



Great Blue Herald

Grand Valley Audubon Society
GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO

BIRDS AND WORDS

from the Chapter President

Hello Members and Friends of Grand Valley Audubon:

I hope this abbreviated newsletter finds you well, seeking out cooler venues, and finding joy as we ease into a post-pandemic normal. I've been engrossed in gardening by attempting to create a better bird, bee and butterfly backyard and as always, exploring new places both near and far.

A few weeks back, the majority of the GVAS Board met for a productive retreat day in the higher, cooler air of the Korte cabin up on Brush Creek. Many thanks to Mary and Nic. We revised, albeit slightly, our mission statement, clarified and prioritized our greatest chapter challenges, and created actions to meet these challenges.

Because you are a local or national Audubon member, or perhaps just an interested party who might consider joining locally, I think it is important for all to know our current challenges, and how you might want to help keep our chapter growing, strong and viable.

In order of priority, we identified these areas as our greatest challenges and possible solutions:

Leadership – how do we shift the many responsibilities I've taken on as chapter president and work towards a chapter president successor?

Solution: create committees and invite members to take part beyond just board members to take some of the burden off of just a few individuals.

Programming – how do we reach a wider audience of those who want to know more about birds, get better at bird ID or eBird and birding through the summer months.

Solution: broaden monthly program offerings to include seasonal field trips at higher elevations, change up the formal monthly program meeting times, possible first Tuesday of the month bird walks, create a 4-question survey for members asking about programming ideas and interests.

Nature Preserve – how to keep momentum going on the wetlands improvement, work days, signage, challenges and access?

Wilson's Warbler photographed in Horsethief Canyon by Bob Clarke. Check out the new Local Bird Page on the website! And if you haven't seen the new Bird Gallery with monthly entries, check it out! Pages are organized by Bob Clarke of Grand Junction.



Solution: form a Preserve Committee to act as liaison to rest of board and membership. Preserve Committee has been formed - Mike C, Larry C and Chuck H.

Membership/Publicity – How to use our NEON membership management program more efficiently/effectively to recruit and retain members, as well as keep membership informed of chapter events.

Solution: Pam Lauman (Membership chair) and Tina Wilson (website and newsletter) are working together with Judy Vanderleest to have this be more effective. It's a learning curve, for sure!

Medium Priority Tasks: Because we are stretching our board members pretty thin, we really could use more volunteers on certain committees to deal with chapter tasks, as well as someone to help energize a fall membership campaign as well as create a membership flyer. As with all non-profit boards, we are seeking out a few new board members. If that's too much, why not try some time on a committee?

The retreat helped give our chapter leaders focus, and certainly made my load lighter by shifting some of the responsibilities to other committees and individuals. If you have considered joining a board, this is a welcoming, non-political, generous and supportive group of folks to work with. Thanks to you all!

Grand Valley Audubon MISSION STATEMENT

Grand Valley Audubon Society strives to foster an appreciation of birds and other wildlife, preserve a diversity of habitats and *advocate for* a sustainable healthy environment through education, research and individual action.
(changes are in italics)

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: BIRD BANDING COMMITTEE

We are currently recruiting volunteers for our Bird Banding Committee for the 2021 Fall Banding Season which runs from Sunday, Sept 19th for set up, with the banding station running from Mondays- Friday mornings, Sept 20 until October 15th.

Volunteers assist the certified bird bander by recording data, periodic walking of the net run course, getting super close to songbirds, assisting the banding educators with daily set up and break down tasks before, during and after student groups arrive for their half day field trip to Connected Lakes State Park.

Please contact Cary at catwood814@gmail.com for more information.

Grand Valley Audubon Board – Get to know your chapter leaders! Let's start with the longest serving members....

Nic Korte has been on the board for nearly three decades. He is a past-president but mostly has served as Conservation Chairman. He has a passion for conserving habitat and for understanding bird behavior.

His specific activities within the chapter are to assure participation in conservation issues both locally and nationwide, and to lead the Western Screech-Owl project. The Western Screech-Owl project has achieved national recognition by leading all Christmas Counts and by showing the way to conserve a significant population despite accelerating habitat loss.

Photo of Nic Korte with granddaughter, Zia.

Check out the **About** page on www.audubongv.org for



Back Row: Pam Lauman, Mike Campbell, Larry Collins, Cary Atwood, Hunter Harmon
Front Row: Judy West, Chuck Hunt, Karen Levad (former GVAS President & Communications Chair), and Nic Korte.
Missing: Stephanie Matlock

UPCOMING EVENTS

Although we are taking our usual summer hiatus, here are some events to take advantage of ~

PRESERVE WETLANDS OPEN HOUSE & PUBLIC BIRD BANDING DAY:

**Saturday, Sept. 25, 2021,
8:30-11:30am**

Join us for a guided walk overview of the first phase of our wetlands restoration project, and what Phase 2 will entail, as well as a first look at the installation of new interpretive signs about the importance of wetlands. From the Preserve, stroll into the Kingfisher area of Connected Lakes State Park and spend time experiencing the scientific

enterprise of bird banding with our certified bird bander. You will get up close and personal to wild songbirds and learn what the capture, study and release of migrating birds means as it relates to bird biology and migration.

