



# Canyon Wrenderings

*The Journal of the Black Canyon Audubon Society*

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

Winter 2012/2013

Volume XXV Number 2

## Mark Your Calendar

### December

**Bird of the month—Dark-eyed Junco**

• **Saturday the 15th**

Montrose Christmas Bird Count

Meet at 8:30 AM at the BLM office (2465 S Townsend, Montrose). For more information, contact Missy Siders at 970-240-5332 (office), 970-275-6639 (cell), or msiders@blm.gov

• **Sunday the 16th**

Gunnison Christmas Bird Count

Meet at 7:30 AM at the Hurst Science Building on the Western State Colorado University campus. For more information, contact Arden Anderson at 970-641-5322.

**AND**

Delta Christmas Bird Count

Meet at 8:00 AM at the Delta City Market parking lot. For more information, contact Amy Segland at 970-252-6014 or amy.segland@state.co.us

### January

**Bird of the month—Rough-legged Hawk**

• **Saturday the 5th**

Hotchkiss Christmas Bird Count

Meet at 8:00 AM at the Hotchkiss City Market parking lot. For more information, contact Jason Beason at 970-310-5117 or jason.beason@rmbo.org.

### February

**Birds of the month—Raptors**

• **Fri. the 15th to Mon. the 18th**

Great Backyard Bird Count

For more information, visit: [www.birdsource.org/gbbc](http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc)

• **TBA**

Raptor Field Trips

Keep an eye on your inbox. Details will be announced at a later date.

## WELCOME BACK, ROSIES

BY AMBER CARVER

Each fall, Rosy-Finches come to Colorado in droves. Seemingly blown in with the snow, they travel in large flocks and take over feeders in mountain towns. Yet they can be tricky to find. You have to know where they are, or be in the right place at the right time.

Colorado is one of the few states where all three species of Rosy-Finch can routinely be found. Brown-capped Rosy-Finches stay year-round. Black Rosy-Finches and Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches only show up for the winter.

If you want to see a Rosy-Finch, your best bet is to drive up to the mountains and patrol on foot. Or, better yet, make friends with someone who lives in the mountains and has a feeder. Either way, Rosy-Finches are a real treat, and they are definitely worth going out of your way for.



This Black Rosy-Finch was found during a stop at the Cimarron gas station. It was hanging out in a mixed flock with Dark-eyed Juncos and Brown-capped Rosy-Finches. Photo by Amber Carver

**Did you know...** Rosy-Finches belong to the genus *Leucosticte*, which includes seven species. The other four species live in Asia.

### LOOKING FORWARD

#### PLENTY OF UP-COMING OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP

I hope everyone had a wonderful fall and were able to get out and enjoy the changing of colors and the movement of birds on their way south. We have some outstanding birding opportunities coming up that our membership should take full advantage of. The first is a large-scale effort by the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory to count Barrow's Goldeneyes in Colorado. Two large bodies of water in the BCAS area have been identified as good places to look for these ducks: Blue Mesa Reservoir and Taylor Park Reservoir.



Details about the count can be found elsewhere in the newsletter. The second are the four Christmas Bird Counts sponsored by the BCAS in our area in Gunnison, Montrose, Delta, and Hotchkiss. These are important and enjoyable events that provide consistent and long-term data that is important to researchers. An attempt is made to count all of the birds within the same 15-mile-diameter area of each count in a single day. The circles are broken into individual count areas that can be covered easily by a group. Our problem is that we have not had enough people counting to cover the areas as well as we would like. If you are reluctant to take part for fear that your skills are inadequate, have no fear because you can be paired with people who are happy to share their knowledge. It is a great way to find out about some great places to find birds, see and learn about birds you might otherwise not know about, meet people who share your interest, and contribute important information about the birds in our area. Dates and other information about the counts are detailed in the newsletter.

