

ROARING FORK RAPTOR

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ROARING FORK AUDUBON
SOCIETY

www.roaringforkaudubon.org

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To promote the enjoyment, conservation and understanding of birds, other wildlife and their habitats through birding, education, advocacy and fellowship in Eagle, Garfield and Pitkin Counties

Audubon Christmas Bird Count ~ December 18, 2011

In lieu of a December evening program, RFAS hosts the Audubon Christmas count and potluck dinner.
See details p. 2.

Programs for January and February, 2011

free monthly educational series for the public

Flowing Uphill – The Future of Colorado's Rivers ~ January 19

Ken Neubecker

Colorado is arid country, where water is more valuable than gold. The mountains, with their melting snow and rivers, are the water supply for over 30 million people. This talk by Ken Neubecker looks at the history of water development in Colorado, particularly the many trans-mountain diversions and their impacts on the Colorado River headwaters, including the Roaring Fork watershed. In some places anywhere from 40% to 65% of native flows are diverted east and out of our rivers. On top of this we face an uncertain future with increasing demands and a shrinking supply of water.

Colorado's future will depend on how well we balance competing water demands: productive farms, growing cities and healthy rivers are all in the mix. Ken, involved in river conservation due to his love of fly-fishing, has been active with many water quality issues, a volunteer for groups such as Trout Unlimited and Roaring Fork Conservancy and an instructor at CMC in Colorado water law, history and issues. We are extremely fortunate to have Ken as a local—you won't want to miss his observations.

Birds of Two Worlds: the Colorado-Mexico Connection ~ February 16

Arvind Panjabi

Roughly two-thirds of bird species found in Colorado are migratory and spend most of their life in Mexico or areas further south. Research and conservation in Latin America has lagged behind that in the U.S. and Canada, but it is equally, if not more, important, given higher threats and less protection in this region. This presentation will demonstrate the migratory linkages between the birds of Colorado and Mexico and will highlight Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory's programs that conserve birds and their habitats south of the border. Find out how you can become involved or visit some of the important wintering areas for Colorado's birds.

Arvind Panjabi is the founder and director of Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory's International Program and a former resident of the Roaring Fork Valley. He is an expert on the ecology and conservation of Colorado's birds, including their migratory and wintering grounds. Join us for this informative presentation!

Please note: Roaring Fork Audubon programs are held on the third Wednesday of the month, 7 pm, at City Hall, 511 Colorado Avenue, in Carbondale. Dessert potluck accompanies program.

Upcoming Roaring Fork Audubon Field Trips and Events

December 18, 2010— Christmas Bird Count—This year is the 111th National Audubon Christmas Count, though Roaring Fork has been conducting its Christmas count only since the mid '70s. Please join us on December 18th for our annual Christmas Bird Count. This has become a tradition for many members.

For 35 years, the desire to both make a difference and to experience the beauty of nature has driven us to leave the comfort of a warm house and contribute our knowledge base of the birds wintering in the Roaring Fork Valley to the national snapshot. This is a great way for those with all levels of birding experience to learn about Roaring Fork Valley's wintering birds.

At the end of the day, we will meet at the home of Linda Vidal to share a pot-luck dinner and compare notes on the day's sightings. Please call one of the leaders if you'd like to join us: Linda Vidal—970-704-9950; Tom McConnell—970-945-0588 or Dave Clark—963-3479 for starting times and places to meet.

February, 2011—date TBA—North Fork Raptors with Black Canyon Audubon—Winter brings many raptors to the Hotchkiss-Paonia area in Delta County. Plan on an all day trip, leaving from Carbondale. Contact Tom McConnell for more details.

April 30-May 1, 2011—Northwest Colorado Grouse—This overnight trip usually produces Greater Sage Grouse, Sharp-tailed Grouse, and Dusky Grouse, and more. As space is limited on this trip, participants must be members of Roaring Fork Audubon. Details will follow in the March newsletter. Contact Tom McConnell.

May 7, 2011—Spring Trip to Hart's Basin, Delta County—All kinds of migrating waterfowl, shore birds and passerines are assured on this trip to Fruit-growers' Reservoir, aka Hart's Basin, in Delta County. This all day trip—which will depend on good weather—is a fixture on our field trip calendar because of the abundant and dependable bird life there. Bring lunch and anything else you may need; be prepared to carpool, if needed. Last minute details will be in the next newsletter. Contact Linda Vidal.

June 11, 2011—Atlas Block Work—Join Linda Vidal, Coen Dexter, and Brenda Wright to work the Basalt Atlas Block. (The 2007-2011 Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas II project observes breeding birds in Colorado for research purposes. The information gathered will be compared to the 1987 Breeding Bird Atlas results, allowing for a long view of bird breeding, behavior, sightings, migrations, etc.: <http://www.cobreedingbirdatlasii.org/>) While the intent is to bird during the day, the Basalt block may be perfect for night observation of Flammulated Owls, also. If we do attempt owling, we will break mid-day, then meet again for a night outing. Please be flexible. Call Linda if you'd like to participate.

