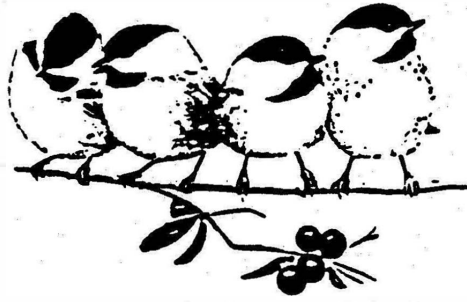


BOULDER BIRD CLUB NEWS

Fifty-two Years Dedicated
to the Field Observation of Birds

March, April and May, 1999



GREETINGS BBC BIRDERS:

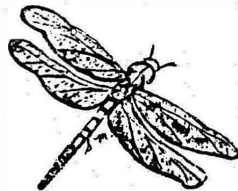
It starts with a trickle. The first arrival of spring is likely to be the Cinnamon Teal, lighting up drab March cattails with color. Bluebirds are not far behind. "First bluebird of spring" has a wonderful feel to it: there may be more snow, but winter is leaving. So are Canada Geese, Bald Eagles, and flocks of ducks that have wintered here and now fly north, pushing the winter back to its northern home.

Other birds arrive. By the time you receive this newsletter, the trickle will have become a steady flow. April begins with arriving Virginia Rails, ospreys, White-Throated Swifts, and Yellow-Headed Blackbirds. Swallows and shorebirds aren't far behind. By May the floodgates open. Every south wind brings waves of new migrants, warblers and flycatchers, orioles and tanagers, hummingbirds and vireos.

How deprived people are who mark the season only by a calendar or the lengthening daylight hours. How lucky we are to trace the advance of spring through the rhythms of the natural world. So get outside and watch the changes weekly. Look over the planned BBC field trips and mark the dates on your calendar. If you've never birded the Pawnee Grasslands, go this spring. Starting in May, the BBC Roadrunners field trips take place every Wednesday morning from 7:30 to 10:30 AM. Meet at the East Boulder Recreation Center parking lot; don't be late. "But, some of us have to work," you say. Well, play hooky from work. If you think that you can't, then you need to, even more than the rest of us. Be a subversive; talk a co-worker into coming along too. You're not a paper-pusher or a cubicle geek; at least for one morning you're a roadrunner.

Time to sign off. But only because a faint song just drifted through the open window. A song I haven't heard since last summer. Gotta go!

Pete Plage, President



IN MEMORIAM

Harold R. Holt passed away December 22, 1998, at the age of 83. He was a naturalist, author, lecturer and photographer, and was widely known in the birding community for his contributions to the Lane Guide series. The Bird Club has purchased a copy of his last book. *A Birder's Guide to Colorado*, and contributed it to the Meadows Branch of the Boulder Library in his memory.

Rhea Irene Heniger passed away February 23, 1999, at the age of 95. She was an active member of the Boulder Bird Club for many years and a life member. The Club has purchased a copy of *The Wind Masters* by Pete Dunne and contributed it to the Boulder Library in her memory.

BOULDER BIRD CLUB SPRING MEETING

FRIDAY, APRIL 30, 1999 at 7:00 PM

Golden West Manor
1055 Adams Circle

Be sure to mark your calendar for the annual spring meeting. Dave Sutherland from the City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks Department will show slides of the birds and flowers taken in the Galapagos Islands during the time he lived there. Please bring a plate of a dozen cookies to share, and bring a friend! Beverages will be provided.

Excerpts from a column by Ellen Goodman, Spring 1998

The phoebes have taken flight. The boldest of the four offspring achieved a shaky liftoff and took a short hop to a nearby pine tree. He sat there twitching in surprise at his own audacity... (then) his three sibling flycatchers gathered up their nerve as well. Now they're all airborne and on their own.

The nest that served as the hub of their activity holds only the downy residue of their infancy. The air that was filled with the noisy demands of a growing family is quiet. The parents who maintained their guard post on the nearby phone line are off duty.....I watched this two-worker family condense 18 years of child-raising labor into five nonstop weeks.

The week the phoebes took flight, the news came relentlessly screaming for attention like an alarm clock. We are sometimes told to take a news break just to restore our equilibrium. But there is more restoration in the festival of phoebes. Here, on the porch, without a care for urgent human concerns, yet another generation of flycatchers has taken wing. "Hope," wrote Emily Dickinson once, "Is the thing with feathers/ That perches in the soul."

