



On The Wing

Volume 35, Number 3

Boulder County Audubon Society Newsletter

May 2005

Birdathon 2005!

Lead, Join, or Support a Team

The 2005 Birdathon fundraiser for BCAS will be unusual in ways that we hope will be inviting to many chapter members. For the first time, we offer a spectrum of ways to participate. Team leaders who have volunteered so far are listed below, with contact information if they are looking for additional members.

Full-day teams (May 21 or 22 only):

Full-day teams have a full 24 hours to tour Boulder County and count as many different species as possible. These teams will follow the traditional birdathon rules.
Randy Siebert – (bcas.birdathon@prodigy.net).
Wayne & Diana Johnston
Marlene (& Cliff) Bruning

Short-day teams (several dates)

Short day teams are limited to 8 hours for their species counts.

Linda Andes-Georges – (303.772.3239)
George Oetzel – (otw@boulderaudubon.org).

Breeding bird count teams (June)

The breeding bird teams have a different objective—identifying birds that are breeding in Boulder County, usually in locations that are rarely easy to access by the public. Not a species tally in the birdathon sense, but they may find quite a few species in a day of looking for nesters. (Note the team names.)

Steve Jones – Bushtwits (303-494-2468, or
Stephen.Jones@EarthLink.net)
Linda Georges – Piptwits (303.772.3239)

We thank former Birdathon organizer Bill Kaempfer, and especially this year's chief, Randy Siebert, for their creative ideas and early communication with the bird-minded community. Please email Randy at bcas.birdathon@prodigy.net, or call Linda Andes-Georges at 303.772.3239 to join a team, or to volunteer as a team leader.

You are welcome to pledge to any team with the form on page 11, or by making a secure on-line donation on the BCAS Web site <www.boulderaudubon.org>. Funds will be used to renew Audubon's school program, to support the local Audubon at Home backyard habitat restoration program, and for chapter support of a local Important Bird Area, to be chosen soon by the Board.



Audubon's 100th Anniversary Event Colorado Audubon and BCAS Friday, May 13, 7:30 PM

On Ancient Wings: the Sandhill Cranes of North America

Join us in celebrating the 100th anniversary of the National Audubon Society with acclaimed photographer Michael Forsberg. Michael's lyrical sight and sound presentation tracks the migration and nesting ecology of sandhill cranes, from Alaska's Yukon Delta to Cuba's Isle of Youth. Michael has been photographing cranes for 15 years, and his crane and prairie images have appeared in *National Geographic*, *Audubon*, *Natural History*, *National Wildlife*, and on a commemorative U.S. postage stamp. Copies of Michael's book will be available for purchase and signing after the program.

The celebration will be at our usual venue, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Boulder, 5001 Pennsylvania Ave. (off 55th St. between Arapahoe and Baseline). There will be special refreshments and a book raffle.

More Programs

See page 3 for the 4th Tuesday program May 24 and a special program Thursday, June 23.

Noxious weeds: What are they? Why should we care?

(Excerpt reprinted by permission from Colorado Weed Management Association, <http://www.cwma.org/>)

Non-native and Unchallenged

What distinguishes noxious weeds from other plants is that they are not native to the United States. They grow unchecked by natural predators and enemies such as insects or diseases. In their native environment, these forces prevent the plant from becoming a problem.



Yellow Toadflax
www.cwma.org

How Noxious Weeds Spread

Noxious weeds become established in soils disturbed by a variety of activities including but not limited to: construction, motorized vehicles, road maintenance, recreation, improper livestock grazing, and natural disturbances such as fire. Noxious weed seeds are transported to new sites in numerous ways such as wind, water, tires, people, as well as wild and domestic animals.

Environmental Impacts From Noxious Weeds

Biodiversity and ecosystem stability are threatened by noxious weeds. A common characteristic of all noxious weeds is their aggressive, competitive behavior. Typically, they steal precious moisture, nutrients, and sunlight from the surrounding plants. Noxious weeds also alter soil properties, the composition of plant communities, and change the structure of animal communities.

A Threat to Our Native Vegetation

Native plant species are being displaced by the invasion of noxious weeds. Of the 3,000 native species of plants in Colorado, 500 or almost 17% have already been displaced by noxious weeds. Once established, noxious weeds have a tremendous capacity to invade adjacent undisturbed native plant communities. This is particularly true in drier regions at lower elevations. These areas most closely resemble the conditions in Eurasia where many noxious weeds evolved.

Noxious Weeds Impact Our Enjoyment of the Land

Colorado, like the rest of the West, is blessed with a great diversity of plant communities. The variety of vegetation on the landscapes in our state is a key reason why we choose to live and recreate here. Noxious weeds negatively impact recreational activities in parks, refuges, forests, lake shores, grasslands, and other natural areas.

Integrated Weed Management is the Solution

The purpose of integrated weed management is to achieve healthy and productive natural and agricultural ecosystems through a balanced program. This program would include education, prevention measures, good stewardship and cultural, physical, biological and chemical controls.

