May Day will be huge at the lake

Clear your calendar on Sunday, May 1, because we have big plans at Evergreen Nature Center.

We are combining events this year to make it a fun day for all of us to get together and celebrate spring. The schedule is below—don’t miss out!

International Dawn Chorus Day
5:30 a.m.
Birders will gather at Evergreen Nature Center as the sun rises. There will be coffee and muffins available at the Nature Center in case it starts out a little cool first thing in the morning.

Birders will take off from the Nature Center to bird Evergreen Lake. We will post a tally of the great birds observed for all to enjoy throughout the day.

Volunteer Recognition Breakfast
8:30 a.m.
We invite all of you to join us at the Nature Center for a recognition breakfast for our volunteers. Many of you have donated your time, expertise and resources over the past three years.

All of you are encouraged to come and join us! Alyson Duffey, the new ENC executive director, will be there to recognize the volunteers for their service. It will be a great opportunity for you to meet her and share ideas.

International Migratory Bird Day
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
To welcome migratory birds back to their nesting and breeding grounds, birders across

Continued on page 5

Alyson Duffey, the new Evergreen Nature Center executive director, is profiled on page 5 of this issue of The Dipper. Hiking is one of her passions—here she is on Green Mountain in Boulder last spring.
Thanks to Dipper editor Debbie Marshall, this issue spotlights our new Evergreen Nature Center executive director, Alyson Duffey. Please join us in welcoming Alyson by dropping by the Nature Center and hanging around for a while!

Make yourself valuable by sharing your experience and expertise with Audubon, our natural environment and your long-established connections in the Evergreen/mountain community. This background will be welcomed by visitors, volunteers and our executive director alike.

Please recall that there will not be chapter meetings in June, July and August, but that does not mean we’ll be hibernating! Keep a look out for newspaper, Dipper and online notices about summer programs, field trips and gatherings at the Nature Center.

We hope to continue and add fun social events, programs and other events during the evenings to make up for the lack of chapter meetings. Please send along any ideas!

- Thanks to Mimi Nelson and Lisa Wald for setting up the Evergreen Audubon/Nature Center display [at a moment’s notice!] at Evergreen Library as well as for hosting a table on our society at the opening event at Wal-Mart’s Garden Center.

- Kudos to board members Jean Thayer and Mimi Nelson for organizing the spring fundraising campaign, and to board members for attending our carpal tunnel-generating signing party!

- Another round of thanks is deserved for the Nature Center Committee (chaired by Heather Johnson, with Karel Buckley, Joan Ridgely, Jean Thayer and Lisa Wald). This amazing team has made huge progress on programs and developments for the Nature Center reopening while we were in the process of hiring our new executive director.

- A round of applause for recent field trip leaders Karel Buckley, Brad Andres, Susan Harper, Sherman Wing, and Bill and JoAnn Hackos!

- Thanks to Bill and Louise Mounsey for their donation to Evergreen Audubon in memory of Scotty Norton.

- A warm welcome to our 11 new Evergreen Audubon members, whose memberships came through the Evergreen Audubon Membership Drive at the Evergreen Wild Bird Store, thanks to the by John and Diane Sears.

The new members are Thomas and Cathy Ager, Shelagh Baines, Melanie Guinan, William Hawkins, Joan Holley, Nancy Merz, Kay Potter and Sandy Schepis, all of Evergreen; Lee Hart of Kittredge, Matthew and JoNell How of Indian Hills; and Kathy Kay, Tom and Kathy Napp, and Joan Ridgely of Golden

Please join us at our chapter meetings, field trips and at the Evergreen Nature Center!
May 5 program will take you Birding in Brazil

At the May 5 EA chapter meeting, Bill Eden will transport you to the Christalino River in Brazil and its rainforest habitat, then to the largest freshwater wetlands in the world—the Pantanal.

His photographs will feature a sample of the 1,800 species of birds found in Brazil, such as the endangered Hyacinth Macaw, the Jabiru, Sunbittern and Green Ibis.

Bill also will discuss some of the mammals he saw, including White-whiskered Spider Monkey, Tapir, Giant Otters and Crab-eating Fox.

