EXPLORE MORE!
Outdoor Challenge award party moved up to Sunday, Sept. 13, 4–6 p.m.
Congratulations, Explorers! The first annual Explore More: Outdoor Challenge ends Sept. 7.
Make sure to submit your journals or challenge summary tables (sent via email) by Sept. 7!
Awards and badges for all challenges and levels will be given at the party on Sept. 13. Enjoy crafts, games, snacks and friends!
The party was originally scheduled for Sept. 26, but we’ve moved it up in order to celebrate closer to the competition culmination.

WREATH FUNDRAISER
Need the perfect holiday gift? Evergreen Audubon has balsam fir holiday wreaths for sale.
We’re offering three different types of 25-inch wreaths available for in-town pickup and four for out-of-town delivery. Pictures and pricing will be posted soon at www.EvergreenAudubon.org.
To place an order, call Marilyn Rhodes at 303-674-9895 or email her at cloverlane@aol.com. Orders are due by Oct. 29.
Payment, by cash or check, for in-town wreaths is due at pickup and for out-of-town wreaths at time of order. The wreaths should be delivered just before Thanksgiving.
Please support Evergreen Audubon and get ready for the holidays now!
- Marilyn Rhodes

Squirrels—our chattering neighbors

Many Audubon members are avid birders, and many of our programs have focused on birds. Broadening the view of our Evergreen world, our September chapter meeting will focus on two native tree squirrels in the Evergreen area: Abert’s and pine.
Their different habitats, diets, behaviors and appearances will be highlighted. Photographs will make it easier to learn to quickly spot and identify these species.
The program also will cover typical questions about these and other small rodents that live in the foothills, and with which we come into contact in our yards and gardens, and out hiking and walking.
The chapter meeting will be Thursday, Sept. 3, at Church of the Hills. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for socializing before we begin our program at 7 p.m.
Pine squirrels, often called red squirrels

Mounseys honored at Hiwan Homestead

On July 25, a decade-long project came to fruition. “Flowers for a Friend” was unveiled at Hiwan Homestead Museum to the friends and family of Bill and Louise Mounsey.
A container of pink Sweet William was placed next to the sculpture in memory of the late Bill Mounsey.
The sculpture and garden is a beautiful and fitting tribute to Bill and Louise for their 50-plus years of community service.
Founding members of both Evergreen Audubon and Evergreen Garden Club, they contributed to building a greener, wiser, more lovely Evergreen.
The “Flowers for a Friend” bronze sculpture was donated to the Jefferson County Historical Society by the Flowers for a Friend Committee: Sandy Swan, Pam Hinish, Tina Kellogg, John Ellis, Louise Mounsey and artist Ken Ball.
EA and Evergreen Garden Club were major contributors to the effort.
- Marilyn Rhodes

Pine squirrel. Photo by Allan & Shirley Casey

Pine squirrel, often called red squirrels

Continued on page 3

Louise Mounsey at unveiling of “Flowers for a Friend.” Photo by Marilyn Rhodes
**President's Message**

I hope you have already gotten your ticket for our annual Evergreen Nature Center Bash. If you have been remiss, it is not too late to join your Audubon friends to help secure the future of the Nature Center.

Please consider joining us on Friday, Aug. 28, at Hiwan Country Club. Details are on our website (www.evergreenaudubon.org). We will provide musical entertainment and the usual silent and live auction events.

Just prior to the Bash, Evergreen Nature Center Executive Director Vanessa Hayes and I will be giving a presentation to the Evergreen Park and Recreation District board of directors on the accomplishments at Evergreen Nature Center. We plan to share highlights of the 2014 season and discuss the financial role Audubon plays in providing this service to the community.

We need to renew the agreement we have with EPRD for use of the Warming Hut, and the presentation is the first step in the process. We hope to agree on a five-year, or perhaps 10-year, renewal.

