ENC HELP NEEDED!
Help make Evergreen Nature Center possible in 2014!
Explore, grow and share your love of nature—join the family of ENC volunteers today!
ENC volunteers enjoy free programs too.
Contact Vanessa Hayes at encdirector@evergreenaudubon.org or 303-330-0489 to find out more.

ANNUAL PICNIC
The Evergreen Audubon Annual Picnic will begin at 4 p.m. Saturday, July 19, at Dedisse Park.
Those attending need to bring a side dish to serve 10. Audubon will provide the main dish and beverages (3.2 beer and non-alcoholic). More details will follow in the July Dipper.
There will be amazing entertainment, as usual. We would like to get volunteers to help with setup and/or cleanup. Please indicate which you will be helping with when you respond with your planned attendance.
Please check the July Dipper or the website for further details, or call Janet Warner, 303-674-1636, or Peg Linn, 303-674-2239.

Meet the ENC assistant director

Pam Little has been hired as temporary assistant director of the Evergreen Nature Center.

Pam takes on the position as ENC Executive Director Vanessa Hayes approaches a maternity leave.

Pam introduces herself below.
I have always loved being outside. I would play outside all summer—climbing trees, picking dandelions, looking for worms and watching birds.

I spent a week each summer during grade school at day camp, going on hikes with other kids, learning the names of plants and animals and how the natives in the area used them to survive and heal.

My first job, when I turned 16, was at that same day camp, along the Missouri River, leading groups of kids for six summers.

With my interest in living things, I focused on a biology degree in college. A few years later, my love of learning led me back to school for a master’s in environmental policy and natural resource management.

My capstone project was “A Student Handbook for Environmental Studies on the Conifer High School Campus.” It’s still in use there today!

I’ve spent a few summers as a naturalist for Colorado Parks and Wildlife, presenting programs on just about everything. I started volunteering at Evergreen Nature Center when it opened in 2008.

I’m also a volunteer naturalist for Lookout Mountain Nature Center and Colorado State Parks, leading stargazing programs and their native plant walks as a Certified Native Plant Master. I’ll be working these duties into the busy schedule at Evergreen Nature Center with the help of all the wonderful volunteers.

-Pam Little

Bird of the Year candidate? Margo Constable photographed this Lewis’s Woodpecker on May 4 between Idledale and Kittredge. See Bird Business, page 4.
You should be receiving our annual appeal letter in the next few days. I hope you will consider supporting Evergreen Audubon in 2014.

In the letter, we reported on just a few accomplishments of Evergreen Nature Center in 2013. Additional information can be found on our website (evergreenaudubon.org) under the “Evergreen Nature Center” tab.

Building on these accomplishments, I would like to report on the financial state of Evergreen Audubon and give you an overview of our income and expenses for 2013 and our future plans.

To start, we had a 3 percent surplus in 2013, which raised our net worth to $98,158. This is a healthy reserve, satisfies our government donors and provides us with a nice cushion to absorb some revenue instability. Total revenues in 2013 were $80,909 and overall expenses were $77,257.

Earned revenue from sales, classes and tickets was $17,571. Total contributed revenue was $63,338: memberships and individual donations ($25,717), the Science and Cultural Facilities District ($14,114), the Bird House Bash ($11,341), the Jefferson County Conservation Trust Fund ($9,866), and foundations ($2,300).

Our expenses fell into three general categories: delivering programs ($52,982), administering the Nature Center and our organization ($19,119), and fundraising ($5,156).

The revenue we need to operate Evergreen Nature Center is five to six times our annual income prior to the establishment of the Nature Center in 2008. For the last six years, we have been able to raise enough money to fund the annual operating costs of Evergreen Nature Center and have almost completely returned its initial contributions to the Land Conservation Fund. Now is the time to move forward.

There is absolutely no question that younger generations are increasingly detached from fingernail-dirt experiences with the natural world of our mountain community. I see this all around me—work, family, socially.

We have a choice. You can join me in supporting Evergreen Nature Center and enabling us to reach out to our rising stars and change their trajectory for the future. Our goal is a sustained annual operating budget of $100,000. Help us get there!

On behalf of the Evergreen Audubon board of directors, we acknowledge sincerely the generous contributions made by our member, community and government donors across our history. Without you, we would not have an Evergreen Nature Center.

