



Canyon Wrenderings

The Journal of the Black Canyon Audubon Society

Representing Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray, San Juan, and San Miguel Counties of Western Colorado

Spring 2025

Volume 40 Number 1



Brown-capped Rosy Finches seen on a recent BCAS field trip. © Missy Siders

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Eckert Crane Days—March 21-28

Mark your calendars for this year's exciting events. Hear special speakers, participate in guided crane viewing, and learn the basics about photography. Check out the full event list on page 5.

Results for Audubon's 125th Christmas Bird Count, Western Slope Colorado

The Audubon Christmas Bird Count occurs December 14th to January 5th every season. Between those dates local hawk-eyed volunteers joined fellow birders across the country to brave various weather conditions to count birds during the annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC). Birders and nature enthusiasts took part in this tradition, many rising before dawn to participate in the longest running wildlife census on the planet.

Continued on page 5.

President's Message

Is this Winter? Is it Spring?

Today we had Rain and Snow and Sunshine in Montrose. In any case, there are probably birds moving north already in the earliest spring, such as Redhead, Canvasback, and Pintail ducks.

Would you like to be more active with the Audubon Chapter? We would love to have your help!

You could:

- Be on the Board of Directors. Or on the Nominations Committee.
- Volunteer at Eckert Crane Days, March 22-23, and chat with some visitors
- Lead a birding trip to your favorite destination
- Give a talk about a birding trip you've been on.
- Write an article about birds for the Montrose Daily Press Outdoor Column. Susan Chandler-Reed recently wrote an article about rare birds that we've seen in our area. You could write about your favorite birds, or a favorite place that you've been.

Bruce Ackerman, President

We are putting the final plans in place for our Annual Dinner Meeting, June 5, 2025. Please put it on your calendar – a buffet dinner at The Bridges in Montrose (under new management). Ted Floyd, noted author and *Birding* magazine editor is the speaker. You could be on the planning committee!

Canyon Wrenderings is the quarterly newsletter of the Black Canyon Audubon Society, Vol. 40 No 1. Send submissions to wrenderingseditor@gmail.com.

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Programs— Kristal Stidham (see above)

Website Manager—Jon Horn (see above)

AD HOC COMMITTEES (ANNUAL EVENTS)

Montrose County Fair — **OPEN**

Bird Banding—Ridgway State Park

Christmas Bird Count Team—Arden

Anderson, Adam Petry, Amy Seglund,
and Missy Siders

Eckert Crane Days— Alida Franco

A note about email addresses in this newsletter:

All emails have an extra space before the @ sign or "[at symbol]" in the email address to discourage spam coming from web crawlers.

Would you like to volunteer? Talk to an officer to see where we need help and where your talents can be used! Volunteers are always needed and welcome.

Montrose

First Tuesday Field Trips Mar 4, Apr 1, and May 6

First Tuesday Field Trips are March 4, April 1, and May 6. Meet at 9 AM (unless otherwise noted in trip description) at the public parking lot at the corner of N. 2nd Street and N. Cascade Ave. in Montrose unless noted in the trip description. Please RSVP at black.canyon.audubon.fieldtrips@gmail.com and specify which trip(s) you are interested in attending.

A leader will accompany the group to a nearby birding hotspot. Return should be by about noon. Bring a snack, water, binoculars, and field guides. **Please RSVP for all field trips** and include your name, field trip date and contact information in case weather or illness forces a cancellation. RSVP to black.canyon.audubon.fieldtrips@gmail.com

Delta

Third Tuesday Field Trips Mar 18, Apr 15, and May 20

Meet in Delta at Confluence Park at 9 AM, unless otherwise stated in trip description. Our meeting location is the large parking lot next to the lake and near the intersection of Gunnison River Drive and Kellogg Street (behind Bill Heddles Recreation Center). We'll likely view the large numbers of birds using the lake and also do some walking along the river. Expect to spend two or three hours exploring the park. Spotting scopes can be very helpful when viewing the waterfowl on the lake.