Coloradoans Can Learn From Others

Tremendous economic and ecologic impacts from noxious weeds have already been realized in several western states. Coloradoans have a unique opportunity to prevent new infestations while aggressively managing existing problems to reduce and prevent the loss of thousands of acres in Colorado.

Boulder County Audubon Society

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- Acting Vice President
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- Wildlife Inventory
Alex and Gillian Brown (303)494-3042

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Boulder County Audubon Society.

On the Wing is published five times annually: Sept, Nov, Jan, March, and May.

Next issue:

Deadline for materials for the Sept 2005 issue is **Tue, Aug 23**. Email address for submissions:

otw@boulderaudubon.org

On the Wing

in color PDF format
www.boulderaudubon.org

Available before you receive your copy in the mail.

Paperless option available:
Email notification if desired.

BCAS 4th Tuesday Program Series

Tuesday, May 24, 7:30 PM

Nest Site Selection by Swainson's Hawks

Blake Schmidt

Each spring, nearly the entire population of Swainson's hawks (*Buteo swainsoni*) travels some 10,000 km from Argentinean "wintering" grounds to nest in the scattered trees of western North American grasslands, shrublands, and agricultural landscapes. These breeding habitats, however, are among the most threatened and degraded environments in North America. Blake Schmidt has recently completed his master's research on nest site selection and nesting success of Swainson's hawks along Colorado's northern Front Range. His results may surprise you. [BCAS election night also]

Unitarian Universalist Church, 5001 Pennsylvania Avenue, Boulder (off 55th St. between Arapahoe and Baseline)



Swainson's Hawks, Bill Schmoker, www.schmoker.org

June Program Thursday, June 23

Noxious Weeds in Boulder County

Susan Fernald will speak on noxious weeds and their threats to birds and other wildlife. She will show photographs of Boulder County's invasives and discuss what can be done by people like us who care about wildlife. Susan volunteers on Gold Hill's Invasive Weed Committee, is a Colorado Master Gardener, and mega-buyer of supermarket coupons from Boulder County Audubon Society.

Note the date and location!

Thursday, June 23, 7:30 PM

George Reynolds Branch library community room, 3595 Table Mesa Drive (2 blocks west of Broadway opposite King Soopers). Jointly sponsored with Boulder County Nature Association.

Wes Sear's Memorial Garden Work-day Event

Join us in creating an Audubon wildlife memorial garden in honor of Wes Sear. Any member is welcome to join us, May 12 and 13, any time from 8:00 AM till dark, to do some planting at the Unitarian Universalist Church (where our program meetings are held). Please bring a digging tool and gloves to wear.

Grant Applications Submitted for Support of BCAS Programs

Susie Mottashed spearheaded applications for grants from the Scientific & Cultural Facilities District (SCFD) and the Lauren Townsend Memorial Scholarship/Wildlife Fund. If the applications are successful, we plan to use the funds to reach out once again to elementary and middle school children with the Audubon Adventures Kits and to conduct Audubon-at-Home (AAH) "Wildscaping in Boulder County" workshops.



BCAS had an excellent school outreach program for several years, until the education chairperson left BCAS. With these grants, and with Susie as the new Education Chair, we hope to rebuild the program.

The AAH workshops, inspired and conducted by Connie Holsinger, will teach homeowners, in easy steps, backyard stewardship known as wildscaping. This will enable even those who may not have green thumbs to create healthy, diverse habitats that feed, shelter and nurture birds, butterflies and other wild creatures.

The Lauren Townsend Memorial fund, in care of the Denver Foundation, was established in part to award grants to nonprofit organizations nationwide that focus on animal welfare or wildlife preservation. We will be notified soon if BCAS is chosen for a grant.

The SCFD application was a collaborative effort, with Linda Andes-Georges, George Oetzel, and Richard Stromp assisting Susie with all the paperwork. We will be notified by the end of the summer whether our grant request will be fulfilled.

Field Trips, May—August

Saturday May 14th - 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Pre-Birdathon Trip to Doudy Draw – rain or shine.

Leader: John Tumasonis

An early morning hike into the depths of Doudy Draw to catch the 1st wave of neo-tropical migrants. Targets will be orioles, warblers, peewees, flycatchers, sparrow species, catbirds, chats, and black-headed grosbeaks. Set the alarm clock and grab your hiking boots. Dress for the weather. Bring water and snacks. Expect a few miles of hiking, with some hills to negotiate. Everyone is welcome.

Meet at the Doudy Draw Trailhead off the Eldorado Springs Road (off route 93 south of Boulder).

Call John T at 303-926-8779

Tuesday May 17th – 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.

Pre-Birdathon Trip / Bobolink Trail – rain or shine.

Leader: John Tumasonis

An early morning walk up the Bobolink Trail to watch for winnowing snipes, kestrels, warblers, vireos, coyotes, red-tailed hawks, sparrow species, woodpeckers, possible bobolinks, meadowlarks, and migrant species. Dress for the weather. No facilities at the parking lot, but the Rec Center is not far away. About a two mile walk. Everyone is welcome.