BIRD CLUB DONATIONS

- Again this year the Boulder Bird Club donated half a day of birding for two and a year's membership in the BBC to the annual Chocolate Lovers' Fling fund raiser for the Boulder County Safehouse.

- Fifty pounds of sunflower seed was given to the Red Rocks Trading Post.

BIRD CAMP

The Colorado Bird Observatory will run birding youth camps in the Rockies again this summer. Sessions for young people 11 to 13 and 14 to 18 will be held from June 19 to 29. An advanced program for students 15 to 18 years old will be held July 2-22. Contact Colorado Bird Observatory (303-659-4348) for more information. As in the past they are providing a \$100 scholarship toward one student's tuition, with preference going to a Boulder County resident.

THANKS

...to Susie Mottashed, a new Bird Club Member, for the drawings in the newsletter. Susie volunteered to do these shortly after joining the club. She is an artist who specializes in decorative wall painting and hand-painted tiles. You can reach her at 303-499-0984.

**BOULDER BIRD CLUB TRIP SIGHTINGS
DECEMBER, JANUARY AND FEBRUARY, 1999**
Compiled by Helga and Jay Sproul.

		DEC		JAN			FEB		
		6	12	3	16	31	7	20	28
		FSB		FSB			FSB		
		BL		VW	RT		LY	LO	
1	Pacific Loon		X						
2	Common Loon		X						
3	Pied-billed Grebe	X			X		X	X	
4	Horned Grebe		X		X			X	
5	Western Grebe		X		X				
6	Double-crested Cormorant				X				
7	Great Blue Heron	X			X	X			
8	Black-crowned Night Heron				X				
9	Tundra Swan	X							
10	Canada Goose	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
11	Green-winged Teal	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
12	Mallard	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
13	Northern Pintail	X	X	X				X	
14	Cinnamon Teal							X	
15	Northern Shoveler	X	X	X				X	
16	Gadwall	X	X	X	X	X		X	
17	American Wigeon	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
18	Canvasback	X	X	X				X	
19	Redhead	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
20	Ring-necked Duck	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
21	Lesser Scaup	X	X	X	X			X	
22	Oldsquaw		X						
23	Common Goldeneye	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
24	Barrow's Goldeneye		X						
25	Bufflehead	X	X					X	
26	Hooded Merganser	X		X	X	X		X	
27	Common Merganser	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
28	Red-breasted Merganser			X				X	
29	Ruddy Duck	X							
30	Bald Eagle	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
31	Northern Harrier	X	X	X	X	X		X	
32	Sharp-shinned Hawk				X			X	
33	Red-tailed Hawk	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
34	Ferruginous Hawk		X		X	X			
35	Rough-legged Hawk		X		X			X	
36	Golden Eagle	X			X		X		
37	American Kestrel	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
38	American Coot	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
39	Killdeer		X						
40	Common Snipe	X		X					

		DEC		JAN			FEB		
		6	12	3	16	31	7	20	28
		FSB		FSB			FSB		
		BL		VW	RT		LY	LO	
41	Ring-billed Gull	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
42	California Gull							X	
43	Herring Gull		X	X				X	
44	Rock Dove	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
45	Great Horned Owl	X	X	X			X		
46	Belted Kingfisher	X	X	X	X		X		
47	Lewis' Woodpecker					X		X	
48	Downy Woodpecker	X	X	X	X		X	X	
49	Hairy Woodpecker			X					
50	Northern Flicker	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
51	Steller's Jay						X	X	
52	Blue Jay	X		X	X		X	X	
53	Western Scrub-jay						X		
54	Black-billed Magpie	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
55	American Crow	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
56	Common Raven	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
57	Black-capped Chickadee	X		X	X	X	X	X	
58	Mountain Chickadee							X	
59	White-breasted Nuthatch							X	
60	Brown Creeper							X	
61	American Dipper	X		X				X	
62	Townsend's Solitaire				X			X	
63	American Robin	X		X	X		X	X	
64	Northern Shrike	X		X			X	X	
65	European Starling	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
66	American Tree Sparrow	X	X	X	X		X	X	
67	Song Sparrow	X	X	X	X		X	X	
68	White-crowned Sparrow		X						
69	Dark-eyed Junco	X	X		X			X	
70	Red-winged Blackbird	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
71	Western Meadowlark							X	
72	Brewer's Blackbird			X					
73	House Finch	X			X		X	X	
74	Pine Siskin						X	X	
75	American Goldfinch			X	X		X	X	
76	House Sparrow	X	X	X	X		X	X	