Bill enjoys photographing birds throughout the United States and internationally. His pursuit of birding and photographing birds, linked with a passion to travel, has taken him to countries including Ecuador, South Africa, Costa Rica, Australia, Belize and Trinidad.

At home, Bill enjoys creating a bird-friendly backyard complete with water features, feeding stations and a hummingbird garden.

Bill has displayed photos in local exhibits and has published them in the “Falcon Guide: Birding Colorado” by Hugh Kingery, Colorado Birds Quarterly, Birder’s World and Birds and Blooms.

Bill is retired from a career in public health. He is an Audubon Master Birder, a mentor in the Audubon of Greater Denver’s Master Birder Program, a CSU Master Gardener and a former board member of the Denver Field Ornithologists.

The chapter meeting will be Thursday, May 5, at 7 p.m. at Church of the Hills, 28628 Buffalo Park Road (across from Evergreen Library) in the downstairs Fellowship Hall.

Bear Creek Watershed Breeding Bird Atlas 2011

Spring is here! Time to get going on the fourth year of the Bear Creek Watershed Breeding Bird Atlas.

We have identified nine sites for 2011 and already have leaders for all the sites. If you would like to participate, please contact the folks below or me at birdmon@evergreenaudubon.org.

You can also always go out on your own—just please report your observations. Information on atlas procedures and progress to date can be found at www.bcwbba.org and annual reports are posted on the Bird Monitoring page.

Thanks to Iowan Ann Johnson for helping with the website and thanks to all past and present volunteers.

Bear Creek Greenbelt West, City of Lakewood
Mike Foster, mikel.foster@comcast.net

Corwina Park, Denver Mountain Park
Inga Brennan, missing35mm@mac.com

O’Fallon and Pence Parks, Denver Mountain Park
Sherman Wing, 303-324-9636

Mount Lindo, Jefferson County Open Space (Indian Hills)
Mike Henwood, Hawkhen@aol.com

Alderfer/Three Sisters Park, JeffCo Open Space
North section, Kay Niyo, Kay@KayNiyo.com, and Carmon Slater, windsreach@aol.com
South section, Karel Buckley, mesabirder@gmail.com

Elephant Butte, Denver Mountain Park
Brad Andres, heatherbrad1@yahoo.com, and Chuck Aid, caid@ecentral.com

Cub Creek Trail, Arapaho National Forest (Brook Forest Road)
Heather Johnson, johnsonheather97@yahoo.com

Mount Pence, Denver Mountain Park (Squaw Pass Road)
Chuck Aid, caid@ecentral.com

Squaw Pass Road National Forest Picnic Areas (Eagles Aerie, Cloudland, Juniper Pass, Warrior Mt.)
JoAnn and Bill Hackos, joann.hackos@comtech-serv.com
Weed season starts off with education outreach

Believe it or not, it is time to think WEEDS. The Community Weed Awareness Campaign has already started its education outreach, with a table at the Wal-Mart Garden Center grand opening and at the April Evergreen Garden Club meeting.

Committee members also staffed the Pulling for Colorado booth at the International Sportsman Expo and the Home and Garden Show.

We will be at the Earth Day Fair on April 23, followed by a weed program at the Nature Center on May 21.

The big event of the year, Community Weed Day, will be Saturday, June 25, at Evergreen Lake. Mark your calendars now so you can join us.

Our efforts have been recognized by the Colorado Weed Management Association’s Pulling for Colorado weed grant in the amount of $1,350.

These funds will be used for educational materials, volunteer recognition and advertising. Our focus will continue to be the impact of noxious weeds on natural habitats.

It is time to keep your eyes open for two of the early spring weeds, Downy Brome (Cheatgrass) and Myrtle Spurge. Both are already rearing their unwelcome heads in the foothills.

Downy Brome (Bromus tectorum) is called Cheatgrass because it emerges in early spring and “cheats” other native plants out of moisture. It is unpalatable to wildlife or livestock and since it matures and dries early, it is a fire hazard. Cheatgrass is an annual, so control is possible with perseverance.

Myrtle Spurge (Euphorbia myrsinites) is taking over many Jefferson County neighborhoods. Originally planted in subdivisions as a xeriscape plant, it has proven to be an aggressive noxious weed.

It exudes milky latex that causes burns and allergic reactions serious enough to require medical attention.