(Field trips continued page 3)

~field trip info~

Dave Clark

970-963-3479

Tom McConnell

(970) 379-7356

immac@rof.net

Linda Vidal

(970) 704-9950

birder@sopris.net

**Everyone is
welcome on RFAS
field trips:**

**You need not be a
RFAS member for
most trips. For
field trips, bring
your binoculars,
field guides, wa-
ter, snacks and a
lunch, and plan
for changing
weather.**

**Please notify
leader 3 days
before trip of your
intention to
attend. If you have
questions regard-
ing a trip, need
additional infor-
mation, or would
like to lead a field
trip or hike,
please contact
Linda Vidal or
Tom McConnell.**

Roaring Fork Audubon 2011 field trips continued...

June 12—2nd Annual Basalt Mountain Owls, Poorwills and Pizza—Join Coen, Brenda and Linda on the 2nd annual Flammulated Owl trip. We'll meet for pizza in the early evening, then proceed up Basalt Mountain. Last year we saw a possible Common Poorwill and two Flammulated Owls—and this year we'll try again! Please call Linda for details.

June 25—Thompson Creek—Join Linda Vidal for a repeat of this great trip near Carbondale. Linda says, "This is such a busy time of year for birding, but I had such a good time on this trip last year, and we saw so many birds that I'm looking forward to leading it again." We should see many migrant and resident birds. This will be a 1/2 day trip, finishing when the weather heats up mid-day. Please be prepared to carpool, bring lunch and other needs. Final details will be in the June newsletter. Contact Linda Vidal.

July 16-17—Black Swifts in Ouray—This will be a weekend trip, driving over to Ouray, birding along the way, overnighing in Ouray. We'll plan on seeing the swifts in Box Canyon behind the waterfalls Sunday morning, after which we'll bird our way home. Because of logistics, e. g. motel reservations, the **registration deadline is May 28**. Information re lodging will be available from Linda by the cutoff day, with final details in the June newsletter. Call Linda anytime for more information. Linda Vidal and Tom McConnell will lead this trip.

August TBA—Wet Mountain Valley with Arkansas Valley Audubon—For the past 26 years Arkansas Valley Audubon has done an August trip to the Wet Mountain Valley near Westcliffe. Birds and scenery are great, with the Sangre de Cristos to the west and the Wet mountains to the east. Typically this trip produces over 100 bird species, thanks to the varied habitats found in this area. Overnight trip—details to come. Contact Tom McConnell.

Field Trip report from August 21, 2010—Independence Pass

Ann Hillmuth

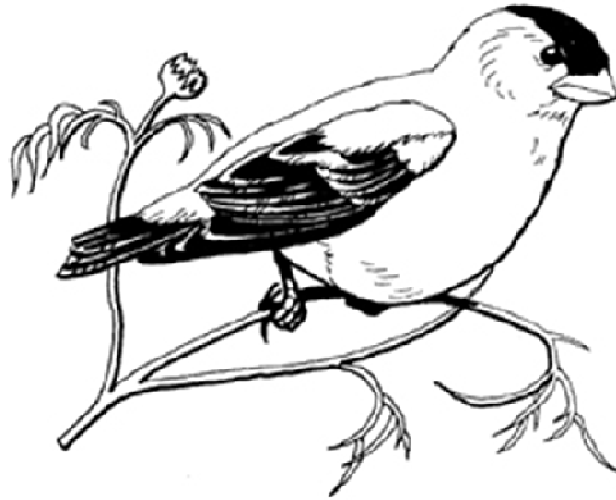
Dave Clark and Linda Vidal led a group of seven on a wildflower/birding expedition on Saturday, August 21, near Aspen. We observed fireweed, Blacktip Senecio, goldenrod and asters by the side of Highway 82 on our way to the first stop. At the Braille Trail, Dave highlighted Broadleaf Fireweed still blooming, as well as Fringed and Star Gentian, Green and White Bog Orchids, Monkshood and little red elephants. We observed a poisonous fly Amanita [mushroom] from a distance.

We continued on to the top of Independence Pass, where Linda called our attention to a group of White-crowned Sparrows, flitting about in willow shrubs and we had a quick look at a pair of American Pipits. We also observed a Red-tailed Hawk soaring nearby. Linda and Kendall demonstrated nanotechnology, calling Wilson's Warblers with their little iPods. Dave pointed out Clustered Penstemon, Yellow Stonecrop, Nailwort, Starwort, Mouseear, and we carefully examined the ovaries of a branch of alpine willow before heading back to the Braille Trail for lunch. On the way home we tore apart a Pearly Everlasting, observing the yellow disc flowers that looked like pussy toes. A good time was had by all.

