

On The Wing

Volume 46 Number 4

Boulder County Audubon Society Newsletter

Nov16-Jan17



Holiday Sale November 22, 2016 Boulder County Audubon Has It All For The Holiday Season!!

5-9pm, Unitarian Universalist Church of Boulder



Join us for a great presentation by acclaimed educator and photographer **Bill Schmoker:** *Birding to the Arctic*. Before our program, enjoy Great Nature-Oriented Gifts, Great Nature Authors, Great Live Birds of Prey, Great Causes, Great Fun, Great People, and Door Prizes. And this year: **We accept credit cards**!

Doors open at 5 p.m. for sales, live raptor viewing by the Birds of Prey Foundation, holiday treats and mulled cider. Bill's talk will follow.

This year's annual Holiday Sale will include exciting, new **Interludes With Nature** field trips. Come early to reserve your spot. See page 3 for trip descriptions and details.

Authors:

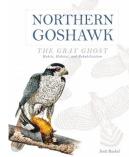
Scott Rashid, raptor books including his latest: *Northern Goshawk, The Gray Ghost*

Bob and Cindy Maynard, their new book *Ancient Skies* Through Ancient Eyes and A Photographer's Guide to Colorado's National Parks and Monuments

Scott Brown, Active Peace: A Mindful Path to a Non-Violent World **Allen B. Crockett**, Peaks, Plateaus and Plains: The Ecology of Colorado, 2nd Edition

Roger Briggs, Journey to Civilization: The Science of How We Got Here

Ann Cooper, Dragonflies of the Colorado Front Range, Dragonflies,



AQ

& A Guide

Dr. Paul Opler, Lepidoptera, including *Moths of Western North America*

Award Winning Artists:

Dale Ball, Mary Balzer, Amy Chu, Lois Edgar, Anne Gifford, Maureen Lawry, Ann Kistner,

Elena Klaver, Cathy Sheeter, Harriet Peck Taylor Annika Andersen: Original owl art to benefit CARRI

Pam Piombino: Egyptian Bazaar

Plus: Boulder County Audubon Logo bill caps and triple certified coffees: shade grown and bird friendly, organic and fair trade.

Browse our ever popular used nature books table, all reasonably priced. Learn about the **Boulder Rights of Nature** group from Steve Jones.

BCAS 4th Tuesday Program Series

November 22, 7:15 p.m. Birding to the North Pole

In August 2015 Bill Schmoker embarked on the US Arctic GEOTRACES Expedition as a PolarTREC teacher. The experience began in Dutch Harbor, Alaska, aboard the US Coast Guard Cutter Healy in early August. For 65 days this polar icebreaker was home to the Coast Guard crew, 49 scientists, and Bill as they transited the Bering and Chukchi Seas en route to deep water basins of the Arctic Ocean and ultimately the Geographic North Pole (marking the first time a US surface ship reached the pole unaccompanied.) After over a month in the pack ice the Healy returned to Dutch Harbor in mid-October. Join Bill as he recounts the unusual birding opportunities he was afforded on this journey. along with other wildlife and natural phenomena he experienced to accompany the cutting-edge physical oceanography that the expedition focused on.

In addition to his 23 years of teaching middle school science in Boulder, Bill is an instructor for the American Birding Association, National Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy, and Boulder County Nature Association. Bill has embarked on two Arctic Ocean research expeditions as a PolarTREC Teacher and explored Greenland as a National Geographic Grosvenor Teacher Fellow. A widely published bird/wildlife photographer, author, and public speaker, Bill finds adventure and seeks new knowledge wherever he finds himself, whether gardening in his back yard, on an icebreaker at the North Pole, and everything in between.



Bill Schmoker with the US Coast Guard Cutter Healy in the background.

Program Meetings are at Unitarian Universalist Church of Boulder, 5001 Pennsylvania Ave. (west off 55th St. between Arapahoe and Baseline)

January 24, 7:15 p.m. Owl: A Year in the Lives of North American Owls

Award winning photographer **Paul Bannick** will present a new program featuring video, sound, stories from the field and several dozen new images from his brand-new book; **Owl: A Year in the Lives of North American**

Owls. Paul uses intimate yet dramatic images to follow owls through the course of one year and in their distinct habitats.