Meet at the Bobolink Trailhead on Baseline Road near the intersection of Cherryvale Road. Note: Parking is limited! Arrive early to ensure a spot - there is no other parking in the area!

Call John T at 303-926-8779

Thursday May 19th – 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.

Pre-Birdathon Trip / Gregory Canyon – rain or shine.

Leader: John Tumasonis

Set the alarm clock and grab your hiking boots. Look for warblers, catbirds, vireos, black-headed grosbeaks, hummingbirds, orioles, tanagers, wrens, chats, peewees, flycatchers, rare migrants, and mountain species. Gregory Canyon in the spring is one of the best! Dress for the weather. Come early, as parking is limited. Some steep uphill grades to negotiate. Everyone is welcome.

Meet at the Gregory Canyon Parking lot – west up Baseline Road before it climbs Mt. Flagstaff. Warning: all out-of-county residents will have to pay a parking fee!

Call John T at 303-926-8779

More Field Trips

Saturday May 28th 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Lyons Birding – Parks and Hill Country

Leader: Ray Davis

Look for nesting species such as bluebirds, swallows, house wrens, and passerines, as well as hawks, dip-pers, jays, nuthatches, chickadees, finches, and many others. With some luck we might find small owl species and pinion jays. All are welcome. Davis has wheelchair access at his house.

Meet at the Lyons Park 'N Ride at 4th and Main Streets.

Call Davis at 303-823-5332

Saturday, June 4th 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Raptor Nesting Tour

Leader: Dianna Johnston

A great tour to see raptors on nest sites throughout the Boulder County region. Target species will include Bald Eagles, Golden Eagles, Swainson's Hawks, Red-tailed Hawks, Prairie Falcons, and others. Will keep our eyes peeled for other species also, such as neotropical passerines. Dress for the weather. Bring lunch, snacks, water. Everyone is welcome.

Meet at the Niwot Park and Ride (on the Longmont Diagonal by Niwot) for carpooling.

Call Dianna at 303-683-5662

Saturday, June 4th, full day trip

Pawnee Grasslands (Boulder Bird Club trip)

Visit the Pawnee Grasslands with a master birder and find elusive grassland birds such as Longspurs, Mountain Plovers, Burrowing Owls, Orchard Orioles, and Nighthawks. Return home via Lower Latham for shorebirds. Meet at 6:00 AM sharp to form carpools at Niwot Park'n'Ride. Return around 6:00 PM. Carpool fee \$10. Be prepared with lots of water, snacks, lunch, hat, bug juice, sunscreen, binocs, etc. Sign up in advance with leader Bill Kaempfer: 303-443-3175 or kaempfer@colorado.edu.

Saturday, June 18th 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Golden Gate State Park

Leader: Paula Hansley

A summer trip up to Golden Gate Park to see a large variety of birds, including hummingbirds, flycatchers, corvids, tanagers, sparrow species, hawks, finches, nuthatches, woodpeckers and many others. Bring lunch and water. Everyone is welcome.

Meet at the Neptune Mountaineering parking lot at Broadway near Table Mesa for carpooling.

Call Paula at 720-890-2628

Even More Field Trips

Saturday, June 25th 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Breeding birds of the Mesa Trail

Leader: Ted Floyd, editor of Birding Magazine

A great hike up the South Mesa Trail to look at a large variety of summer breeders, which includes: warblers, vireos, waxwings, lesser goldfinches, woodpeckers, chickadees, hawks, chats, tanagers, orioles, towhees, buntings, black-headed grosbeaks, wrens, and many others. Late June reaches a crescendo along the Mesa Trail with the summer birds all busy defending territories and attending to nests and young. Bring snacks, lunch, plenty of water. Dress for the weather. Everyone is welcome.

Meet at the South Mesa Trail parking lot along the Eldorado Springs Road west of route 93 (south of Boulder).

Contact Ted at tedfloyd@aba.org

Saturday July 9th 7:00 a.m. to 11: a.m.

Butterflies and warblers of Boulder Canyons

Leader: Steve Jones

Explore several of the beautiful wooded canyons of Boulder Mountain Park looking for butterflies and warblers. Early July yields many butterfly species and neotropical warblers and other summer breeding passerines. Bring hat, water, snacks, butterfly books, and sunscreen.

Meet at the Gregory Canyon parking lot where Baseline turns up the summit of Flagstaff Mountain. Warning: if you are not a resident of Boulder County you will have to pay a parking fee.

Contact Steve at 303-494-2468

Sunday, August 7th 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Dragonflies of Boulder County

Leader: Scott Severs

Study the jewel-like insects that we call dragonflies at selected Open Space areas. Bring your binoculars and insect books, snacks, water, sunscreen, a hat, and bug repellent. Learn more about these dazzling creatures and catch some birding on the side also.

Meet at the Sawhill Ponds Parking lot off 75th street in east Boulder

Call Scott at 303-684-6430

Be sure to check the BCAS Web site, <http://www.boulderaudubon.org> for updates.