Please RSVP for all field trips and include your name, field trip date and contact information in case weather or illness forces a cancellation. RSVP to black.canyon.audubon.fieldtrips@gmail.com

For trips with "dates to be determined", keep an eye out for the monthly emails from BCAS president or visit the Black Canyon Audubon Society website for the latest information.

Spring 2025 Field Trips

All Montrose trips meet at the public parking lot at the corner of N. 2nd Street and N. Cascade Ave. in Montrose unless noted in the trip description. Please RSVP at black.canyon.audubon.fieldtrips@gmail.com and specify which trip(s) you are interested in attending.

March

First Tuesday (Montrose), March 4, 9 AM

Third Tuesday (Delta), March 18

We'll meet at Confluence Park at 9 am in the parking area east of lake (Gunnison River Drive, Delta). We may go to Cranes Landing, Sweitzer State Park or Fruitgrowers Reservoir from there depending on what birds are being seen in the valley. Please RSVP at black.canyon.audubon.fieldtrips@gmail.com or call Dian Torphy at (970) 200-6294.

Eckert Crane Days (Delta)

Saturday & Sunday, March 22-23, 9 AM TO NOON

Watching migrating Sand-hill Cranes and waterfowl. Meet at Fruitgrowers Reservoir. See page 5 for more details.

April

First Tuesday (Montrose), April 1, 9 AM

Third Tuesday (Delta), April 15, 9 AM

Paonia river walk. We'll meet in the parking area east of the Paonia museum. 700 Shady Lane, Paonia. Contact Dian Torphy at 970-200-6294 or RSVP at black.canyon.audubon.fieldtrips@gmail.com. If anyone is interested in carpooling, add that to your signup and we will try and make it happen!

Fruitgrowers Reservoir (Delta), Saturday, April 19, 8 AM

In April, ducks and shorebirds should be starting to show up at the reservoir near Eckert. We'll also look for Lewis Woodpeckers and early migrants. Meet in Montrose at 8 am or in the parking area at the reservoir on North Road at 8:45 am.

Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP,

Saturday, April 26, 8 AM

We will visit the south rim of Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and look for Peregrine Falcons, White-throated Swifts and maybe some early warblers,

Continued on next page

such as Virginia's and Black-throated Gray. Dusky Grouse is another possibility. We'll meet at 8 am in Montrose and head back to Montrose sometime around noon.

May

West End Field Trip, May 6-7

Black Canyon Audubon will sponsor a field trip to Paradox Valley and other West End venues for a spring birding adventure May 6-7, 2025. The opportunity to see over 70 species is very high. Expect several short walks to access bird habitat. The Paradox Valley and West End areas have a great mix of habitats ranging from desert scrub to classic alpine to riparian, allowing for a rich mix of birds during the spring migration. Expect to see a variety of waterfowl, Black-throated Sparrow, Vireos, Yellow-breasted Chat, Grace's Warbler, Black Phoebe, and a host of migrants.

We have arranged accommodations with the Vestal House – check their website for reservations. It's a super nice B&B at 420 Main St. in Nucla. Prices are comparable to the Rimrock Motel, where we've stayed in past years, plus it includes breakfast. The group will meet at the Vestal House, Nucla, Colorado at 9 AM on May 6. The property also has 2 camper/trailer full hookups. There will be a potluck dinner the evening of May 6 at the Vestal House – we'll have the use of the kitchen. Bring your own lunches each day and a dish to share at the potluck. Wear clothing appropriate for spring-time weather. Send a text to (970) 428-7750 to make a reservation at Vestal House by May 1, 2024. Tell them you are with Audubon. The field trip is limited to 10 participants. Sign up at TRLGPA48@gmail.com.

Ute Mountain Mesa Verde Birding Festival, May 7-11

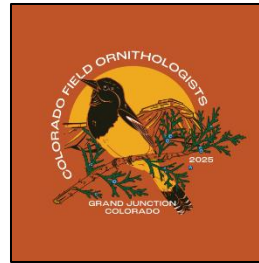
Not BCAS-related, but this is the only annual birding festival in southwestern Colorado. The festival offers a variety of field trips in the areas around Cortez, Colorado. The proceeds benefit the Cortez Cultural Center. See their website for more information: <https://utemountainmesaverdebirdingfestival.com>

Colorado Canyons Association Annual Birding Raft Trip, May 16-18

Colorado Canyons Association will do their annual birding raft trip on the Ruby/Horsethief section of the Colorado River, May 16-18, 2025. The combination of great birding and rafting the Colorado River makes for a fantastic experience. Check out their website at coloradocanyonsassociation.org for details and to sign up. Trip Leader is Bill Harris.