BL - BARR LAKE
FSB - FIRST SUNDAY BIRDING

VW - VALMONT/WALDEN

RT - RAPTOR TRIP

LY - LYONS AREA

LO - LONGMONT AREA

BIRDING CLASSES

Offered by Tina Jones. Please call her at 303-794-2647 for additional information.

- April 6th (Tuesday): 6:30 - 9:00 PM. "Are You Tired of getting only Starlings and House Sparrows in your Nesting Boxes?" Learn about proper size and placement of nesting boxes, how to keep predators out and how to attract common native birds. At the Audubon Society of Greater Denver.

- April 3rd, 10th, 17th: "Birds and Berries: Landscaping for Wildlife and Songbirds" at the Denver Botanic Gardens. Learn how to turn your yard into a song-bird habitat. Emphasis on native low-water plants. Fee required.

- May 13th (Thursday): "Pawnee National Grasslands Bird Outing." 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM. Small fee required. Short-grass prairie birds, with a stop at Crow Valley Campground for migrating warblers, flycatchers, thrushes. Shore birds if time.

- June 24th (Thursday, class) and 27th (Sunday, field trip): "See Colorado Chicks and Nests, plus Snipe Hunting." Field trip to Golden Gate State Park with Denver Audubon Society. Hope to see many nesting birds feeding their young, viewing from a site that won't disturb birds. Emphasis will be on behaviors in courtship and nesting.



NESTBOX TIPS

- Don't use plastic or metal containers. They overheat rapidly.
- Locate in an area with 50% to 70% or more shade.
- Put boxes on predator-proof posts to keep squirrels from reaching chicks.
- Place boxes out of the wind.
- Clean out boxes after winter (Downies can roost in them in winter) and after nesting season.
- Get exact measurements (from a book or a bird store) for hole size, depth of box, size of perch, etc., for birds you want to attract.
- Place materials out for birds to use: human hair, dryer lint (without softener), cotton strings, and feathers. Tie them together and put them in several locations.

BOULDER COUNTY BIRD COUNTS

Bill Kaempfer	306	Nancy Neupert	172
Suzi Plooster	274	Richard Holmes	159
Myron Plooster	268	Debra Sparr	155
Pam Piombino	266	Lock Kilpatrick	146
Carol Cushman	252	Margaret Winter	136
Susan Ward	242	David Crockett	131
Pete Plage	234	Eric Zorawowicz	88
Carol Fredericks	230	Pam Christoph	75
Eric Plage	219	Marvin Woolf	52
Gary Matthews	218	Jin-Shia Kong	46
Tom Delaney	212	Ning Kong	46
Ken Fredericks	206	Dan Eades	40
Maxine Wendler	187	Lindsay Eades	40
Jim Spink	186	Judith Blitz	38+

BIRDING FOOTNOTES

Maxine Wendler attended the ABA Convention in Ft. Myers, Florida, in January. Maxine found 17 life birds, including Limpkin, Snail Kite, three different plovers (Snowy, Wilson's, Piping), a Magnificent Frigatebird, Shiny Cowbird, and Louisiana Waterthrush.

Jo and Ferd Dirckx and Carolyn Rust attended a birding Elderhostel in the Monterey, CA, area in January. It included a pelagic trip on the Pacific. Best birds were four different Shearwaters, Black-footed Albatross, Northern Fulmar, and Common Murre. They saw a total of 150 different species.

Liz Kreider and Joan Dawson went to Bosque del Apache with the Denver Audubon group in mid-January. See Liz's report in this issue.

Wes and Bev Sears birded Bosque del Apache and Big Bend National Park in February.

The Dircks' and Ploosters spent a weekend in February birding the Pueblo area. Best birds of the trip were two Pacific and one Yellow-Billed Loon, all visible in the same binocular view, plus Scaled Quail, Canyon Towhee, and Curve-billed Thrasher. Life Colorado bird for all four was a Carolina Wren.