Saturday, August 13th 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Hummingbird field trip

Leader: John Vanderpool

Peak hummingbird season trip to see these amazing birds in various locations in and around the foothills. Should see broad winged, rufous, and calliope, possibly others. Other species could include neotropical nesters, mountain and foothills species, and raptors. Dress for the weather – including mountain gear and raingear. Bring water, lunch, snacks, sunscreen, a hat, and insect repellent. Everyone is welcome.

Call John at 303-652-3678

International Migratory Bird Day Saturday May 14, 2005 Walden Ponds



IMBD Dawn Chorus Field Trip; 5:30a.m.-7:30a.m.

Local birders will lead a walk to catch the voices of newly returned songbirds. Meet at the main parking lot at Walden Ponds off 75th St., N of Valmont Road. Afterwards, hot shade-grown coffee and breakfast treats will be served at the picnic shelter. Questions? Contact the Wild Bird Center at 303-442-1322.

IMBD Celebration & Big Sit; 7:30a.m.-11 a.m.

Please join the Boulder Bird Club, Audubon Society and the Wild Bird Center to count the birds from the picnic shelter at Cottonwood Marsh (often 60 or more species are seen from one spot!) Breakfast goodies and shade-grown coffee will be available for all to enjoy. This year, IMBD focuses on the dangers birds face from collisions with man-made structures. Information on the conservation migratory birds will be available, and several bird walks will be leaving during the morning around the ponds. All ages are welcome!

Special thanks to Ms. Alexandra Baris, CPA, of Kingsbery-Baris-Vogel-Nuttall, CPAs and Advisors, Boulder, for her donation of professional services to BCAS.

2005 Summer-Fall Boulder County Nature Association Field Ecology Classes

Watching Warblers: Paula Hansley and Scott Severs

Boulder County hosts 8 breeding species of warbler, and up to 20 species may be seen during fall and spring migration. We will explore warbler identification, song, behavior, habitat preferences, and conservation.

Thursday, May 12, 6-9 p.m., indoor class

Sunday, May 15, 6-10 a.m., field class

Sunday, May 22, 5:30 a.m.-noon, field class

Tuition: \$70 (\$60 BCNA members). Limited to 12 participants. To register: contact Paula Hansley at 720-890-2628; [hansleyp@att.net]

Lichen Escapade: Barbara Hawke

Explore the magical world of lichens in forests and foothills. Examine the unique marriage of lichen partners, lichens' unrooted eating habits, lichen romance, and lichen beauty.

Thursday, June 9, 6:30-9 p.m., indoor class

Saturday, June 11, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., field class

Tuition: \$50 (\$40 for BCNA members). To register contact Barbara at 303-527-1819; sandhilldreamer@yahoo.com.

Beautiful Boulder Butterflies: Jan Chu

Observe and photograph late spring and early summer butterflies in the Foothills/Montane ecotone. Learn about their behavior, food plants, and life histories.

Wednesday, June 15, 6:45-8:30 p.m., indoor class

Friday, June 17, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., field class

Tuition: \$60 (\$50 for BCNA members). To register, contact Jan at 303-494-1108; chuhouse@hotmail.com.

Colorado Orchids: Joyce Gellhorn

Hunt for some of the two dozen wild orchid species that occur in Colorado while learning about the amazing adaptations of the orchid family.

Monday, July 18, 6:30-9:30 p.m., indoor class

Tuesday, July 19, 8 a.m.-3 p.m., field class

Tuition: \$50 (\$40 for BCNA members). To register contact Joyce at 303-442-8123; jgellhorn@sprynet.com.

Flowers of the Alpine Tundra: Joyce Gellhorn

Explore the unique adaptations of alpine plants while visiting spectacular tundra sites. Practice keying out alpine plants and learn about their survival strategies.

Monday, July 18, 6:30-9:30 p.m., indoor class

Tuesday, July 19, 8 a.m.-3 p.m., field class

Tuition: \$50 (\$40 for BCNA members). To register contact Joyce at 303-442-8123; jgellhorn@sprynet.com

The Natural World of the Arapaho in Colorado: Andy Cowell

Learn about the natural world of the Front Range and Great Plains as seen by the Arapaho Tribe of the nine-

teenth and twentieth centuries. We will explore plant and place names, creation and cosmology beliefs, and the idea of "ecological consciousness" in traditional Arapaho culture.

Tuesday, August 9, 7-9 p.m., indoor class

Thursday, August 11, 7-9 p.m., indoor class

Saturday, August 13, 9-noon, field class

Tuition: A minimum donation of \$50, all of which will contribute to Arapaho language and culture projects. To register contact Andy at 303-543-7504; cowellj@colorado.edu

Bats of Boulder County: Dr. Rick Adams

Learn about the natural history of these enigmatic mammals by delving into their ecology, physiology, and behavior. We will see bats up-close-and-personal while conducting fieldwork.