Myrtle Spurge can be hand-pulled but caution must be used to prevent contacting the sap. Protective eye-wear and nitrile gloves are recommended.

Be sure to revegetate weeded areas to help limit the return of these and other invaders.

For information on appropriate control methods for these weeds, contact your county weed manager. Contact names and phones numbers are available on the Evergreen Audubon website, www.evergreenaudubon.org under “Weeds.”

You also can contact the CWAC weed team at sheltonpublicaddress@hotmail.com. Keep on pulling.

- Cathy Shelton

### Bird Business

**Compiled from evergreenaudubon.org: Local Sightings**

#### Sightings reported on the EA website were very sparse for the beginning of spring. Keep those reports coming at www.evergreenaudubon.org!

On March 27 at 7:30 p.m., Jonelle Balais heard a Northern Saw-whet Owl in Witter Gulch before fog rolled in. Pine Siskins, Evening Grosbeaks and Pygmy Nuthatches were still at her feeder.

Jonelle saw two Band-tailed Pigeons at her feeder on April 7.

Sherman Wing spotted a Turkey Vulture soaring above Independence Mountain around noon April 9.

Not quite local but worthy of noting, a Neotropic Cormorant was reported at Cherry Creek State Park on April 8. It was still present April 11 about noon, according to Dick Prickett.

This is an uncommon visitor to Colorado with about 20 reports in the past 30 years.

#### Pine Siskin. Photo by Sherman Wing
Alyson Duffey comes to her new job as executive director of Evergreen Nature Center with a degree in environmental studies and a work background that includes fundraising, event planning and management of volunteers.

Alyson grew up in Buffalo, NY, and received an Environmental Studies degree from State University of New York at Buffalo In 2001. She headed to Boulder in 2002, earning a master’s in Environmental Leadership from Naropa University in 2006.

She saw the Nature Center job posting online and thought, “That sounds perfect.”

“I got excited right away,” she added.

Alyson has many ideas for the Nature Center and is looking at creating summer natural science camps at the Nature Center for kids ages 3 to 15.

“I’d like to try running some ecology classes for kids this summer and I’m starting the process by looking into childcare licensing,” she said.

She’d also like to do programs in local schools and have kids visit the Nature Center on field trips as part of a more consistent program of involvement with the schools and to help classrooms fulfill learning standards.

“I’d like to emphasize environmental education because I’d really like to see the Nature Center as the hub in the community for nature-based programming,” Alyson said.

“First we need to set some program structure and then start advertising—perhaps sending postcards to certain demographics, such as families with kids.”

However, “We need to boost fund-raising and income for a more solid budget.”

Word of mouth is the biggest form of advertising, she said, chuckling when asked if she would be utilizing social media. But of course.

The ENC Facebook page will prove valuable when updated regularly and it will be linked to Twitter.

Even before Alyson earned her master’s degree, she started working as the director of the Thorne Natural Science School in Boulder. She became executive director of the Thorne Ecological Institute in 2007 and remained in the position until early 2010.

She recently returned to Colorado from Georgia and had been searching for a job in her field—environmental nonprofits and environmental education—when she spotted the Evergreen Audubon job.

Alyson has no doubt that the Nature Center can grow in terms of fundraising and serving the public.

Nature Center volunteers have carried the day since the program was established three years ago, and Alyson can’t wait to meet them and explore their talents.

“I would like to see if they’re happy with what they’re doing and how they might be happier,” she said. She envisions involving volunteers in projects such as developing interpretive signs or other ways to capture visitors when they’re walking at the lake.

Alyson is a birder who loves learning about the ecology of different areas.

“When I’m out hiking I always have a pocket field guide so when I come across a wildflower or tree I know what it is,” she said.

She is enthusiastic about wildlife tracking, backpacking, organic gardening and yoga, for which she is training to be a teacher. “Maybe we can do yoga at the Nature Center or offer free yoga for volunteers,” she speculated.

“A passion of mine is connecting with people, even if it’s just walking down the street—eye contact or a smile, I think that’s huge. There’s so much enrichment and value in connecting one-on-one with people—so much value in learning from others.”

Alyson currently lives in Lafayette, but is considering a move to the mountain area. Everyone is encouraged to drop by the Nature Center to meet her.