Suzi and Myron Plooster led a field trip "Highlights of Boulder" for the Denver Audubon Society in March.

Nancy and Bob Morton vacationed and birded Bosque del Apache and along the Mexican border at Pancho Villa State Park in New Mexico. They also traveled in Arizona and California, keeping lists for those states.

BIRDING BOSQUE DEL APACHE

If birds fly south, can humans flock far behind? Not if the destination is Bosque del Apache, New Mexico, winter home to tens of thousands of Snow Geese, a good 40,000 Sandhill Cranes, and – with luck – a Whooping Crane or two. Not if those humans are a congenial group of 43 metro area birders, led by their eminently entertaining and informed guides, Urling and Hugh Kingery.

The pilgrims were rewarded not only by flocks of the target birds (including a Whooper whose knees were encumbered with enough tracking monitors to trace him to the moon) but also by some delightful regulars at the Nature Center feeders: Canyon Towhees, a covey of Gambel's Quail, a splendid flock of Lesser Goldfinches and a Pyrrhuloxia. Greater Roadrunners made several guest appearances. Elsewhere a Crissal Thrasher in splendid voice and even a Verdin came out to view the early morning birders. A Bosque Naturalist gave such clear instructions on identifying a Ross's Goose that suddenly a marsh full of Snow Geese morphed into a fascinating mixture of the two look-alike species.

Two coyotes stalked, killed and shared a meal of Snow Goose. They next engaged in what appeared to be pair bonding, raising their heads at close range, howling, loping a bit through a field and howling again. Then they repaired to a sunny bank, their fur golden in the late afternoon light, to sleep off the meal.

That late light turned crimson two evenings in a row. New Mexico sunsets do not disappoint. The last night an added treat was viewing through the lens of a scope the rapid motion of Jupiter in orbit as the planet brightened the sky.

Though the Bosque trip delighted the senses, it troubled the mind. A dam upstream has permanently altered the natural ebb and flow of the water, and the reserve management is trying to replicate – on diminishing budgets – what Nature did effortlessly and for free. They also must work to recover from a devastating fire two years ago. The naturalists have a two-fold mission: to preserve the birds, and to educate the humans. If humans learn, they hope, birds will fly free.

Liz Kreider

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

On one of the coldest days of the winter in Boulder County, ranging from -4 to 5 degrees F, 95 hardy field observers recorded nearly 31,000 individual birds with a total of 97 species. Next year is guaranteed to be warmer!

LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

- The Nature Conservancy has again asked the Boulder Bird Club for volunteer birders to help comb the South Park area for Mountain Plovers. Training and orientation will be provided. This will take place the weekend of July 19-20, near Fairplay. Participants will camp in the Buffalo Springs campground. To register call Tracy at 303-444-2950 and details will be forwarded to you. Ask about other volunteer opportunities with the Conservancy.

- The Boulder Ranger District, Roosevelt National Forest, needs help with various bird projects. Contact Beverly Baker, 303-541-2517.

- The Fall Flight Bird Festival at Barr lake State Park (held September 18) needs help. Contact Paul Green at the American Birding Association, 719-578-9703.

COLORADO FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS

The Colorado Field Ornithologists' 1999 convention will be held in Fort Collins, CO May 19th through the 23rd. For information see their web site, www.frii.com/~hopko/ or call Ray Davis at 303-449-0858 ext. 105 or 303-823-5332 (home.)

The Colorado Field Ornithologists invite your interest and participation. This state-wide group publishes the quarterly Journal of the Colorado Field Ornithologists, maintains the authoritative bird list for the state of Colorado, and holds an annual convention in the spring as well as specialty workshops and seminars. Dues are \$20.00 per person and may be sent to Membership Chair Raymond Davis, PO Box 481, Lyons, CO 80540.

Spring Birdathon

Boulder County Audubon is sponsoring its annual birdathon on May 15. You needn't be an expert to join; all levels of birding experience are welcome. Come out for a wonderful day of birding at the peak of spring migration! Call Wes Sears at 303-499-4751 for more information.