Friday, August 5, 6:30-9 p.m., indoor class

Saturday, August 6, 7-11 p.m., field class

Grassland Ecology: Steve Jones & Naseem Munshi

Camp out in the Pawnee National Grassland and spend a morning in Boulder's Tallgrass Prairie State Natural Area while exploring the geology, ecology, and cultural history of the grassland sea.

Thursday, August 18, 7-9 p.m., indoor class

Saturday, August 20, 6:30-11 a.m., field class

Saturday, September 17, 12 noon to Sunday, September 18, 4 p.m., field class

Tuition: \$80 (\$70 BCNA members). To register contact Steve at 303-494-2468; stephen.jones@earthlink.net.

Audubon Adventures Sketching and Exploring Nature

Does your child have an interest in exploring and learning about our natural world? Is sketching a favorite activity for your child? This class is based on the nationally acclaimed **Audubon Adventures** curriculum published by the National Audubon Society. The focus will be on discovering and sketching the secret lives of the birds, wildflowers, insects and animals in Boulder. Sketching techniques will be demonstrated, a blank journal and supplies will be provided. Class meets at Chautauqua and Viele Lake. Susie Mottashed is the instructor. She is the author of *Who Lives In Your Backyard?*

Note: This class is designed for children ages 9-12 years old.

Session A: Mon-Thurs June 20-23 8:30am-10:30am

Session B: Mon- Thurs July 11-14 8:30am-10:30am

Cost: Each session \$89

To register: Call LifeLong Learning 303 499-1125 x222

COMING SOON...

Colorado Wildscapes

National Audubon's initiative to bring conservation to each home is being implemented in Colorado through Audubon At Home's *Colorado Wildscapes*. This is really a program for optimists – Colorado gardeners for sure – who believe that their actions can have a positive impact on the world around them.

Colorado Wildscapes habitat guide presents, in easy-to-do steps, backyard stewardship known as wildscaping – creating healthy, diverse habitats that feed, shelter and nurture wild creatures. Wildscaping builds healthy communities – both human and wild – by nurturing the natural webs of interconnected lives, from tiny ants to shimmering dragonflies and brilliant Western Tanagers.

Colorado Wildscapes also highlights the stories of Habitat Heroes – people throughout Colorado who are transforming their ordinary landscapes into wildscapes that support a diversity of wildlife.

This guide will provide all Colorado Chapters with a new fund raising tool to support their community activities. Locally, the Boulder Audubon Chapter is planning a wildlife memorial garden for Wes Sears who died in January. The Chapter is working with the family and the Unitarian Universalist Church to design a wildlife memorial garden primarily for birds and butterflies.

Colorado Wildscapes will be distributed by Westcliffe Publishers and also be available directly from the Audubon Colorado Chapters. The publication date is June 2005 and the retail price is \$12.95.

Visit our Web site for more details on the upcoming June publication event!



Backyard Wildscape—Susie Mottashed

Exploring Nature through Field Sketching and Sense Perception – June 8 and 12, 2005

Susie Mottashed and John Tumasonis will team-teach this exciting 2-part (classroom and field trip) workshop. John will demonstrate techniques in perception and awareness that enable the participants to improve their ability to perceive things around them by utilizing quiet, stillness, slow movement and the five senses.

Susie will teach how to create a nature journal by sketching and recording observations. Field sketching techniques will be discussed and demonstrated. No prior sketching skills are needed.

This class is both active and passive. Participants need to be in good health, able to hike and cover approximately 800 feet elevation gain. Wear appropriate clothing for hiking and sitting on the ground. Bring a (8 1/2x 11) sketchbook or blank journal, pens and pencils. More details for the field trip will be discussed on Wednesday evening.

Classroom: Wednesday June 8 6-9 p.m. (Susie 6-8 & John 8-9) at Foothills Nature Center 4201 North Broadway, Boulder

Field Trip: Sunday, June 12, 7a.m. to 4 p.m.

Cost: \$70, minimum 8/ maximum 15 participants

Registration: Make checks payable to: Sketches From the Heart and mail to P.O. Box 3431, Boulder, CO 80307

Information:

Susie 303 499-0984, susiemott@comcast.net

John 303 926-8779, j.electus@worldnet.att.net

Bluebird Nest Monitoring Revived

Following a few years hiatus, BCAS has once again volunteered to monitor the nest boxes at Meyers Gulch and Walker Ranch for Boulder County Parks and Open Space.

Monitoring involves checking each box weekly, if possible, to determine the dates of start of nest construction, egg laying, egg hatching, and fledging of chicks. Monitors also watch for signs of predation, insect infestations, and other possible problems. Because some boxes may house two successive broods, the monitoring season runs from late April to the end of July.

Marti Oetzel is serving as coordinator. Thanks to monitors Eric Albright, Cathy Comstock, Nancy Consolloy, Gene Ellis, Shirley Kurc, George Oetzel, Laura Osborn, Fi Rust, and Joyce Takamine who make this program possible.