#### BCAS Board Meeting Schedule, 2013

January 10- Montrose

March 14- Delta

May 9- Montrose

July 11- Delta

September 12- Montrose

November 14- Delta

BCAS is a relatively small group that covers a large area – Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, San Miguel, and Ouray counties. We are an all-volunteer group. Our dedicated volunteers do a remarkable job: educational programs for school children, bird banding at Ridgway State Park, maintenance of bird skins and mounts for public education, four Christmas bird counts, four raptor field trips, involvement in the Gunnison Sage Grouse Working Group, commenting on proposals on federal land that may affect birds, putting on an annual meeting, putting out a quarterly

newsletter, leading the way with Eckert Crane Days, participating in public events, interacting with Audubon Colorado, maintaining a website and Facebook page, having bi-monthly board meetings, and many other things. Still, we would like to offer more. In particular, we would like to be able to have more field trips and to have more presentations. In addition to being fun and offering more opportunities to our members, it would enable people to get to know each other and to learn more about the world and birds around us. In order for this to happen, we need more participation. We would like to form a field trip committee and we would like to form a programs committee. We think that more field trips and programs are what people want, but we won't know until you say so and help to make them happen. Please call any of the board members to say you are interested and would like to help! By the way, our board meetings are open to anyone who would like to attend. The next one will be in Montrose on the evening of January 10.

**Jon Horn**

BCAS President

## OFFICERS

<u>President</u> - Jon Horn	(970)249-6761 ext. 14	jon_horn@alpinearchaeology.com
<u>Vice President</u> - OPEN		
<u>Secretary</u> - Marti Isler & Sheryl Radovich	249-0737 240-3788	martiisler@montrose.net canyon.creek@bresnan.net
<u>Treasurer</u> - Elaine Probasco	252-0918	eprobasco6@earthlink.net

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chris Lazo	Hotchkiss	963-8049	2006clazo@myway.com
Theresa Childers	Gunnison	641-7364	theresa_childers@nps.gov
Martha Grewal	Cederedge	856-4748	grewalmartha@yahoo.com
Robin Nicholoff	Hotchkiss	527-3997	robgreg@tds.net
Jon Horn	Montrose	249-6761 ext. 14	jon_horn@alpinearchaeology.com
Geoff Tischbein	Montrose	626-9721	geofft@montrose.net
John Beene	Gunnison	(303) 519-9977	john.beene@western.edu
Rich Stafford	Montrose	252-0170	megrich@montrose.net

## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

<u>Audubon CO Rep</u> - Chris Lazo	963-8049	2006clazo@myway.com
<u>Education</u> - Marti Isler & Sheryl Radovich	249-0737 240-3788	martiisler@montrose.net canyon.creek@bresnan.net
<u>Conservation</u> - Bill Day	872-3216	billday@paonia.com
<u>Membership</u> - Rich Stafford	252-0170	megrich@montrose.net
<u>Publicity</u> - Geoff Tischbein	626-9721	geofft@montrose.net
<u>Programs</u> - OPEN		
<u>Newsletter Editor</u> - Amber Carver	(310) 483-5721	caramb22@gmail.com

## Treasury Report

As of October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012, Black Canyon Audubon Society had assets of \$22,941.61. That total includes the following restricted funds: Bird-banding/Education, \$2,088.73 and Fruitgrowers Fund, \$620.00. It also includes a grant from Audubon Colorado of \$2,290.00 to support efforts for the Gunnison Sage-Grouse.