On Sunday, Sept. 6, we will celebrate the second annual World Shorebird Day. Plan on meeting me at 7 a.m. at the Bergen Park Park-n-Ride to head east to search for migrant shorebirds.

Early September is a good time for a diversity of shorebird species on the Eastern Plains. Last year, a few of us found 19 shorebird species in a 24-hour period. The exact location of the trip will depend on specific reservoir water levels.

Plan on a full day and be prepared for sun. Common migrants that you may not be used to observing include Wilson’s Phalaropes, Baird’s and Stilt sandpipers, and Semipalmated Plovers. We will of course look for all species, but will be focused on wetlands and water birds. An exciting find last year was a first-year Sabine’s Gull.

I hope you can join us. Please let me know if you plan to go.

---

**Nature Club sponsors concert**

The Evergreen community was treated to a very special evening concert on Aug. 7 at The Place on Meadow Drive.

The venue was intimate and comfortable with soft lighting and deep, comfortable couches. An artistically inspired slide show of kids in nature made a beautiful backdrop for Beth Woods, an award-winning singer/songwriter from Texas, to entertain and inspire an enthusiastic audience.

Jenna Audlin, founder of the Nature Club at Evergreen Nature Center with help from her mom and dad, Mendhi and Shawn Audlin, was instrumental in bringing Beth to town for a special concert to benefit the Nature Center.

You see, they go way back. Beth is her mom’s cousin and happened to be in the state for a singer/songwriters workshop. A lifetime nature enthusiast and birder herself, Beth was enthusiastically on board with the idea.

Interlaced with her beautiful songs were fun and entertaining stories and anecdotes about her experiences in Colorado and her love of nature. Delicious homemade treats, beverages and a great place to connect with friends enhanced a very enjoyable evening of music.

Special thanks to Cactus Jack’s and Evergreen Discount Liquors for their contributions to making the evening a success. Thanks also to Beth, Jenna and her family, the Nature Club has a great start on next year’s program!

- Ann Dodson, Director of Development
Squirrels—our chattering, tree-dwelling neighbors

Continued from page 1

in the Midwest, are widely distributed in coniferous forests from the East Coast to Alaska.

Highly territorial and vocal, pine squirrels tend to have grayish coats with a light underside and a distinctive white ring around their eyes.

Abert’s squirrels are larger with longer ears and hair tuffs that make their ears look even longer, especially in winter. In other parts of the Abert’s squirrel range, the silver and white or other colors are more common.

We are truly fortunate to have Allan and Shirley Casey presenting this program on squirrels.

They have been avid students of squirrels since 1986, when they obtained their first state wildlife rehabilitation licenses for small mammals.

They have rehabilitated more than 25 species of small rodents—mostly squirrels, including several day-old Abert’s and pine squirrels. They have published widely on wildlife and rehabilitation topics, including a book on rehabilitating squirrels that has been sold around the world.

They have conducted training and consulted on rehabilitation topics and wildlife issues. They co-founded Wild-Again Wildlife Rehabilitation in 1993 (www.ewildagain.org).

The Caseys are active with many wildlife and conservation organizations. Allan is on the board of directors of the Mountain Area Land Trust.

He also was instrumental in local bond elections supporting local parks and served on the Evergreen Parks and Recreation District board of directors from 2006 to 2010.

As rec board president, he helped secure Audubon’s seasonal home at Evergreen Lake.

- Ed Furlong
Director of Education

Silver-colored Abert’s squirrel. Photo by Allan & Shirley Casey

“Flowers for a Friend” honors the many local contributions of Louise and Bill Mounsey. It was unveiled at Hiwan Homestead Museum on Meadow Drive in Evergreen on July 25. See story on page 1. Photo by Marilyn Rhodes
Evergreen

On July 16, Rachel Hutchison shared, “Saw my first Calliope Hummingbird of the season today at my feeder.”

Dale Glover reported a Bald Eagle at Evergreen Lake on Aug. 2, “This eagle has been on the north side of the lake on the hillside most of the afternoon.”