Ann is a long time member and supporter of RFAS

"When words escape, flowers speak"—Bruce W. Currie

Great Backyard Bird Count.



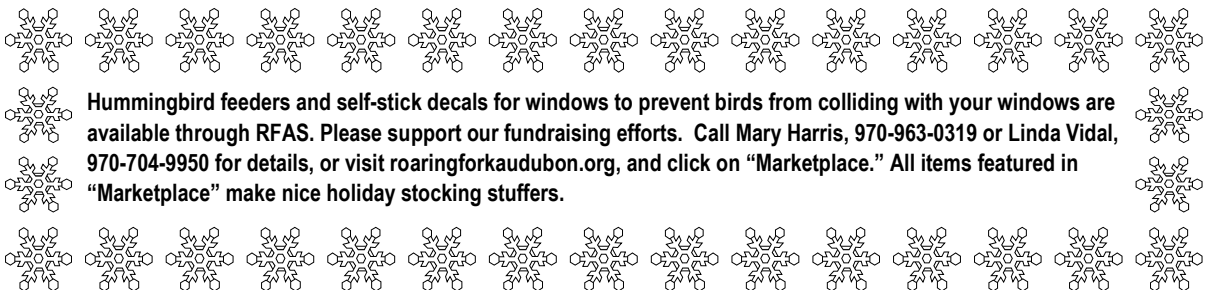
October 5, 2010—The 14th annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is coming up February 18-21, 2011. The four-day event is free and is open to bird watchers of all ages and skill levels. Participants watch birds for any length of time on one or more days of the count and enter their tallies at www.birdcount.org.

The results provide a snapshot of the whereabouts of more than 600 bird species. The GBBC is a joint project of the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, with Canadian partner Bird Studies Canada.

The 2010 GBBC was another record-breaker with more than 97,300 bird checklists submitted by an estimated 63,000 volunteers from across the United States and Canada. These volunteers found connecting with nature to be great fun.

From reports of rare species to large-scale tracking of bird movements, the GBBC provides insight into the lives of bird populations.

Mark your calendars!



Hummingbird feeders and self-stick decals for windows to prevent birds from colliding with your windows are available through RFAS. Please support our fundraising efforts. Call Mary Harris, 970-963-0319 or Linda Vidal, 970-704-9950 for details, or visit roaringforkaudubon.org, and click on "Marketplace." All items featured in "Marketplace" make nice holiday stocking stuffers.

RFAS Donates Books to Libraries

Roaring Fork Audubon, to raise our regional residents' awareness of the surrounding natural community of animals and plants, has donated books to several public libraries in our local Audubon area. A committee consisting of Liz Bokram, Mary Harris, and Jan Fedrizzi contacted library personnel with a list of suggested book purchases. Libraries contacted were Aspen, Basalt, Carbondale, Glenwood Springs, New Castle, Rifle, Parachute, Eagle, Gypsum, Avon, and Vail Public Libraries.

All libraries chose to buy new nature books, most from our list, as a result of our donations.

Check your local library for these new additions, some of which are listed below. (Not every library ordered every book on our suggested list.)

- *Fisher, Chris. **Mammals of the Rocky Mountains**, 2000. Nifty paperback mammal guide, great illustrations and format, good for all ages. \$18.95, paperback.*
- *Huggins, Janis. **Wild at Heart: A Natural History Field Guide**, 2004. This book covers wildlife—birds and mammals—plants and ecology of the Upper Roaring Fork Valley (similar to Eagle Valley). (Janis will be an Audubon program presenter spring of 2011.) Very helpful overview of montane, subalpine and alpine habitats throughout our designated Audubon area. \$29.95, paperback. (Editor's Note: Dee Malone--one of our Audubon board members--did some of the illustrations for this book.)*
- ***National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America**, 2006. Excellent field guide. \$18.95, quality paperback.*
- ***National Geographic Complete Birds of North America**, 2006. Excellent and attractive reference book. \$35.00, hardcover.*
- *Roedel, Michael. **Compact Guide to Colorado Birds**. 2007. Very good for Colorado beginning birders, adults or children, excellent format and quality. \$13.95, paperback.*

Save Trees for the Birds

Find out about programs and other activities of Roaring Fork Audubon Society (RFAS), which is initiating an e-mail-based notification system to inform members about RFAS's offerings. Please send your e-mail contact information to cobirder2002@yahoo.com, including your name for confirmation purposes.

We are also looking for additional active members who share our enthusiasm for our natural community. Please contact us through the above e-mail or visit our website, roaringforkaudubon.org.