We will witness the four seasons on territory, as

each stage in an owl's life is chronicled through rare images: courtship, mating, and nesting in spring; fledging and feeding of young in summer; dispersal and gaining independence in fall; and, finally, winter's migrations and competitions for food. His program shows how owls use the unique resources available to them in each habitat to face those challenges. All 19 species found in Canada and the United States are featured in photos, video and narrative throughout the book, with a special focus on the Northern Pygmy-Owl, Great Gray Owl, Burrowing Owl, and Snowy Owl.

Owl is a stunning follow-up to Bannick's bestselling title, *The Owl and the Woodpecker*, giving bird lovers yet another gorgeous photographic tribute, engaging natural history, and a compelling call to preserve the habitats that sustain these most iconic of birds.



INTERLUDES WITH NATURE 2017

This popular series of fundraising outings features the very best leaders taking you to special places for unusual field trip opportunities. As always, these offerings will go on sale on the evening of the Holiday Sale, (November 22), starting at 5 p.m. At that time you can read full descriptions. Please note, there will be new procedures for reserving a spot and paying for these trips. See below.

Species of Special Concern in Boulder County w/ Scott Severs

Quivira and Cheyenne Bottoms National Wildlife Refuges w/ Carl Starace (two nights)

Birds, Butterflies and Beasts of Arapaho Ranch w/ Pam Piombino (overnight)

A Visit to the Butcher's Shop—Loggerhead Shrikes w/ David Leatherman

Prairie Chickens and Birds of the Plains w/ John Vanderpoel (one night)

Laramie Bird Banding Station w/ Alison Holloran (overnight)

Hereford Ranch, Wyoming w/ Ted Floyd

This year, we are requiring full payment the evening of the Holiday Sale. We will have all but one of the dates determined, so come with your calendars, check books, cash or credit cards. If you cannot pay the night of the sale, you can put your name on the Wait List. If you have to cancel, there will be a \$20.00 fee imposed. If you cancel less than three weeks before the event, the money will only be refunded if the spot can be filled, but there will still be a \$20.00 fee. Please consider it a donation for the fine work that Boulder County Audubon does and how much work it is to arrange these trips and keep track of the attendees.

BOULDER'S 75th ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Sunday, Dec. 18, 2016



Coordinator: Bill Schmoker Free, and open to all ability levels

Start time depends on if you go out early for owls The Boulder Circle of the CBC, sponsored by Boulder County Audubon, will hold its 75th count on Dec. 18. All skill levels are welcome to join teams and help the leaders by contributing their spotting and identification skills. More experienced folks are urged to lead a small group to cover a specific area within the count circle. Anything can happen (both weather and wildlife) and it usually does. If

you prefer, you can also stay at home and count at your feeder, while sipping mulled wine and munching snacks.

Following a full day in the field (for most of us), we celebrate together with the social event of the season, the compilation supper at the clubhouse at the Villa del Prado, 635 Mohawk Dr., Boulder, starting at 4:30pm. Boulder County Audubon will provide a main dish and salad. We ask participants to bring potluck appetizers, salads, and desserts **AS WELL AS YOUR OWN PLATE, CUP, AND SILVERWARE. THIS YEAR WE WILL ASK YOU TO DONATE \$1 IF BCAS PROVIDES THESE ITEMS.**

Please contact Bill Schmoker (bill.schmoker@gmail.com) to lead or join a team. This is THE social event of the Holiday Season!

Boulder County Audubon Society

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Teen Naturalists

Steve Jones.

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Website

Sharon Daugherty

Field Trips Nov 2016—April 2017

Colorado's Middle East

Saturday, Nov. 12, 6:30 a.m.-7 p.m.

Leader: Bill Kaempfer

Free: No limit, but do let Bill know you are coming and plan on carpooling. kaempfer@colorado.edu

Colorado's Middle East? That would be Eastern Colorado between the South Platte corridor along I-76 and the Arkansas River Valley, east through La Junta and Lamar. Join Bill Kaempfer on this all-day excursion. Depending on recent reports, we will visit spots like Schaefer Reservoir in Lincoln County, Flagler Reservoir in Kit Carson County, and Last Chance in Washington County. These spots are all about two hours east, so be prepared to leave early and return late for this one-day trek on the high plains. We will see lots of hawks and waterfowl, and possibly Harris's Sparrow, Lapland Longspur, and Northern Shrike.