Carol Chapman had a colorful visitor Aug. 7. “This morning at my millet feeder I had my first Lazuli Bunting of the season.” She lives off of North Turkey Creek.

JoAnn and Bill Hackos had Band-tailed Pigeons at their feeders again last month. Sure do wish they’d stick around long enough for their friends to get a look at them, too.

House Wrens

There was a lot of chatter about House Wrens on Cobirds in July. Many birders reported an increase in nesting wrens and wren fatalities.

As the breeding wrens increase, they compete with one another and other species and often kill nestlings that threaten their food source. Some wondered if the increase might be due to the unusually cold and rainy May we had this year.

House Wrens breed in my yard annually but this year I have found at least four nests, which is very unusual.

Hummingbirds

During the last month, Allan and Shirley Casey have photographed three species of hummingbirds at their home: Broad-tailed, Rufous and Calliope, and their observations led them to a Broad-tailed Hummingbird nest in their yard.

They were able to photograph the growing nestlings from a good vantage point, producing some excellent images.

They were so pleased with the shots they got, they entered several of them in Cornell Lab’s “Home Tweet Home” photo contest.

Submissions had to be of the nesting cycle, Beautiful Eggs, Best Nest, Cutest Baby or Feeding Time.

I’m pleased to report that Allan won honorable mention and said, “Thanks to all of you that voted. Not bad for a first-time entry in a national competition, especially at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology!”

The contest was part of Cornell’s nest-watch program.

Spotted Sandpiper Family at Evergreen Lake

Mary Geder posted on the Denver Field Ornithologists Facebook page July 29: “Had some birder relatives in town from the East. Due to the heat, spent most time in the mountains with the usual bird suspects.

One highlight was the Spotted Sandpiper chick at Evergreen Lake. Those guys are a 10-plus on the cuteness scale. Even on those tiny toothpick legs, he was already tail bobbing.”

Warren Roske replied the same day, “I have not seen the chick. This week I have had four adults on the sandbar. With the debris on that sandbar, I could have missed a small chick.”

Continued on page 5
On Aug. 1, Warren hit the jackpot! “At Evergreen Lake this morning there were three chicks visible only for a few seconds moving in and out of grass.

“To my knowledge the chick reported last week and the three this morning are the first ones reported in the 12 years I have been monitoring the lake.”

Echo Lake

Barrow’s Goldeneye have nested at Echo Lake for several years now. I first attempted to locate them this summer on July 11 with no luck.

The female must’ve been sitting on eggs. I returned to the lake on July 18 and found the female parading six tiny ducklings through the water.

On Aug. 8, all six ducklings were still alive and well, per a Cobirds report.

I was able to photograph five of the six ducklings with the hen. The sixth duckling just would not cooperate!

On July 31, Brad Andres posted, “After spending a few hours on Squaw Mountain this morning, I went to Echo Lake to check out the Barrow’s Goldeneye and stumbled across a small group of passerine migrants that included Lark Sparrows and a Townsend’s Warbler.”

Thousands of Bluet Damselflies

I photographed these blue jewels July 11 at Echo Lake. There were hundreds, thousands really, of Bluet Damselflies decorating and mating in the shrubs, trees and on the rocks.

Based on the pattern on the abdomen, these could be Northern Bluet or Boreal Blues. According to Dennis Paulson’s book, Northern and Boreal are impossible to tell apart without having them in hand and using a magnifier to look at their appendages.

Familiar Bluet apparently is also really hard to distinguish from those two, but may be possible with a close-up shot of the appendages. Since I’m not a damselfly expert, yet, I’ll just call these a species of Blues.

Cordilleran Flycatchers

I first observed Cordilleran Flycatchers at Echo Lake this year on July 11, actively feeding on the horde of Bluet Damselflies present.

The next weekend, on July 18, I discovered their nest under the eaves of the old pavilion in the picnic grounds.