Kinikin Road (Montrose), Wednesday, May 21, 8 AM

Join us as we travel along Kinikin Road southeast of Montrose. We'll meet in Montrose at 8 AM. This section of road can be very birdy in Spring if the winter has been wet. Birds we have a good chance to see and hear are Brewer's Sparrow, Sage Thrashers, Yellow-breasted Chat, Lazuli Bunting, and possibly Blue Grosbeak. Raptors are commonly seen. Convention artwork by TJ Smith



June

Colorado Field Ornithologists Convention, Grand Junction, June 5-8

This organization's annual convention is being held in Grand Junction this year and offers a large number of field trips. Visit their website for more information <https://cobirds.org/conventions>

March, April & May Evening Lectures

Thursday, March 13, 7 PM

"Greater Sandhill Cranes in Colorado"

Van Graham, Colorado Crane Conservation Coalition

Thursday April 10, 7 PM

"Birding in Colombia"

Alan Reed and Susan Chandler-Reed at Montrose Field House

Thursday May 8, 7 PM

"Birding in Belize"

Bruce Ackerman at Montrose Field House

Eckert Crane Days Mar 21-28



Photo © Verlee Sanberg.

Thursday, March 13, 7 PM

The Biology of Greater Sandhill Cranes in Colorado

Presentation by Van Graham, Retired Terrestrial Wildlife Biologist/Colorado Parks and Wildlife. At the Montrose Field House/ Summit room, 25 Colorado Ave, Montrose

Friday, March 21, 6 PM

Sandhill Cranes and Humans: Collaborators or Adversaries

Presentation by Rachelle Vanausdall, Colorado State University. At the Delta Public Library Community Room

Saturday, March 22, 9 AM TO NOON

Guided Crane Viewing

Sponsored by Black Canyon Audubon Society. Spotting scopes and binoculars provided. At Fruitgrowers Reservoir, North Road in Eckert. Lots of good birding!



Saturday, March 22, NOON

Western States Ranch BBQ

At Harts Basin Rd (North of Fruitgrowers Reservoir). Free lunch for crane watchers.

Sunday, March 23, 9 AM to Noon

Guided Crane Viewing

Sponsored by Black Canyon Audubon Society. Spotting scopes and binoculars provided. At Fruitgrowers Reservoir, North Road in Eckert

Saturday, March 28, 10 AM

The ABC's of Nature Photography

Presented by Nolan Thornberry. Bring your phone or camera. At Bill Heddles Rec Center/ Community Room B, Delta

CBC continued from cover

From feeder-watchers and field observers to count compilers and regional editors, everyone who takes part in the Christmas Bird Count does it for love of birds and the excitement of friendly competition—and with the knowledge that their efforts are making a difference for science and bird conservation.

The count takes place within Count Circles, which focus on specific geographical areas and each circle is overseen by a Count Compiler. Count circles are divided and areas assigned to participants at the meetup time and place. Beginning birders join a group that includes at least one experienced birdwatcher.

In addition, birdwatchers with homes within the boundaries of a Count Circle, can stay home and report the birds that visit their feeders.

A Summary of Christmas Bird Counts in the area:

Montrose—14 Dec 2024

Organizer was Missy Siders. There were 24 participants who counted 13,453 individual birds of 79 species. Rarities seen were Williamson's Sapsucker, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Black Phoebe

Delta—28 Dec 2024

Organizer was Amy Seglund. There were 12 participants who counted 13,346 individual birds of 63 species. Rarities seen were two White Pelicans, and three Blue-winged Teals

Gunnison—22 Dec 2024

Organizer was Arden Anderson. There were 17 participants who counted 3,463 individual birds of 44 species. Rarities seen were two Bushtits.