Brad Andres, EA President

Birder Devin Hefferon of Boston wondered if the photos his father-in-law, Art Robbins of Evergreen, sent him of ibis at Evergreen Lake were White-faced or Glossy. EA’s Warren Roske said he had seen two White-faced ibis at the lake the previous week. “We get them in migration and we have had them every year since I began keeping records in 2004,” Warren added. “The guidebooks all show the Glossy along the East Coast and the Gulf Coast so one of those here would be very unusual. The white around their face is limited and often hard to see unless you are very close.” Photo by Art Robbins
Popular weed program returns for June meeting

Spring is here and recent moisture has inspired a burst of much-wanted green on hills, meadows and along streams and lakes.

But which green belongs and which doesn’t?

One aspect of human presence in the Front Range foothills is the inadvertent introduction of non-native and invasive plant species.

Both weeds and wildflowers are in abundance, and the challenge is to learn which should be removed and which should remain.

Non-native plants may drive out native plant species and can have devastating effects on the food resources our birds and wildlife depend upon.

Learn how to decide which plants will stay and which must go at our popular Weeds and Wildflowers ID program, presented by Betsy Kelson and fellow members of the Community Weed Awareness Campaign Committee at the next Evergreen Audubon Chapter Meeting.

The meeting, relocated to Evergreen Nature Center for the summer, will be Thursday June 5, at 7 p.m. Come early to socialize!

Noxious and invasive species and their management will be discussed, with photo examples of the plants you want to remove before they take over your yard and hillside. (Hint: think knapweed.)

Learn to distinguish between “good” and “bad” thistles and other species that pose particular problems for mountain landscapes.

We also will talk about the native and garden species that will thrive in mountain climates and add to your garden’s beauty.

If you have a problem identifying a plant, and want to know whether it is a weed or a local plant resident, bring a specimen for our experts to ID.

The CWAC Committee also will share its successes in raising awareness and removing weeds from community spaces such as Evergreen Lake.

If you are not able to attend the June program, Evergreen Nature Center displays information about noxious weeds that is refreshed monthly.

Other outreach events are on tap all summer throughout the area.

The Community Weed Awareness Campaign is a committee of Evergreen Audubon in cooperation with the Mt. Evans Group of the Sierra Club, Evergreen Garden Club and concerned citizens.

For more than 16 years, its mission has been refreshingly clear and focused: preserving Evergreen and the surrounding area’s natural heritage and biodiversity through community education and active noxious weed management.

Members of the CWAC Committee are Sylvia Robertson, Betsy Kelson, Marilyn Kaussner, Renee Cormier, Bud Weare, Larry White, Pat Carter and Else Van Erp. New members are encouraged to join!

- Ed Furlong
EA Education Chair

20th Dawn Chorus makes for fun morning at lake

It was an outstanding morning on May 4 for the 20th International Dawn Chorus at Evergreen Lake.

The weather was perfect, temps above freezing! Sunshine warmed us as we stood outside—perhaps one of our warmest Dawn Choruses to date.

There were 28 participants, including six children. There were 35 species of birds seen between 5:45 and 10 a.m.

Highlights were 14 White-faced Ibis, six Spotted Sandpipers and 18 Willets.

Other exciting species were Green-winged Teal, White-crowned Sparrows, a pair of Say’s Phoebe hanging around the Nature Center eves, a Red-tailed Hawk, a Green-tailed Towhee, and four Great Blue Herons.

A Turkey Vulture did a fly-by, but no Osprey appeared. Two new species for this day—Western Wood-Pewee and Wilson’s Warbler—brought our 20-year total to 109 species.

A herd of elk spread out on the golf course and the U.S. Fly Fishing Competition Team brought three boats to fish the lake, making it a special morning to watch our local waters.

The data, on spreadsheets for 20 years, will now be archived at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in perpetuity.

Thank you to the 576 participants over the 20 years, for all the treats and coffee we shared together. I know many, including our dear Bill Brockner, always looked forward to this early morning.

Good birding, Karel Buckley

- Ed Furlong
EA Education Chair

THE DIPPER JUNE 2014  3
Bird of the month: Lewis’s Woodpecker

On May 4, Margo Constable emailed a photo of what I consider the Bird of the Month, and possibly the year, a **Lewis’s Woodpecker**.

According to Larry White, “There is a breeding population of Lewis’s Woodpeckers in the Hayman burn area near Lost Valley Ranch that we visited last summer with researchers studying them.

“Also, **Red-headed Woodpeckers** are there. They apparently colonize burn areas in the Front Range. Do you live near such an area?”

Margo responded, “Not yet! We live between Idledale and Kittredge on Cold Springs Gulch Road in an open valley with two ponds.”

Margo and spouse Don McKenna said the woodpecker was still present on May 10, hanging out with **Bullock’s Orioles** and **Evening Grosbeaks**.