CITY OPEN SPACE & MOUNTAIN PARKS VISITOR PLAN

Synopsis and comments by Linda Andes-Georges

On Tues. April 12th, the City Council approved the Visitor Plan by a 9-0 vote. The Council members made a number of minor adjustments, after sifting through a mountain of letters and emails, and hearing over four hours of passionately contradictory testimony. [For a fuller report with more details, call Linda Andes-Georges (303.772.3239)].

Among issues that may hold particular interest for BCAS members were the following:

Habitat Conservation Area management:

The acreage of land contained in the HCAs was reduced in the final draft of the Plan. The Council discussed the acreage thus modified and now classified "Natural Areas," and passed an amendment which specifically requests that staff monitor and make restoration plans for these lands (Tallgrass Prairie-west, and the Doudy Draw-west/Eldorado Mt. area).

On trail use in HCAs: Staying on trail survived a modification proposal and will remain a requirement.

Night time closures: These were not retained for HCAs, although Councilmembers were divided on the issue.

Permits for off-trail use in HCAs: Anyone now can be permitted to go off-trail, subject to evaluation of impacts (one does not have to be participating in an educational group or scientific study).

Dog management:

Another amendment emphasized the creation of more "no-dog" areas or trails, to be studied, "using a collaborative process" (presumably with representatives of the public who have been sharply divided over the Plan's dog management in general).

The west end of the Skunk Canyon trail will be voice and sight instead of leash-required (this was proposed by Ageton); the parts of the trail that are on NIST and NCAR properties will remain under Federal regulation. It must be noted that when trails are designated as V & S "on corridor," this means that dogs may wander 20 feet off either side of the trail, effectively making each corridor 40-feet wide. Please warn meadowlarks, bobolinks, and other ground nesters!

NOTE: Approximately 74 (of 120) miles of trail remain under "voice-an-sight control" regulations for dogs and their guardians. This is actually a reduction in number of miles from today's situation.

Continued next column

Competitive events:

These will not be considered as appropriate on Open Space because of the impacts that would occur, and because the amount of time taken by staff to work on these events would reduce time spent on important management and maintenance activities.

In conclusion:

It is now reasonable for BCAS members to feel confident that what we value most has been highlighted, and in most cases, protected in this plan for public use. A number of compromises were made which we may find objectionable, but the big picture is very good. Consider, for example, that general public awareness of owner-uncontrolled dog misbehavior is now acute. Adaptive management, an enormously useful and flexible too, is now formal policy (it means that Staff may make changes according to changing circumstances and when impacts are noted). About a third of Open Space lands are "zoned" as Habitat Conservation Areas, and accorded the highest level of protection. In future years, we will need to keep an eye on the execution of these good plans, but for now, we can all inhale plum blossom perfume with serenity

Many Thanks ☺ ☺ ☺

To Scott Severs, who is retiring from long service on the Board. He has contributed to BCAS in many ways over the years. He was involved in the Coal Creek project from its outset and contributed to a number of teacher workshops. He has led numerous field trips and Christmas Bird Count groups. He was also newsletter editor for four years, preceding the current editor. Many thanks, Scott, and please continue leading field trips and joining other activities.

To John Tumasonis, who appeared at a board meeting with suggestions for some field trips that differ from the typical birding trips. He was immediately drafted into being field trip coordinator, and he has done a magnificent job. He is retiring from the board and the trip-coordinator position. We are hopeful that he will lead a few of his novel birding trips in the coming year(s).

To the SCFD grant-writing committee: Susie Mottashed, Connie Holsinger, Linda-Andes-Georges, Richard Stromp, and George Oetzel. The grant would provide a big boost for our educational outreach programs.

To Richard Stromp for his substantial effort in modernizing BCAS accounting. Richard's changes have provided the information needed for realistic and sensible future budgeting.

To Laura Osborn and Marti Oetzel for reviving BCAS bluebird monitoring.

To all who have contributed their time and money to BCAS. We need and appreciate all of you.

BOULDER COUNTY WILDLIFE INVENTORY, DECEMBER 2004 - JANUARY 2005

Gillian and Alex Brown, 4560 Darley Avenue, Boulder, CO 80305.

Both December 2004 and January 2005 were record months. The many unusual and out-of-season birds brought in birders from all over the state, often producing still more sightings. The weather was relatively mild with a lot of water still open. The Boulder Christmas bird count (BCBC) always provides good coverage across a wide range of habitats, while the Indian Peaks Winter Bird Count (IP) ensures coverage of our montane and alpine species. Both months produced a high number of gull species. **Great Black-backed Gull** was the most unusual gull species; birds were seen in at least three different locations. It is hard to tell whether this was the same bird in each location; certainly large flocks of gulls seemed to be moving around the county daily. A **Glaucous Gull** was known to move between Valmont Reservoir and the Lafayette/Erie region. **Ring-billed Gulls** were seen in flocks of several thousand. **Herring Gulls** and **California Gulls** were present in fair numbers. Other less usual gulls included **Mew Gull**, **Thayer's Gull**, and **Lesser Black-backed Gull**.