Wild Evergreen

Rocky Mountain Elk—The Rut excerpted from the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation website

As August draws to a close, shortening days, cooling temperatures, and snow in the high country all signal the start of the rut (elk mating season).

Elk begin moving to lower elevations. Mature bulls move in among a group of cows and calves. These groups, called harems, are the scene of constant action from September through October, and sometimes through November.

During the rut, small herds of elk are frequently seen at Evergreen Lake and roaming the golf course. If you’ve never experienced the height of the rut, I hope you’ll have the opportunity to this year.

The elk are functioning at fever pitch during the rut, though, so please be safe and keep your distance.

A harem is usually smaller than the large cow/calf herds of summer and lacks the male yearlings.

These adolescent males are usually driven off by the mature bulls or by cows intolerant of their presence.

By September, a bull’s antlers are fully grown and almost ready for the displays and battles to come.

The biggest bulls are animals in prime physical condition and may be 6 to 8 years old. Younger bulls may try to butt in—they are physically able to breed by their second summer—but they seldom get a chance to mate.

When the rut begins, bulls begin to bugle. The sounds they make are among the more haunting and beautiful in nature, as memorable as the howls of wolves and the calls of loons.

Harems disband when the rut ends. Cows regroup, and bulls of all ages may gather in bachelor groups. Both sexes eat as much as they can in preparation for the coming winter, a time of sparse food.

Elk will stay on their summer range as long as possible because the food is much more nutritious than what they will find on their winter range.

For more details on elk behavior, visit www.rmef.org.
Third Saturday Bird Walk reveals birding bonanza

Five people enjoyed Evergreen Audubon’s Third-Saturday Bird Walk to the Bergen Peak State Wildlife Area on July 19. Chuck Aid led the walk and provided a report:

We were fortunate to be there on a very “birdy” morning in which numerous recently fledged birds were clamoring to be fed, and there was good diversity.

Among the highlights were a couple of juvenile male Hairy Woodpeckers with extensive red on their crowns, numerous Green-tailed Towhees singing, and a couple of male Black-headed Grosbeaks cavorting in some aspen.

The major highlight, bird-wise, was the male Virginia’s Warbler that we were able to watch for over five minutes gathering little caterpillars from the upper branches of a Douglas Fir.

These were then taken to feed its hidden young, after which it returned to the same tree and started all over again.

As Virginia’s Warblers breed predominately in the scrub habitats of the lower foothills, it was a real treat to see one of these often difficult-to-see birds and to confirm it was raising young at 8,100 feet.

It goes without saying that the wildflowers were stupendous. The Gaillardia are world-class this year.

Gaillardia were world class on Bergen Peak Bird Walk. Photo by Marilyn Rhodes

Register online for Third-Saturday walks

Chuck Aid’s Third-Saturday Bird Walks are becoming so popular he may consider adding a weekday walk as well.

The Sept. 19 walk will be in a foothills Denver Mountain Park that shall remain nameless.

Registered participants will meet at Evergreen Library at 7:30 a.m. to consolidate into as few cars as possible and then drive to the park. The walk usually wraps up around noon.

The walks are for Evergreen Audubon members and their guests. Non-members won’t be turned away, but will be encouraged to join Evergreen Audubon.

To ensure the best experience for all, the number of participants will be limited. To register, visit EvergreenAudubon.org/?page_id=3379&ee=245.

In the past, Chuck asked those wishing to participate to call or email him. From now on, he’d like you reserve your spot online.

Evergreen Audubon and Evergreen Nature Center

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

Sept. 10, 2015, 6-9 pm

Have you served 12+ hours with EA and/or ENC in 2015?

YOU’RE INVITED!

Evergreen Audubon wants to celebrate the hard-working volunteers that make our organization possible. Join us for games, drinks, food and fun! Electronic invitations have gone out to all qualifying volunteers, so please let us know if you have not received yours!
Most of us know the albatross from Coleridge’s “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,” which tells the story of the unfortunate seaman who kills an albatross, only to be burdened with it around his neck as a punishment.