—Stephen D'Amato



Coffee for sale

Kendall Henry is selling shade-grown, organic, fair trade coffee for our chapter. You may select whole bean or ground: \$10.00 for a 12 oz. bag of breakfast, rainforest, French roast, or decaf.

Please order from kendall@sopris.net or call 970-928-8358 by the 7th of each month to arrange purchase.

**ROARING FORK AUDUBON
LOCAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Please enroll me/us in the Roaring Fork Audubon Society. I/we may participate in all chapter activities, as well as receive the Roaring Fork Raptor newsletter. Dues are used for local chapter activities.

Date _____

Individual (\$20) _____

I have included an additional donation of _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____ Email (please) _____

I do not want solicitations from National Audubon

Enclosed is my check payable to: **Roaring Fork Audubon**
P. O. Box 1192
Carbondale, CO 81623

If you would like to join or donate to the National Audubon Society directly and receive the award-winning Audubon Magazine, use chapter code DO87XCH and call 1-800-274-4201.

Bird and mammal checklists available

for Roaring Fork and Eagle River Valleys

Tom McConnell recently has completed a massive update of bird and mammal checklists for the Roaring Fork and Eagle Valleys, from Aspen to Rifle to Vail. The list is available from our website, <http://roaringforkaudubon.org/PDF/2010%20CHECKLIST.pdf>. Thanks to Tom and other contributors for sharing their knowledge and publishing this handy list. For more information or to obtain a list, contact Tom, immac@rof.net or Linda Vidal, birder@sopris.net.



from RFAS Board

Eventually the Roaring Fork Raptor newsletter will be produced in email format only, so be sure to sign up for our e-newsletter now. Just go to cobirder2002@yahoo.com and leave your email address, including your name, so that we can make sure we have all information correct.

Raptor Editor needed: Roaring Fork Audubon is seeking a new Raptor newsletter editor, as of Summer, 2011. This position is challenging and rewarding, providing many networking opportunities. Please contact Jan Fedrizzi, dfnajt@yahoo.com or 970-328-6961 for details.

See roaringforkaudubon.org for newsletters, updated information, changes in programs and field trips and more! Thanks to Jim Biebl, our volunteer webmaster!

If you are a "Friend" of Roaring Fork Audubon, please check the expiration date next to your name on every newsletter label and renew your membership if it is about to expire. Please renew with our chapter by sending a check designated "Friend of RFAS." RFAS does not have the resources to send you reminders to renew (see p. 6 for renewal coupon).

from Colorado Audubon

(Thanks to *Ptarmigan*, Fort Collins Audubon)

—by Ken Strom

On January 1, 2011, the official office of Audubon Colorado will move to Fort Collins, where it will share space with Audubon Wyoming in the new Rocky Mountain Regional office of Audubon. The

On the fly ...

(compiled from various Audubon sources)

Fort Collins office will be the home base for all three staff currently working in the Denver office, Ken Strom, Stephanie DeMattee and Tricia Hamilton.

At the same time, Audubon Colorado will share workspace in Denver with Colorado Trout Unlimited. This space will allow for Audubon Colorado's frequent activities and projects in the greater Denver area, including work with the state legislature and state agencies, TogetherGreen education program, Important Bird Areas (IBA) restoration efforts, and others.

On any given day, any of the Colorado staff may be working in Fort Collins or Denver, depending on the focus of their work that day. The address and phone number for the new Rocky Mountain Regional office of Audubon will be posted soon. Current Audubon Colorado contact info: 303-415-0130 or sdemattee@audubon.org.

from St. George, Utah Audubon

St. George Bird Festival is slated for Jan. 27-30. <http://www.sgcity.org/birdfestival/> for more info.

from National Audubon

Thanks to *Audubon Magazine*, Nov-Dec 2009, p. 53

Along the edges of the hay field, snow is plastered on the north side of trees and fence posts. Northern harriers pushed south weeks ago. But there's a large, long-winged hawk flying low and wobbling on the wind. A straggler? Now it hovers—a harrier? But no, the coloration is too dark...

Oh, it is a rough-legged hawk, migrant from the far north that winters in many of the lower 48. This buteo gets its name from feathers extending down the shanks of its legs, an adaptation to its frigid habitat. The rest of the plumage varies widely in individuals—from dark to light. Like our buzzards—also known as vultures—the rough-legged hawk will disgorge food when threatened, enabling faster takeoffs.

Roaring Fork Audubon
Box 1192
Carbondale, CO 81623

Regular free
monthly
Audubon
educational
programs are
held the third
Wednesday of
every month,
September
through May,
with the
exception of
December.

Join us!

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Delia Malone 970-963-2143

Tom McConnell 970-379-7356

Linda Vidal 970-704-9950

Laurel Williams 970-945-9621

Roaring Fork Raptor

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