## GOT PLANS NEXT SUMMER?

### A heads-up on the national convention

The National Audubon Society will be holding a convention at the Skamania Lodge in Stevenson, Washington on July 12-15. Under the banner "Taking Flight Together," this event will draw chapter leaders, board members—and anyone interested in becoming more involved—from around the country to share ideas, attend workshops, and discuss Audubon's current direction. It's many months away, and registration doesn't open until February, but now's the time to start planning. To learn more about the event, and to sign on to the mailing list, visit: <http://www.audubon.org/2013convention>



# Chapter News

BY CHRIS LAZO

## BY THE SWEAT OF THEIR BROW Nest boxes readied for spring festivals

The drills were whirring and the saws were buzzing. Well actually just the drills were whirring as BCAS board President Jon Horn had everything prepped and laid out for final construction of forty Bluebird nest boxes. Saturday November third saw three BCAS board members at Jon's house for the completion of the of the nest boxes. These nest boxes will be used for fund raising to support the conservation and education efforts of BCAS. Last year, Jon built a number of birdhouses on his own and they were a huge success, as fundraisers, at Eckert Crane Days in March. The board decided to continue the initiative. Jon calculated and bought the supplies, not to mention pre-cutting everything so all we had to do was screw them together. That took four hours.

The BCAS Bluebird nest boxes will be used to thank those making donations to BCAS at Eckert Crane Days in March and at the Gunnison Sage Grouse

## A FRIEND IN NEED...

### Hotchkiss merchant lends a hand

Every fall for the last seven years, hundreds of middle school children attend the Bird Banding Station at Ridgway State Park to participate in a day of learning out of doors. An integral part of the experience is the opportunity to see and touch bird skins from the BCAS mount and skin collection. This last fall a small number of those skins were damaged when the exhibit was blasted by winds from a fall thunderstorm. Those skins, as well as some specimens that were showing general wear and tear, were salvaged by a Taxidermist extraordinaire. Richard Evans who owns the *Trout Store and More* in Hotchkiss with is charming wife, LaVerne, applied his extensive talents to repair those damaged birds. Richard has contributed his skills to

Festival in Gunnison in April. If any are left, they may also be available at the Delta Outdoor Heritage Day in late May or early June.



Sheryl Radovich was among the board members who showed up for Jon Horn's nest box construction party. *Photo by Chris Lazo.*

BCAS in the past and is even now preparing new specimens to be added to the BCAS collection. Both his time and materials have been generously donated free of charge. The board of BCAS would like to express their sincere gratitude to Richard and LaVerne for their support.

Should you have the opportunity to visit the *Trout Store and More*, you will be more than pleased by this gem on the main street of Hotchkiss. It offers gifts, art supplies and lessons and, of course, custom fish and bird mounts. While visiting with the proprietors please take a moment to let them know how much their donations mean to BCAS.



## Thanks for another successful fundraising dinner

BY JON HORN

On November 5<sup>th</sup>, a number of BCAS members and other guests enjoyed a spaghetti dinner at the Scenic Mesa Ranch near Hotchkiss put on by the Kid's Pasta Project. The dinner resulted in a \$100 donation to BCAS and a very enjoyable evening. Many thanks to the Kid's Pasta Project and to Jan Smeltzer for making the arrangements!

# In case you missed it

## A MEMO ON THE 2012 FALL BANDING SEASON

BY AMBER CARVER

By any standards, we had a very successful season of fall banding. The weather cooperated, we caught a lot of birds, and the kids were charming. The operation ran smoothly from start to finish, and the educators were at the top of their game.

There are many variables involved in running a public bird banding station. Factors like funding, unpredictable weather, and the possibility of sudden illness can be a real headache for the team operating the station, but dedication and a large dose of organization can make up for unforeseen circumstances.

Keeping the Ridgway banding station running year after year is tough work, and the organizers deserve recognition. Thanks to their efforts, my job was easy. All I had to do was show up and band birds.



