to gather data on private lands where people live and doing this across the continent over many years.

“GBBC has enormous potential both as an early warning system and in capturing and engaging people in more intensive sampling of birds across the landscape.”

Bird populations are always shifting and changing. For example, 2009 GBBC data highlighted a huge southern invasion of Pine Siskins across much of the eastern United States.

Participants counted 279,469 Pine Siskins on 18,528 checklists, as compared to the previous high of 38,977 birds on 4,069 checklists in 2005.

Failure of seed crops farther north caused the siskins to move south to find their favorite food.

For more information about the GBBC, visit the website at www.birdcount.org. Or contact the Cornell Lab of Ornithology at 800-843-2473 or Audubon at citizenscience@audubon.org or 215-355-9588, Ext. 16.



During last year’s Great Backyard Bird Count, Judy Howle photographed a House Finch in Mississippi, left, and Ted Schroeder snapped an Evening Grosbeak in Oregon.



Farewell and Thanks

This is our last edition of *The Dipper* as editor and assistant editor.

We send a heartfelt thanks to those who have contributed articles and photographs. You have made *The Dipper* possible these last three years.

We have enjoyed keeping up with the activities of Evergreen Audubon and the opportunity to keep the members informed.

- Margaret McDole and Mark Meremonte

Membership

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

New

Mimi Nelson—Evergreen

New Family

Dee & Ron Sacks—Evergreen

Renewing

Mike Henwood—Morrison
Eivind & Caroline Jensen—
Idaho Springs
Cindy Miller—Morrison
Ed Steinbrecher—Evergreen
Jane Wilson—Golden

Renewing Family

Warren Zimmer & Pam Bixter—
Evergreen
David Jones & Deb Callahan—Evergreen
David Cuellar & Donna Forrest—
Evergreen
Barbara Jean & Tom Gard—Evergreen
Lori, Eric, & Pearl Hogan—Evergreen
Peter & Lucille Link—Evergreen
Barbara & Alistair Montgomery—
Lakewood
Bill & Louise Mounsey—Evergreen
Walt & Polly Phillips—Evergreen
John & Diane Sears—Evergreen
Tim & Marilyn Stechert—Evergreen
Caroline & Ingrid von Kleydorff—
Evergreen
Felicity Hannay & James Wood—Golden



Evergreen Nature Center volunteers and their spouses gather with members of the Evergreen Audubon board to celebrate a successful year at the Nature Center. About 35 people enjoyed a Nov. 1. potluck dinner at the home of Debbie and Don Marshall on Independence Mountain.

Nature Center Volunteers Celebrate

More than 12,500 people from all over the world visited Evergreen Nature Center this year.

That was an 11 percent drop from attendance in 2008, due to an increased

number of bad-weather days and the inability to open for the season on Earth Day because of snow.

Twenty new Visitor Assistants were recruited to staff the Nature Center.

Our Every Day Savings Programs Include:

- Free Seed Bag After 10 Purchased On Wild Delight & Petersen Blends (or) Instant 8% off when you buy any two bags
- Save on Suet - 10% off w/6 cakes or 12% off by the case
- Vortex Optics at Max Allowable Discount Every Day - we match internet pricing on Vortex Optics



32156 Castle Ct. Evergreen
303.679.2786

Open 7 Days a Week
Mon-Fri 10-6; Sat 10-5; Sun 10-4
evergreenwildbirdstore.com

Calendar

| | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| December 20 | Christmas Bird Count and Tally Rally |
| January 15 | Annual TENAS Banquet |
| February 4 | Chapter Meeting |
| February 12-15 | Great Backyard Bird Count |
| March 4 | Chapter Meeting |

Monthly Meetings (except January and July)

First Thursday at 7 p.m.

Church of the Hills, 28628 Buffalo Park Road

Audubon Colorado Office 303-415-0130

www.auduboncolorado.org

TENAS Website

www.dipper.org

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, call 1-800-274-4201. Use chapter code C9ZD090Z.

VOLUME 40, NO. 1. *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

- Website, Dipper Changes
- Presidential Farewell
- Banquet Reservation Form

In This Issue

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