Yard Birds

Hummers

Inga Brennan had this year’s first **Broad-tailed Hummingbird** male at her feeder April 13. It was snowing and 24 degrees. This beat her early record by one day.

Evening Grosbeaks

On April 27, Mark Meremonte and Margaret McDole reported four male and three female **Evening Grosbeaks** on their feeders. They had been enjoying them for about a week.

Collared Dove Mating Survey

On April 28, David Walker reported from Indian Hills:

“For the last three weeks I have had daily visits by a pair of **Eurasian Collared Doves**, a new species for my yard. They confirmed that they are a pair when they started making mating moves about a week ago.

“This included grabbing the other bird’s bill and then they would switch. Reciprocal preening was also observed. Then they did copulate.

“Now they tend to arrive alone and come several times each day to feed and get water. It is all interesting but I’ve associated this species with more urban settings than Indian Hills and at lower elevations.

“I’ll have them here as long as they want to stay and watch to see if nesting is successful. Has anyone else had them nest?”

Bob Santangelo of Wheat Ridge responded, “Cornell is looking for people to participate in an EC Dove mating survey. It starts out with a pair, and then you end up with several like the ones that are showing up in my driveway every morning.”

**Black-headed Grosbeaks**

David Walker had a new arrival at his Indian Hills home on May 8, a lone male **Black-headed Grosbeak**.

On May 10, Mark Meremonte and Margaret McDole reported a first of season male **Black-headed Grosbeak** at their feeders on Upper Bear Creek, 3 miles west of Evergreen Lake.

**Virginia Warbler**

Larry White had a singing male **Virginia Warbler** in Bell Park the morning of May 9.

**Red Rocks**

On April 18, Sherman Wing saw 2 male **Say’s Phoebes** in the meadow off of Plain View Road late in the afternoon. Sherman reported more early migrants near the Trading Post April 27, including **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher**, ** Lazuli Bunting**, **White-throated Swift** and **Broad-tailed Hummingbird**.

Continued on page 5

To contact Marilyn Rhodes, call 303-674-9895 or email cloverlane@aol.com.

To subscribe to the Evergreen Birders email list to report and view local sightings, go to evergreenaudubon.com and click on the Local Sightings link.
A Clark’s Nutcracker Spectacle

On April 28, Margo Constable’s friends, Chris and Patty, observed a huge influx of noisy Clark’s Nutcrackers arriving in waves at their home on Forest Hill Road near downtown Evergreen.

“The birds arrived in waves at roughly 5 p.m. April 27 in the front yard of our house, which faces northwest,” Chris reported.

“At first I thought there were conservatively 50–75 or so. They were moving up the hill from below and most stayed in the treetops while others went to the ground and picked through fallen pine cones.

“They moved through our property from northwest to southeast squawking and chattering as they went.

“As one group cleared out, another group of 50–75 came through behind them with the same routine.”

Patty watched as they gradually continued away from the house up the hill behind and off toward the east where we eventually saw them cross over the ravine to Independence Trail and up over the top.

“A few scattered groups of 10 or so continued to arrive in the same fashion traveling behind and following until about 5:30 p.m. The total was easily 200 or more.”

“I agree with Susan Harper, who said, “I’ve never seen or heard of flocks of Clark’s Nutcrackers this large!”

On May 5, Sherman birded the short-grass prairie on the Morrison side of Mount Falcon.

He recorded Lark Sparrows, Vesper Sparrows, Western Meadowlarks, Song Sparrow and a Prairie Falcon (fly-over).

JoAnn and Bill Hackos found a small flock of Lazuli Buntings at Red Rocks along the road east of the Trading Post on May 9.

Hiwan Ponds

The heavy snow that surprised us on Mother’s Day resulted in a rare and wonderful fallout at the Hiwan ponds.

Did you know that Cliff Swallows build their communal mud nests by carrying little mud pellets in their bills and transporting them one at a time? It takes them a week or more to build a nest that has a tubular entrance 6 to 8 inches long. Killdeer build scrape nests, little more than shallow depressions on sand or gravel. Because their eggs and chicks are so visible, they distract predators from their nests using a “broken-wing” display.

Winter Wrens build domed nests using the vegetation around them. The male may build six to 12 “cock nests” before the female selects one. The wren weaves dry grass in and out of a cup and then adds a dome, lining the inside with moss.

In “Avian Architecture,” Peter Goodfellow describes in detail the truly amazing constructions made by birds around the world. From simple scrape nests to hanging, woven and stitched nests, Goodfellow thoroughly illustrates the techniques used by birds to build a safe and snug environment for their eggs and young.