We will carpool and leave at 6:30 a.m. from the northeast corner of the East Boulder Rec Center. Dress appropriately for mid-Nov. weather, but we will probably only have short hikes here and there during our trip. Bring food and drink for snacks and lunch and expect to be home by 7:00 p.m.

Great Boulder Caper

Friday, Nov. 25th, 2016, 7:30 a.m.-sunset

Leader: Ted Floyd

Free: No limit, no reservations necessary.

Work off some of that holiday turkey dinner on this annual outing with the ever energetic Ted Floyd, the erudite editor of ABA's magazine, *Birding*. From Ted: "Our very broad objective will be to visit various lakes and ponds in eastern Boulder County. Maybe we'll see Bonaparte's Gulls, Swamp Sparrows, Harlan's Hawks, Cassiar Juncos, diverse geese and gulls, problematic goldeneyes, a rare grebe or loon...or probably, something entirely unexpected."

No experience necessary. Children and non-birding companions welcome. Carpooling helpful. Bring binocs and scope if you have 'em. Bring leftover tofurkey (this is the Great BOULDER Caper, after all) and orange slices and such. Feel free to email lead caperer, Yours Truly, with any questions: tedfloyd57 "at" hotmail "dot" com. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at Cottonwood Marsh at Walden Ponds, off of 75th Street.

30th Annual Winter Solstice Hike

Wed., Dec. 21, 2016, 7 a.m.

Leader: Steve Jones

Free: Limited to 25, register: curlewsj@comcast.net

This homage to the lengthening days of the Winter Solstice will meet at the North Teller/White Rocks Trail on the south side of Valmont, between 75th and 95th Streets. It is traditional to bring prose, poems, or serene thoughts to share in heartfelt fellowship. Share the magic of waterfowl in breeding plumages, soaring raptors, and often a lovely pair of Great Horned Owls., Breakfast at the Garden Gate Café in Niwot follows at 9. When you register with

Steve, please let him know if you plan on joining the group for breakfast.

A Rosie Outlook for Rosy Finches

Leader: Carl Starace

Saturday, January 14, 2017, snow date, January 21, 2017

Free: Limited to 12 in 3 cars, reservations: castarace@gmail.com

Time: 9 a.m-1 p.m.

Join Carl for this frosty search for the various seed eaters that weather Colorado's high country winters. This will be both a car tour of mountain feeders and a hike along Ski Road, so dress appropriately and be prepared for cold and wind. The target species are all 3 Rosy Finches (Grey-crowned, Black ,Browncapped), as well as Evening and Pine Grosbeaks, and Red Crossbills. White-winged Crossbills would ice the cake!

Meet along Railroad Avenue in Lyons, by the public toilets at Sandstone Park to car-pool. Snacks and warm drinks advised!



Photo of a Gray-crowned Rosy Finch Photo © 2013, Ken Cook

Field Trips Jan.—April 2017 (cont'd)

Highlights of the Colorado University Museum of Natural History

Friday, January 20, 2017 \$2.00 Admission Charge

Limited to 15 Reservations: cindynrama@icloud.com

Time: 10-11a.m., at the Museum entrance

Join CU Staff for a tour structured to give you an overview of this important research museum. Be prepared to be surprised by the extensive collections of artifacts and natural history to be found in the Anthropology, Botany, Entomology, Paleontology and Zoology departments. You will learn of the various areas of research in which CU scientists are engaged and how critical these collections are to their process and results.

Meet at the Museum's entrance. The parking lot that is meant to serve the building is under construction, and parking is otherwise difficult in and around of the campus, so it is advised that you take the "Dash" bus, which will let you off at Broadway and Euclid, right in front of the facility. Afterwards, feel free to return to your favorite displays or to explore what is referred to as the, "bio-lounge," a study area for the students with further displays.

Wintering Raptors: Species, Sub-Species and Conservation Biology

Leader: Sue Cass

Date: Sunday, January 29, 2017; snow date Saturday,

February 4, 2017 Time: 8:00 a.m.-12:00

p.m.