Bohemian Waxwings were seen all over the county from the mountains to the plains. Some of the flocks contained as many as 300 birds. Small numbers of **Cedar Waxwings** were sometimes interspersed in these flocks. Two small groups of **Lesser Goldfinch** appeared to be wintering; one such flock was in North Boulder while the other was in the south of the city. These birds are unmistakable in winter as they do not, unlike the more common resident **American Goldfinch**, lose their yellow plumage. Other unexpected wintering species were **Say's Phoebe**, **Hermit Thrush**, **Gray Catbird**, **American Pipit**, **Green-tailed Towhee** and **Brown-headed Cowbird**. **Turkey Vulture**, **Virginia Rail**, **Long-eared Owl**, **Winter Wren**, **Marsh Wren** and **Northern Mockingbird** are some of our less usual winter species.

The hot spot for mountain birds in January was the Fawnbrook Inn in Allenspark. The feeders at the inn attracted enormous flocks of **Rosy Finch**; one estimate suggested around eight hundred birds. All three types of **Rosy Finch** (**Gray-crowned**, **Brown-capped** and the less common **Black**) were seen with **Brown-capped Rosy Finch** being the most prevalent. A **Common Redpoll** was also present. This species had not been seen since 2002. **Pine Grosbeak** and **Pine Siskin** added to the spectacle. In contrast, the numbers of both **Cassin's Finch** and **Red Crossbill** were very low. The numbers of **Evening Grosbeaks** had increased for the first time for several winters.

Trumpeter Swans returned to Lake Valley for the third straight winter. Other of these birds were also seen elsewhere in the county. **Trumpeter Swans** are now a much more common winter sighting than **Tundra Swan**. A **White-winged Scoter** seen on Union Reservoir in December was new for the year. **Northern Bobwhite** were seen on the Boulder Christmas bird count. This was the first sighting of this species since 2000. It is always hard to know whether these are truly wild birds or whether they have been released. Two mammals stand out as particularly interesting. **Moose** was reported for the first time to the inventory; apparently many of these animals have been introduced into Colorado in an attempt to expand their range. (Fitzgerald et al., 1994, 393) **Bighorn Sheep** are rarely reported; a small group was reported in both December and January.

Altogether 122 bird species were seen in both December and January. This thoroughly outdoes last January's record 108 species. For the full listing of species go to www.boulderaudubon.org/inventory.htm

Work cited: Fitzgerald, J.P., Meaney C. A. and Armstrong, D. A. (1994). *Mammals of Colorado*. Denver: Denver Museum of Natural History and University Press of Colorado.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE DECEMBER 2004 AND JANUARY 2005 INVENTORY

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2004: An Overview of the Boulder County Wildlife Inventory

In the last few years we have seen increased coverage and reporting of rare and interesting species in Boulder County, but a drop in the reporting of the more common species. This has resulted in 2004 being the second best year ever for the number of bird species reported. The monthly totals have been variable with January, February and December all being record months. Four bird species were new for the inventory. These were Red-throated Loon, Cackling Goose (by virtue of being split from Canada Goose), Glaucous-winged Gull and Cassin's Sparrow. Unfortunately, the Red-throated Loon was seen at Union Reservoir (U), so does not add to the county list. Cassin's Sparrow is fairly widespread in Weld County, so was not a surprising addition. Spring migration produced several unusual warblers; however, Tennessee Warbler was one of our more usual warblers that was missed. The Brant was seen in the part of Broomfield County (B) that was formerly part of Boulder County so is not truly a county bird. Altogether, 298 avian, 32 mammalian, 6 reptilian and 3 amphibian species were reported to the Boulder County Wildlife Inventory.

Species reported in 2004 but not in 2003

- Red-throated Loon(U)
- Cackling Goose
- Brant(B)
- Black Scoter
- Northern Bobwhite
- Ruddy Turnstone
- Pectoral Sandpiper
- Parasitic Jaeger
- Great Black-backed Gull
- Glaucous-winged Gull
- Black-legged Kittiwake
- Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
- Chihuahan Raven
- Wood Thrush
- Bohemian Waxwing
- White-eyed Vireo
- Yellow-throated Vireo
- Blue-winged Warbler

Species reported in 2004 but not in 2003

- Cape May Warbler
- Black-throated Blue Warbler
- Blackburnian Warbler
- Pine Warbler
- Prairie Warbler
- Cassin's Sparrow
- Black-throated Sparrow
- Dickcissel
- Orchard Oriole
- White-winged Crossbill
- Common Redpoll

Species reported in 2003 but not in 2004

- Glossy Ibis
- Ross' Goose
- Sharp-tailed Grouse
- Long-billed Curlew

Species reported in 2003 but not in 2004

- Semipalmated Sandpiper
- White-rumped Sandpiper
- Stilt Sandpiper
- Arctic Tern
- Inca Dove
- Boreal Owl
- Magnificent Hummingbird
- Black-chinned Hummingbird
- Gray Flycatcher
- Purple Martin
- Gray-cheeked Thrush
- Blue-headed Vireo
- Tennessee Warbler
- Grace's Warbler
- Summer Tanager
- McCown's Longspur
- Rusty Blackbird