- Debbie Marshall

May Day will be huge at the lake, Nature Center

Continued from page 1

the country are hosting birding celebrations. This year, Evergreen Audubon has planned a day of fun activities for both adults and children.

To kick off the event, Dr. Brad Andres will lead a Birding by Ear field trip at 10 a.m., starting at the Nature Center. Prior signup is not required, but recommended.

Some of the other activities going on throughout the day include a bird banding demonstration; bird viewing with spotting scopes and binoculars; kids crafts and activities, including clay bird and nest sculpting; and many beautiful bird mounts of local birds as well as rare birds from around the world—a special exhibit just for the day.

We also need volunteers to help for the day!

RSVP for May 1 Events

We encourage all of you to RSVP for the events listed above. If you plan to come to Dawn Chorus, the Volunteer Recognition Breakfast or IMBD—or if you would like to volunteer for the events, please contact Heather Johnson by e-mail at atlarge1@evergreenaudubon.org.

- Heather Johnson

www.evergreenaudubon.org
Red Rocks Park
March 26
Birding in March isn’t like birding in the winter, but it ain’t like spring either. Eleven birders got together for a lot of camaraderie and a few good birds.

We started the morning birding behind the Trading Post and saw the Curved-billed Thrasher and the White-throated Sparrow, both uncommon birds in this area. We had the sun on our backs for the morning viewing, and that felt great.

Highlights of the day were all about falcons.

The American Kestrels are year-round residents, but now with breeding plumage they are spectacular. Most of us saw these small falcons as we entered the park.

A pair of Peregrine Falcons was seen perched and soaring on the cliffs. They entered the cavity where they have nested for the past several years; hopefully they will nest here again this season.

On the cliffs farther east, Prairie Falcons were seen mating. After copulating, the male flew off but the female remained on a ledge where we assume a nest exists. Our walking trail took us just below the bird,; she watched but never left as we walked past her.

We saw a total of 26 species today. We ended the morning with hot beverages and snacks, sitting in the sun and getting reacquainted with old friends, and meeting new ones.

- Sherman Wing

Barr Lake (including ponds on I-76)
April 9
This trip was a great success despite the heavy fog. JoAnn and Bill Hackos led a group that included David Wald, Karel Buckley, Peggy Linn, Ron Belak and Ed Furlong.

As soon as we got out of the cars on a chilly morning, a pair of Prairie Falcons flew right overhead.

The lake was full of ducks, with large numbers of American Shovelers, Gadwalls, Coots, Mallards and Buffleheads and smaller numbers of Green-winged Teal, American Wigeon, Cinnamon Teal and Lesser Scaup.

The ducks lifted off when the immature Bald Eagles flew overhead. We watched one of the eagles circling down toward the ducks, only to gracefully nab a fish and fly off to enjoy its catch.

We found the Great Horned Owl nest with one adult visible and the Barn Owl box with a barely visible owl inside.

While we were balancing on wood chips and trying to stay out of the water on flooded lake edges, David Wald sighted male and female Wood Ducks, a beautiful conclusion to the morning.

- JoAnn Hackos
Backyard Weeds  
Evergreen Nature Center  
Saturday, May 21, 10 am–noon  
Cathy Shelton

Spring presents unique challenges to weeders since plants are early in their growth and can be difficult to identify. But spring often is the best time to control emergent plants.

Join us for an indoor presentation about the noxious weeds found in our backyards, followed by a field trip around Evergreen Lake to identify weeds and native plants and discuss control methods. Bring garden gloves in case we want to pull a few of the bad guys. The program will be held regardless of weather.


Colorado Wildflowers  
Evergreen Nature Center  
Sunday, May 22, 1-3 pm  
Pam Little

Walk with a Native Plant Master and discover native plants’ importance to wildlife and humans.

All programs will be easy, less than a mile walking, on dirt trails with uneven surfaces. Wear sturdy shoes and layered clothing for all weather conditions.


O’Fallon Park  
Saturday, May 28, 8 am  
Susan Harper and Sherman Wing

Discover springtime in the Rockies. Every year at O’Fallon we are surprised by the variety of bird life.