SECOND TUESDAY BIRDWALK:

Tuesday, Sept. 14, 2021~
Join us every second Tuesday of the month for a 1.5-2 hr bird walk. All skills welcome. We will meet this month at 8:30AM on the Audubon Trail behind Chow Down Pet Store in the Safeway Plaza at Hwy 340 and Monument Road. Leader to be announced.

COSTA RICA BIRDING TRIP: Sept. 1-8, 2021



Accompany Grand Valley Audubon on a birding excursion in the Osa Peninsula to seek out the spectacular abundance of avifauna, flora, and wildlife inhabiting the primary and secondary rainforest. Hike through Corcovado National Park – the largest national park in Costa Rica – and observe the area's richness in biodiversity, learn about conservation initiatives, explore Caño Island, and search for water and shore birds along the Tárcoles River on this 8-day journey through a natural hub for wildlife and beautiful scenery.

Visit holbrook.travel/gvas-cr21 or contact Kevin Van Dien at kevin@holbrooktravel.com or 877-295-7927.



- Go birding in the primary rainforest of Corcovado National Park.

- Visit Caño Island Biological Reserve and watch for Osprey, Cattle Egret, black hawk, and phalarope.

- Enjoy a whale watching tour with a local expert from the KETO foundation.

- Search for white-faced capuchin and spider monkey in the Barú National Wildlife Refuge.

- Look for Double-striped Thick-knee, Roseate Spoonbill, jacanas, and ducks along the Tárcoles River.



OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

Cary Atwood, *President*
catwood814@gmail.com

Larry Collins, *Treasurer*
lcollins1@bresnan.net

Judy West, *Secretary*
jwest202@gmail.com

Mike Campbell – mcampbell641@gmail.com

Pam Lauman – pamggl@gmail.com

Stephanie Matlock – smatlock@coloradomesa.edu

Hunter Harmon, *CMU* – hunterharmon72@gmail.com

Nic Korte, *Conservation* – nkorte1@hotmail.com

Chuck Hunt, *Preserve Manager* –
codysmokeybear@yahoo.com

Tina Wilson, *Website & Newsletter* –
tinawilson2656@gmail.com

Meredith Swett Walker, *Wetlands Project Coordinator* – mbswett@gmail.com

www.AudubonGV.org

INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER

- > **BIRDS AND WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT**
Find out about the Board Retreat. What issues they discussed, and what solutions they came up with.
- > **UPDATED MISSION STATEMENT**
- > **BIRD BANDING VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**
- > **UPCOMING EVENTS > COSTA RICA TRIP**
- > **GET TO KNOW YOUR BOARD MEMBERS**
- > **BOARD MEMBERS AND CONTACT INFORMATION**
- > **WEBSITE UPDATES - NEW PAGES, NEW DESIGN**
WWW.AUDUBONGV.ORG



Photo by Lori Shuler, Snowy Plover, Colorado Riverfront Trail, Pear Park section, 4-26-21.

New pages on the website: www.audubongv.org

- > Bird Photo Gallery: photos taken by members and submitted monthly for publishing. See more info on online.
- > Local Bird Galley: find this page under Resources. Both pages organized by photographer, Bob Clarke.



CPW is monitoring for sick, dying birds seen in other regions of the United States but not currently here in Colorado.

FORT COLLINS, Colo. - With reports of sick and dying birds in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States, Colorado Parks and Wildlife is on the lookout for any signs of similar concerns in Colorado.

So far, no cases compatible with this "mystery disease" have been confirmed in the state of Colorado. The syndrome observed in other states is characterized by swollen eyes, blindness and signs of neurologic impairment. The birds most commonly affected have been young blue jays, grackles, European starlings and American robins. The cause of this disease remains unknown.

Please contact your nearest Colorado Parks and Wildlife office if you observe birds with swollen eyes, birds that appear sick or act abnormal, or if you observe three or more dead birds in one location within a two week period.



Sick birds with finch conjunctivitis have swollen, red, watery, and/or crusty eyes. Birds may recover from this disease, although severe cases can be fatal. Finches are most commonly affected. The Mycoplasma gallisepticum bacteria is spread by contact between birds and is usually spread in crowded groups.

In Colorado, house finches can be infected by bacteria (*Mycoplasma gallisepticum*) that cause swollen, crusty eyes, but this finch conjunctivitis disease has not been seen in other species. Finch conjunctivitis and other bird diseases are often spread at bird feeders.

Remember to clean bird feeders and bird baths regularly by removing all debris, cleaning with a 10 percent bleach solution, rinsing with water and allowing them to air dry completely before refilling. Please take down feeders if you notice sick or dying birds.

Contact:
Jason Clay
Northeast Region Public Information Officer
303-291-7234 / jason.clay@state.co.us
@CPW_NE