Free: Limit: 15 in no more than four cars. **Reservations:**

suecass@comcast.net

Sue is well known as a Volunteer Naturalist for Boulder County and as one of the best trainers for the multi-year County



Rough-legged hawk, © 2013, Gerhard Assenmacher

Winter Raptor Surveys. Please join her for this field trip where the goals are much more than simple identification to species. You will attempt to take all of the Red-tail Hawks down to subspecies by observing definitive plumage variations of Boulder County's resident Western Race Redtails, Buteo jamaicensis calurus. Other possible sightings include Ferruginous, Rough-Legged and Harlan's Hawks, Bald and Golden Eagles, Northern Harrier, American Kestrel and Prairie Falcon as well as the Great Horned Owl.

There will be a discussion of the relevant aspects of raptor ecology, which may include migration patterns, reproductive strategies, Reverse Sexual Dimorphism (RSD), polymorphism, intergradation (subspecific interbreeding and the resultant plumage variations) and conservation.

Meet promptly at 8 a.m. at the parking lot of Lagerman Reservoir, on the south side of Pike Road between 63rd and 75th Street. Wear warm clothing and bring water/snacks, binoculars, spotting scopes, raptor field guides/apps and a sharp eye!

Wheat Ridge Greenbelt with Davis

Leader: Ray, "Davis"

Wednesday., Feb. 15, 2017; snow date, Thurs., Feb. 16

Free, no limit; questions: 303 823 5332 or

davis@greenspeedisp.net

Time: 8:00-12:00

The Clear Creek Trail amidst the Wheat Ridge Greenbelt, is well known for exceptional viewing and photographic opportunities for most all the wintering waterfowl to be found in the Front Range. These birds will be resplendent in their glorious breeding plumages in February. This public area includes lakes, a boardwalk and blind. Passerines and birds of prey are readily found in the surrounding area.

Meet at the East Boulder Recreation Center at the north east corner of the parking lots to carpool. This outing is for all skill levels. Bring binoculars and scopes if you have them. Dress appropriately and be prepared to walk about 2 miles.

Annual Spring Welcome Hike

Leader: Steve Jones Monday, March 20, 2017 Free: Reservations:

curlewsi@comcast.net

Time: 7:30 a.m. to?? Steve will once again lead a meandering hike around one of Boulder's great and easily accessible wildlife areas. We will celebrate the



Hooded Merganser, © 2013, Gerhard Assenmacher

return of warmth, lengthening days, and the birds that give song to the trees. The Walden/Sawhill complex has a great variety of habitats, so everything from Woodpeckers to Wood Ducks and Minks to Mergansers might be found.

Steve asks that all participants contribute something sweet, spicy, nurturing or passionate to share at a pot-luck breakfast along Boulder Creek. Meet at the Cottonwood parking lot, off of 75th Street, Boulder.

Pella Crossing After the Floods

Leader: Phil McNichols

April 23, 2017, rain date, May 14, 2017 Free, reservations: pmcnichols@comcast.net

Time: 7 a.m.-9 a.m.
Join Phil, one of Boulder County's Volunteer Naturalists, to celebrate spring and the emergence of a revitalized Pella Crossing. Pella was severely impacted by the floods of September 2013, and has been closed to the public since then. Boulder County is in the process of rebuilding the ponds and trails, so this group will be amongst the first visitors to witness the return of birds and other wildlife to this impressive parcel of Open

Space.
This outing is for all ages and skill levels of birding. Meet at the Pella Crossing parking lot, just south of Hygiene on the east side of 75th Street. Wear comfortable shoes and bring binoculars and scopes if you have them. Boulder County Audubon has binoculars to lend if you need them; tell Phil when you make your reservation.

Colorado Gives Day

Once again, BCAS will be included in the 1000+ Colorado non-profits, and we hope you will think of us during the giving season. Many of you have thought of us at other times this year and we thank you!

The additional advantages we derive from donations on Colorado Gives Day (December 8th) are these:

We'll be given an additional sum (a percentage of the total: an augmentation thanks to one sponsor, the Colorado



Health Foundation). The additional sum is based upon the amount of funding our chapter receives from all of our friends; this financial plum is called the Incentive Fund boost.

Special drawings make other prizes (from Bank One and other sponsors) available to us.