Perhaps the highlights of the book are the wonderful illustrations, including sketches, diagrams and photographs to explain how both large birds and tiny ones create outstanding structures.

We once came upon an Australian Brush Turkey nest in Australia. At first we couldn’t believe it was an avian construction. The nest is a huge mound, which can be as much as 6 feet high and 30 feet in diameter. The eggs are laid in a 2-foot deep hole and covered by a compost pile. The decaying vegetation keeps the eggs warm, although the male keeps testing the temperature and removing or adding material.

The chicks dig themselves out of the nest, one at a time. They are fully feathered and can run and feed themselves. They never meet their parents, although they find others and form foraging groups.

I’m certain you’ve seen oriole nests, hanging from the tips of branches like little sacks. According to Goodfellow, the oriole weaves plant material to form the suspended cup.

Scientists have calculated that the nests contain 10,000 stitches and thousands of knots and loops. The female makes as many as 20,000 trips gathering material to weave her nest.

The accounts in “Avian Architecture” demonstrate that birds are incredible engineers, spending enormous time and energy creating the best environment to raise their young.

Goodfellow’s book is fascinating and informative. The birds that we enjoy listening to and watching build complex nests without being taught by others. They may get better with experience. In fact, bowerbirds take several years before their bowers are designed well enough to attract a mate.

I know you’ll find “Avian Architecture” interesting and informative, another excellent book for your collection.

Sun-grown coffee has consequences for songbirds

People currently drink about 1.6 billion cups of coffee per day. To meet this incredible demand the coffee agribusiness over the past 25 years has increasingly been encouraging the cultivation of coffee in monoculture, sun-grown coffee plantations.

This is accomplished by clear-cutting vast tracts of rainforest and by applying pesticides, herbicides and chemical fertilizers to boost short-term production.

Throughout the development of this huge industry, ornithologists and conservationists led by Russ Greenberg (former director of the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center and founder of International Migratory Bird Day who died this past October) have been pointing out how this emphasis on high-production, sun-grown coffee has horrendous consequences for migratory songbirds.

As an alternative Greenberg advocated that the approach taken by traditional coffee farmers in the neotropics, which is to cultivate coffee bushes in the protective shade of the rainforest canopy, helps to nurture a whole host of bird species.

Additionally, the coffee bushes draw nutrients from organically renewed rainforest soil and gain pest and weed protection from surrounding flora and fauna.

Dozens of species of migratory songbirds, some of which have recently experienced precipitous population declines, rely on these traditional, densely shaded coffee farms for food and shelter during the time spent on their winter ranges.

Species surveys conducted by the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center and other researchers indicate that birds are found in significantly greater abundance and diversity within shaded coffee farms than in full-sun coffee plantations.

Additionally, traditional growing methods that provide diverse mixes of natural and planted flora foster the greatest diversity of birds.

In 1999 the SMBC determined that even though some coffees may be labeled as “organic,” “free trade” or even “shade-grown,” that these designations do not necessarily signify that the coffee is really being grown in a way that provides for birds.

At that time the SMBC originated the Bird Friendly® Coffee Certification, which is now the gold standard for coffee farm habitat conservation. It has the strictest requirements of any coffee certification for measures such as shade-tree height, shade density and plant biodiversity.

Aside from SMBC certification, consumers have no guarantees that coffee labeled with other certifications, such as organic or shade grown, is bird-friendly.

Yet consumers can improve the chances that critical habitat has not been destroyed or diminished by avoiding store-bought and fast-food coffees and choosing Arabica over Robusta varieties.

Informed decision-making about coffee is one important way in which our everyday actions can support healthy bird populations in critically important ways.

Continued on page 7
Join Evergreen Nature Center for an exciting season of nature and learning. Unless otherwise noted, the location is the Nature Center and the cost for classes is $4 per participant or $10 per family. Evergreen Audubon members enjoy a 50 percent discount.

Register for programs at www.evergreennaturecenter.org

Wednesday Wild Ones with Hearthfire Books: *The Bird Herd Goes to Bed*  Wed., June 4 & 18, 10–11 a.m. Ages 2–5 with adult  Getting the bird herd to go to bed is something their parents truly dread: ever have that problem?  Hearthfire Books and Evergreen Nature Center present a nature education adventure based on *The Bird Herd Goes to Bed* by local author Joan Whalen.

**Evergreen Audubon Presents:**  **Weeds and Wildflowers**  Thursday, June 5, 7 p.m.  *Free Event*  Summer is coming and along with it, weeds and wildflowers are in abundance. Learn to discriminate between the two with the return of our popular weeds and wildflowers ID program, presented by Evergreen Audubon’s Community Weed Awareness Campaign Committee.