The Steller's Jay was one of the most exciting catches this year. *Photo by Amber Carver*

To see more fall banding photos from the past two years, visit our Facebook page at: [www.facebook.com/BlackCanyonAudubon](http://www.facebook.com/BlackCanyonAudubon)

## IT'S NOT TOO LATE to participate in this year's Barrow's Goldeneye count.

The count—happening November 23 to December 3<sup>rd</sup>—is in its fourteenth year. Orchestrated by the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, the objective of the count is to assess the wintering population of Barrow's Goldeneye. These numbers will help us understand how the Colorado population is doing. The instructions are simple. Visit local reservoirs and lakes, and tally the number of Barrow's Goldeneye present. Either submit your sightings on eBird ([www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)); post them to cobirds ([cobirds@googlegroups.com](mailto:cobirds@googlegroups.com)) or wsbn ([wsbn@yahoogroups.com](mailto:wsbn@yahoogroups.com)); or email them directly to Jason Beason ([jason.beason@rmbo.org](mailto:jason.beason@rmbo.org)).

### LAKES WHERE MOST BARROW'S GOLDENEYE WERE FOUND IN THE PAST

- . Bear Creek Reservoir—Jefferson Co.
- . Blue Lake—Eagle Co.
- . Blue Mesa Reservoir—Gunnison Co.
- . Clear Creek Reservoir—Lake Co.
- . Dillon Reservoir—Summit Co.
- . Elevenmile Reservoir—Park Co.
- . Grand Lake—Grand Co.
- . Horsetooth Reservoir—Larimer Co.
- . Ice Lake—Chaffee Co.
- . Jerry Creek Reservoir—Mesa Co.
- . Lake Avery—Rio Blanco Co.
- . Lake Granby—Grand Co.
- . Mount Elbert Forebay—Lake Co.
- . North Pond Park—Summit Co.
- . Ranch at the Roaring Fork Ponds—Garfield Co.
- . Rifle Falls Fish Hatchery—Garfield Co.
- . Shadow Mountain Reservoir—Grand Co.
- . Silverthorne Sewage Ponds—Summit Co.
- . Spring Park Reservoir—Eagle Co.
- . Stagecoach Reservoir—Routt Co.
- . Steamboat Lake—Routt Co.
- . Taylor Park Reservoir—Gunnison Co.
- . Union Reservoir—Weld Co.
- . Vega Reservoir—Mesa Co.
- . Yampa River—Moffat Co.

### PAST COUNTS

- 1999—226 at 8 sites
- 2000—107 at 16 sites (less effort)
- 2001—181 at 20 sites
- 2002—189 at 16 sites
- 2003—245 at 21 sites
- 2004—226 at 14 sites
- 2005—219 at 16 sites
- 2006—280 at 21 sites
- 2007—225 at 17 sites
- 2008—183 at 19 sites
- 2009—163 at 16 sites
- 2010—163 at 16 sites
- 2011—217 at 24 sites

*Data courtesy of Jason Beason at RMBO*



Black Canyon Audubon Society  
 P.O. Box 387  
 Delta, CO 81416



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**Your expiration date is shown on your mailing label. BCAS on the label means you are a local member only. Labels with an ID number indicate national membership. If your membership has expired, please renew using the form at right. National renewals should follow the instructions at the bottom of the form.**

Black Canyon Audubon Society (NAS chapter C9ZD140Z)  
**Membership Renewal and Application Form**

Members may participate in all chapter activities, receive the *Canyon Wrenderings* newsletter and vote on chapter issues. Annual local membership dues are \$10 if newsletter is received electronically, \$15 if newsletter is mailed. Dues remain locally.

(Check one) Renewal (see mailing label for expiration date) \_\_\_\_\_  
 New Member \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Enc: \_\_\_\_\_ \$10 for email newsletter.  
 Email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$15 for U.S. mail/print subscribers.

Mail your renewal to:  
 Black Canyon Audubon Society, 14967 Rolling Hills Drive, Montrose, CO 81403.

*If you would like to join or donate to National Audubon Society and receive Audubon magazine, please send a check for \$20 to National Audubon Society, P.O. Box 422250, Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250. Please use this form and list Black Canyon Audubon Society/C2ZD140Z on your check so that BCAS can receive membership recruitment funds.*

To save paper and postage and to receive photos in color, send an email to: blackcanyonaudubon@gmail.com