Hotchkiss—4 Jan 2025

Organizer was Adam Petry. There were 45 participants (a record high) who counted 6,978 individual birds of 59 species.

Big thanks to all who volunteered! For more information about CBC participation, visit Audubon's website or contact Bruce Ackerman, president of the Black Canyon Audubon chapter.

Avian Ramblings—Spring 2025

By Bill Harris

I just finished reading Amy Tan's "The Backyard Bird Chronicles," an easy read about her journey into the "feeder" world. Her powers of observation are excellent. The interplay she describes between birds of different species and those of the same species is spot on. Many birders I know put out feeders. It's a great way to observe birds' behaviors. Kathy and I put out bird feeders, including a suet cage. The yard is a busy place around the feeders, especially during the winter. We also have a water dish – it's a real bird magnet.

The suet cage is primarily frequented by Northern Flickers. On one sunny morning recently, a male flicker landed on the cage and started pecking at the suet. A moment later a second male flicker landed on the ground under the cage and started feeding on the crumbs the other flicker created. The first flicker dropped to the ground, chased off the second flicker, pecked the ground a few times then returned to the cage. The second flicker soon returned under the cage and continued feeding. The first flicker flew off a moment later – the second flicker promptly alighted on the suet cage. An interesting example of a pecking order.

Another observation I have made is the behavior of Dark-eyed Juncos. Small flocks of 6-8 juncos are wintertime yard visitors. They are the first birds to arrive at the feeders in the morning. They are strictly ground feeders, and have their own form of pecking order, chasing each other as they scratch and peck the ground. They hang around until the house sparrows arrive en masse.

For several years Woodhouse Scrub Jays have frequented my yard in the fall, harvesting the Gambel Oak acorns. Most of the time they show up as a pair, but on occasion they arrive with what I assume is a young one. They are boisterous with a cocky attitude, squawking, flicking their tails, letting other birds they are in charge. They cache acorns in our gardens and supposedly are good at remembering where their caches are located. I wonder how good they are at remembering, because the following spring I find numerous oaks coming up in the gardens. ■

Homemade Bird Suet

by Susan Chandler-Reed

After several years of putting store-bought suet cakes in our suet feeder and getting almost no interest from birds, we have been making it from scratch, using a recipe found on the internet. We figure that it costs only about \$1/block to make ourselves, compared to \$2.50/block at the store. But now instead of putting out one or two suet cakes each winter, we are feeding birds a cake every day or two!

The internet has numerous variations of this recipe. We have been using lard from the grocery store (in the same aisle as the Crisco brand), but you can also start with melted beef or pork fat. The suet cakes are gooey to handle and can become rancid if kept at room temperature, so be sure to keep them in a cool place.

Bird Suet Cake Recipe

2 cups chunky peanut butter (the hydrogenated cheap stuff) (approx. 1 lb)

2 cups lard (approx. 1 lb)

1 cup oatmeal

1 cup bird seed

½ cup of sugar

Melt lard and peanut butter in large saucepan on stovetop. Remove from heat, cool slightly, and stir in remaining ingredients. Mix well and pour into 9 x 13-inch pan lined with parchment paper (for easy removal). Cool until solid and cut into six pieces (or to fit your feeder. Refrigerate or freeze extra blocks until needed.



Not up for making your own suet? Dian Torphy reports that her birds eat the C&S brand of suet seen here. ■

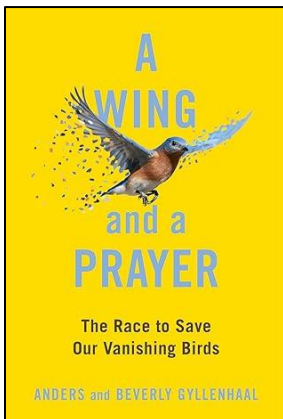
Upcoming Book Club Selections

The readers in the Book Club suggested books for 2025 and then voted on their favorites (always difficult to choose!) Everyone is invited to join on the meetings. We generally meet by Zoom from October to April and then in-person in summer. Check the website for any changes or contact Bruce Ackerman to get on the Book Club email list. Please join us, even if you have not read the book yet; the discussions are always lively. Here are the books for the next four months, with the full list on the BCAS website.