**Sun-grown coffee is not for the birds**

Continued from page 6  
To learn more:  • For a two-page summary of SMBC Bird Friendly criteria: nationalzoo.si.edu/scbi/migratorybirds/coffee/criteria.cfm.  • For a searchable directory of Bird Friendly suppliers: nationalzoo.si.edu/scbi/migratorybirds/coffee/lover.cfm.  • For an explanation of different coffee certifications: www.coffeehabitat.com/certification-guide/.

- Chuck Aid  
Director of Conservation

**Bear Creek Dipper**  **Family Adventures**  **Thursday, June 12, 10 a.m.–noon**  Families with children ages 6–10  Part fighter jet, part stunt pilot—forest hawks are finely tuned for expert flying in dense forests. You won’t find a soaring Red-tailed in these close quarters! Join our family adventure into the exciting life of darting and diving raptors.

**Summer Solstice**  **Stargazing at Staunton**  **Saturday, June 21, 8:45–10 p.m.**  Meet at Staunton State Park  *Free program, park fee applies*  Bring a blanket or camp chairs. Join amateur astronomer Pam Little each month for a tour of the night sky.

**Bear Creek Nature Walks:**  **Berrian Mountain**  **Saturday, June 28, 9 a.m.**  Meet at Evergreen Lake parking lot.  Get to know your local wildlife and flowers! Follow spring green-up through the Bear Creek Watershed on the second of our 2014 Bear Creek Nature Walks.

**Night Boating and Nature Exploring: What Do Wild Beds look like?**  **Saturday, June 28, 7–10 p.m.**  *Free ENC event, regular boat rental fees apply*  High in a tree or far below the ground, wild beds are made of every possible material from dirt to feathers. Cozy up with friends and family as we explore sleeping spots of every shape and size.

**Youth Outdoor Skills Day**  **Sunday, June 29, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.**  *Free Event*  Evergreen Nature Center joins Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Evergreen Elks, Evergreen Trout Unlimited and other area organizations to celebrate general outdoor fun on Evergreen Lake. Fishing, boating, camping, hiking, hunting and exploring will be included.  *Registration required!*  Call 303-291-7386 or email wildlife.neoutreach@state.co.us.

**The Big Yawn**  
This Great Horned Owl had no problem getting her owlets to bed (see Wednesday Wild Ones above). Rob Raker photographed this nest near the Trading Post in Red Rocks Park in April.
Evergreen Audubon Local Membership Application

I/we would like to join the Evergreen Audubon. I/we may participate in all chapter activities, receive The Dipper newsletter electronically, and vote (two Family members may vote) on chapter issues. Dues remain locally.

Date __________________________

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Name _________________________________________________

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Address ________________________________________________

City ____________________________ State ____ Zip __________

Phone (optional) _______________________

Email __________________________________________________

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

☐ I DO NOT want solicitations from National Audubon.

If you would like to join or donate to the National Audubon Society directly and receive the AUDUBON Magazine, use chapter code C9ZD090Z and call 1-800-274-4201.

VOLUME 44, NO. 6. Evergreen Audubon, P.O. Box 523, Evergreen, CO 80437, publishes The Dipper every month. Evergreen Audubon is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Members may receive an electronic copy of The Dipper without charge or may pay $15 a year for a mailed hard copy (members only). Evergreen Audubon 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.


PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Artwork: Sylvia Brockner, Mildred Keiser

Not All Coffee Is for the Birds

Fly Fishers Enjoy Dawn Chorus Too

Weed Program Returns

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 4  Wednesday Wild Ones 10–11 am Nature Center
June 5  EA Chapter Meeting 7 pm Nature Center
June 10 Newsletter deadline
June 12 Bear Creek Dippers 10 am–noon Nature Center
June 18 Wednesday Wild Ones 10–11 am Nature Center
June 21 Stargazing 8:45–10 pm Staunton Park
June 28 Bear Creek Nature Walk 9 am Meet at Evergreen Lake
June 28 ENC Program/Night Boating 7–10 pm Evergreen Lake
June 29 Youth Outdoor Skills Day 9 am–1 pm Evergreen Lake

July 19 EA Annual Picnic 4 pm Dedisse Park

Please submit Dipper newsletter content by the 10th of the month to dipper@evergreenaudubon.org. Your submissions will be forwarded to both Dipper editor Debbie Marshall and Kathy Madison, EA Director of Communications.