Our donors can donate at any time, but to help us benefit from the perks above, you can participate in advance, starting on Nov. 1, and schedule your donations for Colorado Gives Day. It is easy to book all your local and regional gifting for that day by spending only a short time on the website, and filling in your financial information only once. Smooth!

Our programs and projects will benefit from your support. Watch for news of these programs in the pages of *On the Wing* or on our BCAS website. Meanwhile, rendezvous for the holidays at www.ColoradoGives.org — Thank you!

Birds and Brews Oct 9, 2016

A group of 35, including 15 newcomers, spent several birdy hours in Sawhill Ponds, on a warm and beautiful fall afternoon. Led by Steve Jones, we were able to find 37 species, including Wilson's Snipe, Golden Eagle, and seven species of ducks. After our outing, we gathered at Upslope Brewery for an enjoyable social hour with snacks provided by BCAS. The next B&B event will be in December or January with details to follow. We can hope for northern birds (like swans!) who come to spend the winter in our Colorado Banana Belt. We invite everyone to join us for good birding, camaraderie, and refreshments.



Birds and Brews trip leader Steve Jones sets up a scope for the group.

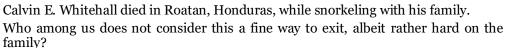


The group is astonished to find the rare Beer Bird at Upslope Brewery post-bird walk.

Did you know? Audubon's Western Rivers Action Network now offers a <u>Birds & Brews</u> map for Colorado!! Audubon has been working with brewers and other businesses in the West to help address issues of drought and the need to protect our waterways and resources.

Remembering Calvin Whitehall, photographic champion of the high alpine

stopped exploring on August 2, 2016



Calvin was a longtime member of Boulder County Audubon, as well as of Boulder County Nature Association. A quiet man with a sensitive soul, he is remembered by us as one of the late Joyce Gellhorn's right-hand associates as she documented and advocated for the high alpine ecosystem. They shared their talents for Joyce's book, *Song of the Alpine*. Calvin's lovely photos bring to life the avian emblem of that area, the White-tailed Ptarmigan.

But he was also a prairie person. In his late years, he and colleague Connie Redak were monitors for the ongoing citizen science project, Burrowing Owl Monitoring on County Open Space.

In "normal" life, Calvin was a certified public accountant, and had his own business until retiring in 2002. He then quickly morphed into a dedicated and well-known wildlife photographer, with a specialty in the two contrasting ecosystems:

high-alpine, and shortgrass prairie.

He is survived by his wife, Cheryl, and children Matthew and Jessica and their spouses, as well as his three grandchildren (Tessa, Aidan and Taylor), and his sisters. We will all be remembering him every time we reach for the photo archives, where many of his photos reside.



Teen Naturalist Fall Outings

These upcoming trips are free and open to students in 6th through 12th grades, along with parents and siblings. To register, contact Steve Jones at curlewsj@comcast.net

Sunday, Nov. 13, 8-12:00 noon: Leaders: Steve Jones, Carol McCasland, and Elena Klaver. Wintering raptor survey on Rabbit Mountain South survey route. We usually see 20-30 hawks, eagles and falcons along this 20-mile survey route, which follows back roads from US 36 to Lagerman Reservoir and on to west Longmont. Last year our group set a record for this 33-year-old raptor survey, seeing 9 species during one morning. Lunch (courtesy of BCAS at a restaurant in Longmont) will follow the survey. Meet at the North Foothills open space parking area on north Broadway, 0.5 miles north of US 36.

Sunday, Dec. 18, 7a.m.- 2:00 p.m. Boulder Christmas Bird Count. Leaders: Geoffrey Ames and Steve Jones. Once again, all teen naturalists are invited to join the Douby Draw/Eldorado Mountain group for 6 hours in the field followed by indoor picnic lunch at Steve's house in South Boulder. Dress very warmly, bring binoculars, as well as water and snacks. We will hike about 4 miles during this survey, which has been going on in North American since 1900. Data are used to help conserve bird populations. Meet at the Doudy Draw parkin area on Eldorado Springs Drive, 2 miles west of SH 93. I will send out a reminder and permission forms about a week before each outing. Please tell your friends who might like to join us, and let me know if you have questions.