Starting March 2025 the book club meetings will switch to second Wednesdays of each month at 3 PM. Please let us know if you'd like to be on a separate email list just for the book club. Contact Sheryl Radovich at sherylradovich@icloud.com or Bruce Ackerman at BruceAckermanAUD@aol.com.

March 12

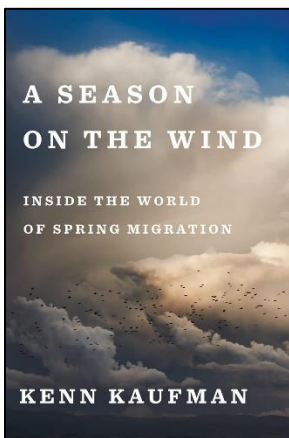
A Wing and a Prayer: The Race to Save Our Vanishing Birds by Anders Gyllenhaal and Beverly Gyllenhaal, (2023).



"The Gyllenhaals, birders and distinguished former reporters, journeyed thousands of miles, tracking efforts to protect the America's vanishing birds."

A Wing and a Prayer offers hope and an urgent call to action: Birds are dying at an unprecedented pace. But there are encouraging

breakthroughs across the hemisphere and still time to change course, if we act quickly.



April 9

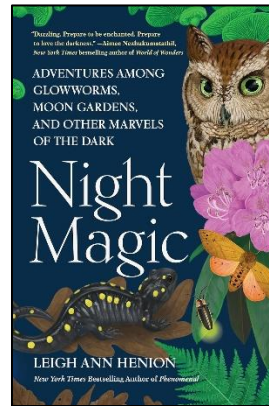
A Season on the Wind: Inside the World of Spring Migration by Kenn Kaufman (2019).

A story of the incredible spring bird migration that occurs each year. Some birds travel thousands of miles from South to North America. One spectacular place is along Lake Erie in

northwestern Ohio, where the peak of spring migration is so spectacular that it attracts bird watchers from around the globe.

May 14

Night Magic: Adventures Among Glowworms, Moon Gardens, and Other Marvels of the Dark (2024) by Leigh Ann Henion

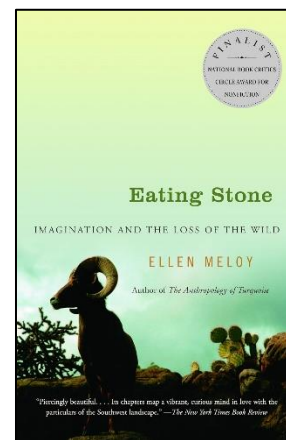


The author invites you to celebrate the living wonders and richness of the dark. The book moves through spring, summer and fall, each season focusing on a few different life-forms including spotted salamanders, glowworms, moths and bioluminescent fungi. Mixed in among these encounters, Henion laments the ever-growing theft of

natural darkness by artificial light, and encourages readers to tune in to the darkness around them.

June 11

Eating Stone: Imagination and the Loss of the Wild by Ellen Meloy (2006).



Long believed to be disappearing and possibly even extinct, the Southwestern bighorn sheep of Utah's canyonlands have made a surprising comeback. Naturalist Ellen Meloy tracks a band of these majestic creatures through backcountry hikes, downriver floats, and travels across the Southwest. Meloy chronicles her communion with the

bighorns and laments the growing severance of man from nature. Wry, quirky and perceptive the book is a brilliant and wholly original tribute to the natural world.

Conservation Conversations

By Sallie Thoreson

Owl Irruptions in Minnesota

I was recently in cold, blustery Minnesota. I did not see any owls but I sure heard about them. This winter, Snowy owls have been seen farther south, even posing risks for air traffic at the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport. In the area around Duluth there have been sightings of Great Gray, Boreal, and Northern Hawk owls. One report called it “the invasion of the vole snatchers.” This is the largest owl irruption in Minnesota in two decades. The cold weather and lack of voles in Canada help drive the owls south, plus plenty of food one year may lead to too many owls for the food supply the next year. Unfortunately, too many owls are succumbing to trauma in their new environment, through vehicle collisions. They are stressed in their new environment, arrive cold and hungry, and their poor peripheral vision means they may not see vehicles as they cross or land near roads.