This moderate three-mile loop trail will take us along a riparian corridor where we might see nesting American Dippers. As we head up through a ponderosa forest, we will see and hear many of the early spring migrants.

We will look for nesting birds in the aspen groves; last year we found Red-naped Sapsucker, White-breasted Nuthatches and Violet-green Swallows all nesting here. This truly is one of the prettiest trails in our foothills.

Let’s meet at the park near the stone bridge. Expect changeable weather, so dress in layers and don’t forget your hat. Bring your binoculars, some snacks and water.

This half-day field trip will conclude around 1 p.m. and for those who are interested, we will lunch together afterward at the Bear Creek Tavern.

Please contact Susan Harper or Sherman Wing if you are planning to come, email preferred. Sherman: sherman.marlie@prodigy.net or call his cell at 303-324-9636. Susan: sharper74@msn.com.

Diamonds in the Sky  
Grass in front of  
Evergreen Lake House  
Saturday, May 28 8:30 pm  
Pam Little

Join amateur astronomer Pam Little for a tour of the night sky. Locate the Queen that hangs upside down in her throne.

Find the guardian of the northern star. Listen to these star stories and many more. Make a star clock like the ones ancient travelers and sailors used.

Bring a blanket or camp chairs.


Mouncey Ranch, Edwards  
Saturday-Sunday, July 23-24  
Susan Harper and Sherman Wing

Evergreen Audubon members have a very special opportunity to spend a weekend birding at a private ranch outside the town of Edwards, west of Vail.

Diana Donovan, daughter of founding EA members Bill and Louise Mounsey, has invited Evergreen Auduboners to her private ranch for a weekend getaway July 23 and 24. Friday evening, July 22, is open for arrivals as well.

There will be a potluck dinner Saturday, with EA founder Sylvia Brockner as our campfire speaker.

The ranch house is a restored 100-year-old cabin without electricity or running water. Participants may choose to camp at the ranch or stay in town at a local hotel. Smaller RVs, trailers and tents are welcome; however, there are no water, electricity or sewer hookups.

The ranch has lots of hummingbirds, bluebirds, hawks and great wildflowers. Participants can walk, sit, relax or whatever. Short trips will be planned.

There is a nature center nearby in Vail. Bald Eagles overlook public fishing areas that are available nearby on the Eagle River. There is a lot to do and see in a very special setting. Views of beautiful wildflowers await about a 45-minute car drive away on Shrine Pass.

Lodging suggestions for those not camping:

• Many motel options in Eagle, which is a 20-minute drive to the west along the Eagle River.
• Christy Lodge in Avon is a 15-minute drive. Call 970-926-0606.
• Tivoli Lodge in Vail is a very nice lodge half an hour away. Call 970-476-5615.

This is a trip for Audubon members only, so if you are not an Evergreen member, now is the time to join!

Please call Louise or Bill Mounsey, 303-674-4695, for further information and to reserve a spot. This field trip is expected to fill quickly.

www.evergreenaudubon.org

Participants in the May 28 field trip to O’Fallon Park may see Violet-green Swallows nesting there. Photo by Sherman Wing
IN THIS ISSUE

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Birding in Brazil Program
Weed Season Underway

Artwork: Sylvia Brockner, Mildred Keiser

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED
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May 1 Earth Day Fair 10 AM–4 PM Evergreen Lake House
May 1 Dawn Chorus 5:30 AM Evergreen Lake
May 1 Volunteer Breakfast 8:30 AM Nature Center
May 1 Migratory Bird Day 10 AM–4 PM Nature Center
May 5 Chapter Meeting 7 PM Church of the Hills
May 10 Newsletter deadline 5 PM
May 21 Backyard Weeds 10 AM Nature Center
May 22 Colorado Wildflowers 1–3 PM Nature Center
May 26 EA Board Meeting 6 PM
May 28 O’FALLON PARK FIELD TRIP 8 AM–1 PM Meet at park
May 28 Diamonds in the Sky 8:30 PM Evergreen Lake House

Please submit newsletter content by the 10th of the month to Lisa Wald: communications@evergreenaudubon.org. Email or call Dipper editor Debbie Marshall with questions or comments: marshallpublish@gmail.com, 303-674-3752.

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

I DO NOT want solicitations from National Audubon.

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