Colorado Native Bird Care and Conservation Winds Down the 2016 Busy Season

(Colorado Native Bird Care and Conservation is a local wildlife rehabilitator based in Lyons, CO and is a 501c3 non-profit that relies solely on public donations to continue their work.)

It is early October and as we open the carrier and release 7 orphaned but now fully grown goldfinches, we mark the end of the 2016 rehab season. We will still receive birds injured during migration, resident birds caught by cats or knocked senseless by windows, and bats that leave the roost in search of water and get stuck in a snow storm, but the bulk of the work for 2016 is done.

We treated 227 wild patients this summer. From a baby, hairless small-footed Myotis bat washed out of his roost in a rain storm to a to Double-crested Cormorant fatally entangled in fishing line, they all received the best of our efforts to save them. 27 of our patients were cat attacks, two were dog attacks, ten were struck by cars, 12 were window strikes, and the rest came from miscellaneous and sometimes bizarre circumstances. For example, we received one young robin found floating in a cooler on a lake in Longmont; another patient was a baby pigeon plucked from a public mailbox by the mail carrier; we had a female mallard missing an entire leg, and even a young robin being kept as a pet by a well meaning but ill-informed person. Our patients' stories and situations may vary widely but we always do our best to help patients recover so that they can be released back into the wild. Wildlife rehabilitators in Colorado receive no funds from city, county, or state entities. Our work can only continue because of donations from the public. Colorado Native Bird Care and Conservation is a 501c3 non-profit. For more info go to www.coloradonativebird.org

-Donna Nespoli

USFWS and CO licensed bat and wild bird Rehabilitator Colorado Native Bird Care and Conservation



A MacGillivray's warbler recovering from a window strike. © CNBCC. All Rights Reserved.



A yellow warbler recuperating after being bitten by a house cat. © CNBCC. All Rights Reserved.

Some of CNBCC's patients this year



A Sora Rail on the exam table at Colorado Native Bird Care and Conservation. © CNBCC. All Rights Reserved.



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http://tinyurl.com/zkvuntk

Hog Island Maine Birding Camp Scholarships

Boulder County Audubon Society is now accepting applications for our annual scholarship to the National Audubon Society's June 11-16 Coastal Maine Bird Studies for teens program the Audubon camp on Hog Island. Applicants must be 15-17 years of age and demonstrate a strong interest in natural science.

The scholarship covers the \$1395 cost of the program, including transportation to and from the Portland, Maine, airport. We also offer up to \$500 travel reimbursement, based on student chapter affiliation and need. Deadline for completing and submitting this year's application is 1 January, 2017.

To find out more, or to apply, visit www.Boulderaudubon.org/education

Rocky Mountain National Park Birding Camp Scholarships

We also offer a single scholarship to the American Birding Association Camp Colorado in Rocky Mountain National Park, 26 July-1 August. This \$1295 scholarship covers lodging costs, meals, and transportation costs throughout this seven-day camp. Application deadline for this scholarship is 1 March, 2017. Applicants must be 13-18 years old.

Before applying, please visit the Camp Colorado website to find out more about the program:

http://events.aba.org/aba-young-birder-camps/.

To apply for the scholarship, visit www.Boulderaudubon.org/education

You're kidding, right? M&Ms to save ferrets? And fatten prairie dogs, no doubt...



© National Geographic

issues

From Amazon deliveries [crop watering], drones are being drawn into many unexpected aspects of life. But perhaps none is more unlikely than a plan dreamed up to help save the black-footed ferrets [...] The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) intends to use drones to scatter vaccine-coated M&Ms over the Bend National Wildlife Refuge (Montana) to help protect the animals from a devastating disease. The vaccine combats [...] sylvatic plague that is decimating both the prairie dog and ferret populations in the area. [...] The smaller prairie dogs are a crucial food source for the endangered ferrets. The ferrets also use the prairie dogs' burrows for shelter... According to *The Guardian* newspaper, the vaccine will be mixed into peanut butter and then smeared onto M&Ms to entice the animals to eat it. Prairie dogs find the bait "delicious," FWS biologist Randy Machett told the

Become a Supporting Member of Boulder Audubon We get very little return from National Audubon dues and have to rely primarily on

ocal funding to support Boulder County Audubon Society activities.	, 5
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