State Legislation

BCAS participates in the Public Policy Committee of the Audubon Councils of Colorado (ACC). The committee monitors state legislation and receives briefings from lobbyists supported by Audubon Rockies (BCAS contributes financially to this effort). The Committee is currently recommending support for a battery stewardship program in communities, additional turf restrictions for residential development, and to continue the Wildlife Habitat Stamp Program (among others). Opposition is currently to adding nuclear energy as a clean energy resource and a package of bills aimed at undoing many of the environmental and conservation wins from the last several years. There are numerous bills the Committee is monitoring. There are also some nine state water bills, with Audubon Rockies recommending support for six of them. All bills may change over the course of the legislative session.

National Audubon Society leadership

A recent federal court ruling underscored that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) must consider Greater Sage-Grouse habitat when leasing for oil and gas development on public lands.

The new science-driven “Birds and Offshore Wind” report explains how the U.S. can balance offshore wind energy with bird conservation. Potential impacts on birds can be addressed through careful siting and

operation. <https://www.audubon.org/our-work/climate/clean-energy/birds-and-offshore-wind-report>

National Audubon is introducing its “Healthy Birds, Healthy Planet Policy Agenda,” which details the policies of Audubon over the next five years at the local, national, and hemispheric levels to “bend the curve on migratory bird decline.”

Advocacy techniques

These days it may not be enough to make a specific ask (“pass or don’t pass this bill”) of lawmakers, but to address the trend toward making sweeping changes in bedrock environmental legislation and priorities. Conservation organizations are including/suggesting the idea of letting our legislators know about our interests and reminding them of the value of public lands. Recommended texts include “I love National Monuments/National Parks/etc. (specific examples) because...; Public Lands provide economic benefits for local communities, and help mitigate fires, erosion, and floods; multiple use of public lands works; public lands sequester carbon and provide other benefits such as... and I ask you to be a champion for birds and wildlife by lending your support and attention to these critically important areas...” Personal relationships, meetings, and respectful emails/calls to representatives (federal, state and local) can help them realize who their constituents are and what they represent. WE are a special interest that matters!

The Name Game

In a time-honored tradition, legislators may use titles for their bills that are misleading. Colorado state legislators have a bill defining nuclear energy as a “clean energy” similar to geothermal, solar and small hydroelectricity. The federal “Fix Our Forest Act” could lead to more logging of large trees that store high amounts of carbon, and could lead to approval of logging for large swatches of land without thorough scientific input and public engagement. The current “Ending Presidential Overreach on Public Lands Act” attacks the Antiquities Act and eliminates presidential authority to designate new national monuments. In 2022 Federal representative Boebert sponsored the “Trust the Science Act” (now called the “Pet and Livestock Protection Act”) to permanently delist the gray wolf in the lower 48 states. Words matter, and we have voices to speak up.

Continued on page 9.

A Whale of a Time

A number of our BCAS members like to sea kayak. Among the joys (and risks) are meeting a whale. One kayaker off the coast of Chile's Patagonian coast had a humpback whale grab him, take him underwater in its mouth, and then spit him out. According to a BBC article, humpback whales cannot swallow large objects as they have a throat the size of a household pipe. Good to know.

Beavers Get the job Done

In the Czech Republic, while humans were deciding how to fund and implement a dam project to protect a river and create thriving wetlands, the beavers moved in and completed the project ahead of schedule, under budget, and better than the original plans called for by humans.

If you would like more information on any of these topics, please contact
black.canyon.audubon.society@gmail.com and
reference "Conservation Conversations" ■

New Osprey Nest Platform Erected in Montrose

By Bruce Ackerman

On Monday, February 10, Audubon had an osprey nest platform installed at Chipeta Lake city park in Montrose. It is on the east side of the lake, you can drive near it along the north side of the lake.