The albatross, if killed, according to seafaring legend, could still the winds and becalm the ship.

Carl Safina, the inaugural holder of the endowed chair for nature and humanity at Stony Brook University, recounts the journey of a Laysan Albatross named Amelia as she works hard to find food for her chick in a world increasingly hostile to these remarkable, long-lived birds.

Albatrosses, we learn, are the “greatest long-distance wanderers on Earth.” Their wings allow them to float rather than fly.

On our Aleutian Island birding trip in 2014, we saw many Laysan Albatrosses, perhaps Amelia among them, hunting for squid and fish along the deep water bordering the Pacific Plate where it meets the Bering Sea.

We also saw two other north Pacific species, the Black-footed and the very rare Short-tailed albatrosses. It was our experience with these amazing fliers that led me to Safina’s book.

“A total never seen one flap a wing! In fact, they have an amazing wing lock at the shoulder and an elbow lock that they snap into place, enabling them to use up no energy keep their wings out.

Scientists tell us that a Wandering Albatross’s heart “beats slower during flight than while sitting on the sea.”

Albatrosses rarely come to land; they spend 95 percent of their lives flying at sea. They cover immense distances. Safina reports that a 50-year-old albatross has flown, at minimum, 3.7 million miles. That’s nearly a million miles farther than my 2.8 million miles on United.

That’s nearly a million miles farther than my 2.8 million miles on United.

Most of Safina’s albatross study takes place on an atoll called French Frigate Shoals, which lies about 500 miles northwest of Honolulu, the northernmost edge of the Hawaiian Islands.

A group of scientists live and work on Tern Island, where there is an old World War II airstrip. The atoll is a breeding ground for Laysan and Black-footed Albatrosses, along with Masked Boobies, and the scientists follow her journeys seeking food for her chick and herself.

She travels north to the Aleutians and west nearly as far as Japan. In her first four trips since her egg hatched, she covers 506, 199, 917 and 2,388 miles.

“Eye of the Albatross” is a fascinating, compelling account not only of Amelia’s epic flights, but of the scientists who band the birds and study the endangered Hawaiian Monk Seals and the Steller’s Sea Lions.

Safina recounts both history and biology in his account of the albatross and many other seabirds he encounters. We even follow him on a dip into the shark-infested lagoon.

We meet the biologist and his student assistants and learn about their dedication to improving the breeding success of the birds they work with. They work on removing sandburs, an alien grass that repels birds. Their living conditions are extremely primitive, but they are fully dedicated to restoring and protecting the breeding colonies.

You will find Safina’s story both fascinating and disturbing. He tells of the human thoughtlessness that dooms so many of the birds. The trash piles are immense, collecting from the ocean everything we discard.

Unfortunately, too much of the trash ends up killing the chicks. And, you learn that dumping plastics into the ocean has been illegal since the early 1990s.

You also learn about the effects of changing weather conditions, with many more El Niño years since the late 1970s. Warm water decreases the numbers of fish and other prey. As a result, the albatrosses and other seabirds abandon their nests because they cannot find enough to feed their chicks.

As you follow Amelia’s flights, you will grow concerned, as I did, that she will not survive and not find enough food for her growing chick. When the chick finally fledges, learning to fly on its fantastic wings, you’ll want to cheer.

“Eye of the Albatross” is a personal and fascinating account of an amazing bird and a stunning endangered habitat. You will find yourself rooting for Amelia and impressed by the dedication of the scientists and caretakers.
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 _________________________________________________

Family member(s) name(s) ________________________________

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 CYZD090Z and call 1-800-274-4201.

Printed on recycled paper

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Audubon Rockies Office, Rockies.Audubon.org

Artwork: Sylvia Brockner, Mildred Keiser

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