Month-by-Month Avian Species Totals

Year	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
January	84	99	100	100	90	90	96	89	98	103	108
February	89	98	88	90	75	97	86	91	89	95	106
March	98	116	107	112	90	120	96	97	115	100	116
April	116	140	137	146	151	137	134	155	170	150	136
May	192	229	207	208	205	221	199	203	243	211	214
June	143	150	139	144	171	164	164	153	159	155	168
July	141	121	124	147	167	150	153	132	173	113	147
August	137	113	125	152	147	139	166	125	177	111	144
September	172	152	150	166	157	165	178	146	172	145	175
October	131	99	110	127	129	118	139	124	149	102	107
November	101	110	103	97	113	101	114	118	112	113	111
December	111	103	111	102	111	114	116	118	125	115	122
Year Total	266	273	264	270	275	286	279	276	308	290	298



Western Bluebird feeding chick—G. Oetzel

Boulder County Audubon Annual Elections

BCAS elections are usually much like typical corporate proxies—no contested positions. That is the case this year, as well. However, this is your opportunity to speak up. Votes will be tallied at the May 24 meeting.

The bylaws specify a full Board of 12 members. There are only 8 on this ballot. **We are actively seeking volunteers to fill the open positions.** Contact any Board member if you are interested. (See page 2 for contacts.)

Please mark the ballot, below, and mail it to Boulder County Audubon Society, P.O. Box 2081, Boulder CO 80306. (Also available at the May 24 meeting.)

President

Linda Andes-Georges

Vice-President

Steve Jones

Secretary

Connie Holsinger

Treasurer

Richard Stromp

Directors

Joan Dawson

Susie Mottashed

George Oetzel

Bob Turner

Write-ins:

Position	Name
_____	_____
_____	_____

NEW! ORDER GROCERY COUPONS BY MAIL

We have a new option for you to obtain grocery coupons, an important source of BCAS income. If you would like to receive your coupons or cards through the mail, we will double-enclose them and post them after receiving your check.

The mail method entails some risk: anyone who finds or steals the coupons (or a gift card) can “spend” them like cash. The risk is fairly low, but if you are ready to assume it, mail orders can be a easy way to keep in stock.

We are still happy to deliver your order to your door if you prefer. Call Linda Andes-Georges (303.772.3239) to make arrangements.

We encourage you to try using the plastic “gift cards.” They are used exactly like credit cards—but simpler because you do not have to sign anything—and the cashier can always tell you how much money you have remaining on your card.

GROCERY OR LIQUOR COUPON ORDER FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

King Sooper: # at \$10 _____ ;# at \$25 _____

Safeway: at \$100 _____ ; Wild Oats: # at \$100 _____

Liquormart: # at \$25 _____

Make checks payable to Boulder County Audubon Society and mail to BCAS, POBox 2081, Boulder, CO 80306

Birdathon Team Pledge Form

Team leader or Team Name

Pledge Amount (circle type)
_____ per species or fixed amount

Name: _____

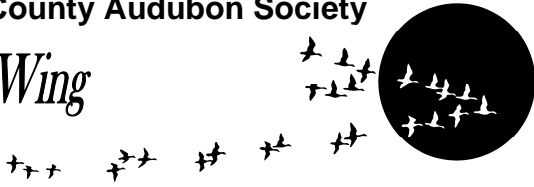
Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Mail to BCAS, POBox 2081, Boulder, CO 80306
You can also pledge or donate online at
www.boulderaudubon.org

Boulder County Audubon Society

On The Wing



**P.O. Box 2081
Boulder, CO 80306**

www.boulderaudubon.org

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<p>May-June Programs</p> <p>Fri, May 13: Michael Forsberg, Sandhill Cranes</p>
<p>Tues, May 24: Blake Schmidt, Swainson's Hawks</p>
<p>Thurs, June 23: Susan Fernalld, Noxious Weeds in Boulder County</p>

Boulder County Audubon Society Membership

When you join the National Audubon Society (NAS), you automatically become a member of the Boulder County Audubon Society (BCAS) as well. Joint membership in the NAS and BCAS includes the NAS quarterly *Audubon* and the BCAS newsletter *On the Wing* (5 issues annually), as well as participation in all BCAS activities.

However, BCAS receives only a small amount of your dues from NAS to support local activities. We encourage you to join BCAS to help support local activities.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

- \$20 Annual BCAS membership
- \$ _____ Additional contribution

Make check payable to *Boulder County Audubon Society*

Mail to: Boulder County Audubon Society
P.O. Box 2081 Boulder, CO 80306

If you would like to join or donate to the National Audubon Society and receive *Audubon* magazine, or to make changes to your NAS membership:
please call 1-800-274-4201 or
go to <http://www.audubon.org>