Delta-Montrose Electrical Association (DMEA) donated a 50-foot power pole on which the platform sits and installed it. Gayle Johnson, BCAS treasurer, single-handedly made this happen. She donated half the cost of the platform, purchased it, and coordinated between DMEA and Montrose City Parks Department to make it happen. BCAS donated the other half to purchase the platform that is a 3-foot-wide grid on top of the pole, with sidebars. Five employees of DMEA, and one from Montrose City Parks were there to "git 'er done." Ten Audubon members were present to watch it go up.

We expect ospreys will migrate back into our area in April and we hope they use the new platform. We will be watching and will spread the word when the ospreys arrive.



The installed platform.



A closeup view of the platform installed atop the pole.

As far as I know this is the only nest platform in the Montrose area. In recent years, ospreys have tried unsuccessfully to nest on a power pole on nearby Otter Road, and at the football stadium of the Montrose High School Red Hawks. We have heard that Ridgway State Park is also working on plans to install a platform there.

Tune into ABA's Podcast



The American Birding Podcast brings together staff and friends of the American Birding Association as we talk about birds, birding, travel and conservation in North America and beyond. Tune in via your favorite streaming service.

Up From the Egg: Confessions of a Nuthatch Avider

By Ogden Nash

Bird watchers top my honors list.
I aimed to be one, but I missed.
Since I'm both myopic and astigmatic,
My aim turned out to be erratic,
And I, bespectacled and binocular,
Exposed myself to comment jocular.

We don't need too much birdlore, do we,
To tell a flamingo from a towhee;
Yet I cannot, and never will,
Unless the silly birds stand still.
And there's no enlightenment in a tour
Of ornithological literature.
Is yon strange creature a common chickadee,
Or a migrant alouette from Picardy?

You can rush to consult your Nature guide
And inspect the gallery inside,
But a bird in the open never looks
Like its picture in the birdie books –
Or if it once did, it has changed its plumage,
And plunges you back into ignorant gloomage.
That is why I sit here growing old by inches,
Watching a clock instead of finches,
But I sometimes visualize in my gin
The Audubon that I audubin.

*Frederic Ogden Nash (1902-1971) was
an American poet known for his light, often comic,
verse. ■*



White-breasted Nuthatch © Verlee Sanburg.

BCAS Board Meeting Highlights

by Sallie Thoreson, Secretary

These highlights cover the Board meeting in January 2025.

- Colorado Field Ornithologists annual meeting is Grand Junction June 5-8. They will have some trips to the Montrose area. Bill, Don, and Bruce may lead some local trips.
- BCAS regular projects and programs are continuing. Starting March 2025 the book club meetings will switch to second Wednesdays of each month at 3 PM. The new dates and the schedule of books for 2025 are on the BCAS website.
- Future birding trips are planned and publicized through the normal channels. Kristal also has our meeting programs booked into 2025. • The BCAS currently has 440 paid members. The BCAS dues structure was amended to charge an additional \$10 for mailing a printed copy of the newsletter to members and to clarify that BCAS only receives \$3 for each National Audubon Society membership. All BCAS memberships are up for renewal in January 2025.
- The BCAS website is undergoing a refresh. It should be ready soon.
- BCAS continues to contribute an article to the Montrose Daily Press every five weeks, coordinated by Caroline Evans. • Crane Days will be happening March 21-23 at Fruitgrower Reservoir. Alida has lined up presentations at Delta Library on March 21 and March 29. The monthly meeting in Montrose for March 13 will also feature a sandhill crane speaker. Alida is setting up bird-related Storywalks at a couple of the Delta County libraries.
- We are forming a committee to plan for the annual meeting/banquet for the beginning of June. We are always looking for new members to help us with this fun event.
- Sallie is part of the Public Policy Committee of the Audubon Councils of Colorado (ACC). The committee monitors state legislation and receives briefings from lobbyists from Audubon Rockies (BCAS contributes financially to this effort). Our State representatives need to know Audubon chapters support the birds, habitat, and conservation.

Continued on next page.

- The Motus tower will have to be moved. David Sinton and Missy Siders are searching for a new location.
- At the Marine Road Wildlife Area, The City of Montrose is planning a dedication of the bird blind as part of the Earth Day Celebration on Tuesday April 22. Bill and Jon have been working on a loop trail through the NW portion. The City may plant two more trees if previously planted trees don't survive. We need to control the Russian Olive saplings. While they are valuable for habitat, we need to thin them now. We encourage everyone to bird the area. Let the Montrose Public Works know if you see any dogs off lease, trash or problems in the parking lot.
- • BCAS is starting to get the usual requests for Spring educational programs. Alida is also working on a bird migration webinar for Colorado Lights Out Week in April for both Delta and Montrose areas. Please let Sallie Thoreson know if you are available to help with any events. ▪

BCAS Treasurer's Report

By Gayle Johnson

The chapter currently has \$37,073.72 in its checking account. We received several large gifts from members to support the installation of a MOTUS tower in our area.

Expenditures have been small: \$300 to the Grove restaurant to secure our annual meeting space in 2024, \$266.45 to the UPS store, and \$228 for website domain maintenance. ▪

Free Raptor ID App

Looking for a resource to boost your raptor ID skills? Check out this free app from Hawkwatch International and The Cornell Lab of Ornithology. It's available free from the App Store and Google Play. It includes 1000 annotated photos and many identification videos to make raptor ID easier. Hawkwatch International also has fabulous identification sheets on its website at <https://hawkwatch.org/raptor-id/raptor-id-fact-sheets/>.



Volunteer Opportunities

Our BCAS board has lots of ideas for programs and outreach to members and the community. We need your help to make all this happen!

Please consider joining one (or more) of the following committees. You can set your commitment level and schedule.

Education and Outreach Committee. BCAS participates in a few key community education events April - May. We really need a cadre of interested folks to help with the events. You don't need to be an experienced birder, but a willingness to share your enthusiasm for birds and the outdoors. You can let us know you'd like to be on the list for us to contact when we have an event. Better yet, you can volunteer to coordinate one (or more!) events or programs. This is really fun and rewarding.

Publicity Committee. We need help to promote all the good things BCAS is doing- through the standard media and on Social Media. You may want to be the person to contact one newspaper or coordinate News Releases to all media and/or expand our Social Media reach. A Committee makes the workload manageable.

Annual meeting Committee. Our banquet and annual meeting is scheduled for early June and we are just starting the planning. We welcome your input and assistance. We need to pick a date, location, speaker and menu. Whew! We also need help on registration, silent auction and other details. This is a short-term commitment, and leads to food, fun and fellowship.

Advocacy Committee. These are trying times and there are many opportunities (some would say necessities) to keep informed and get involved in productive conversations and making our voices heard. Help us decide what issues to get involved with and how to help BCAS members make their comments and voices count. You may be passionate about one local, state, or national issue or you may want to learn more about how to follow policy and legislative issues and make meaningful comments. Help us protect birds and the places we all live.

Please let Bruce Ackerman know which Committee(s!) you are interested in or where you would like more information. Bruce can connect you with BCAS board members who are working in these areas. We look forward to working with you! And we always have room for more Board members. ▪

Black Canyon Audubon Society

P.O. Box 387

Delta, CO 81416



Want to see the color photographs in this publication?

Help reduce the use of paper and lower BCAS expenses by receiving this publication in color via email. Send your request for electronic delivery in PDF format to

blackcanyonaudubon@gmail.com .



Please remember to renew your membership!

Local memberships expire December 31. Please pay online or by check and extend your membership through December 2025. Dues paid to the Black Canyon Audubon Chapter stay in the chapter and help fund activities, public outreach, and more!

Black Canyon Audubon Society (NAS Chapter D14)

Chapter Membership Form

Local Audubon chapter members may participate in all chapter activities, receive the chapter newsletter *Canyon Wrenderings*, and vote on chapter issues. Annual membership dues are \$20 for individual and \$30 for family membership. These annual dues remain local. If you are a member of National Audubon, you are already a member of BCAS!

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone (Optional): _____

Email address (Required): _____

Enclosed: ____\$20 for individual membership, ____\$30 for family membership
____ Additional \$10 for printed and mailed copies of newsletter.

Renew online at: www.BlackCanyonAudubon.com.

or mail your renewal to: Black Canyon Audubon Society
PO Box 387, Delta, CO 81416.