Saturday AM Bird Walks:

Don't forget that The Wild Bird Center in Boulder sponsors morning bird walks every Saturday morning year round, going to a wide variety of areas in the Boulder Valley. Be at the store parking lot by 7:20 AM. They leave promptly at 7:30 and return to the store by 9:45. Call the Wild Bird Center at 303-442-1322 for more information.

GROUPS TO JOIN

Boulder County Nature Association

PO Box 493, Boulder, CO 80306.

Dues: Individual, \$15; household, \$20; senior, \$10.

Estes Park Bird Club

c/o Alice Gray, PO Box 2301, Esters Park, CO 80517.

Dues: Household, \$5.

Denver Field Ornithologists

448 S. Leyden, Denver, CO 80224.

Dues: Individual or family: \$25.

Boulder County Audubon Society

PO Box 2081, Boulder, CO 80303

Dues: \$7.50 for local newsletter only.

American Birding Association

PO Box 6599, Colorado Springs, CO 80934.

Dues: Individual \$36, Family \$43.



BOULDER BIRD CLUB FIELD TRIPS

April 11: First Sunday Birding. Walden Wildlife Habitat.* Meet at Cottonwood Marsh at 9:00 AM, bird until noon. Leader - Loch Kilpatrick (303-975-1485.)

April 18 (Sunday): Betasso Preserve. Joint trip with Boulder Audubon. A moderate 3 mile hike for foothills birds. Carpool \$5.00. Meet at Scott Carpenter Park parking lot on 30th St. at 7:30 AM, bird until noon. Leader - Wes Sears (303-499-4751.)

April 24 (Saturday): Shorebirds in Weld County. Meet at the K-Mart parking lot, north side, at 7:30 AM, bird until mid-afternoon. Bring lunch, water. Carpool \$2.00. Leader - Dick Pratt (303-651-6860.)

May 2: First Sunday Birding. Walden Wildlife Habitat.* Meet at Cottonwood Marsh at 9:00 AM, bird until noon. Leader - Steve Litz (303-666-1434.)

May 5: Wednesday Roadrunners. Boulder Bird Club starts its seventh year of informal birding on Wednesday morning. We will meet at 7:30 AM at the East Boulder Recreation Center (west end of parking lot) and decide which local hot spot to visit. Return by 10:30 AM. Leader - Carol Fredericks (303-499-3438.)

May 8: Dawn Chorus at Sunrise. Meet at the Teller Lakes South Trailhead off Arapahoe between 75th and 95th at 5:45 AM, bird until 8:30. Look for warblers and nesting birds. Bring breakfast and a hot drink. Leader - Carol Cushman (303-442-1636.)

May 12: Wednesday Roadrunners. Meet at East Boulder Rec Center at 7:30 AM, bird until 10:30 AM. Leader - Carol Fredericks (303-499-3438.)

May 19: Wednesday Roadrunners. Meet at East Boulder Rec Center at 7:30 AM, bird until 10:30 AM. Leader - Carol Fredericks (303-499-3438.)

May 26: Wednesday Roadrunners. Meet at East Boulder Rec Center at 7:30 AM, bird until 10:30 AM. Leader - Carol Fredericks (303-499-3438.)

~~**May 28 (Friday): Nighthawks and Poorwills.** Meet at Fourmile Creek Trailhead (on south side of Lee Hill Road .3 mile west of Broadway) at 8:00 PM, bird until 9:30. Please carpool. Must register in advance with leaders. BBC members only. Leaders - Suzi and Myron Plooster (303-494-6708.)~~

May 29 (Saturday): Pawnee Grasslands. Meet at Niwot Park 'n Ride (between traffic signals on Colorado 119) at 6:00 AM for a full day of birding. Look for Mountain Plover and Longspurs on the grasslands. Lunch at Crow Valley Campground, look for Orchard Orioles and Mocking birds. Home via Lower Latham for rails, shorebirds and Marsh Wrens. Bring morning snack, lunch, plenty to drink, hat and sunscreen. Carpool - \$5.00. Leader - Bill Kaempfer (home 303-939-8005, work 303-492-6923.)

June 2: Wednesday Roadrunners - Lyons. Meet at East Boulder Rec Center at 7:30, bird until noon. Look for Lewis' Woodpeckers, migrating warblers. Leaders - Suzi and Myron Plooster (303-494-6708.)

June 6: First Sunday Birding. Walden Wildlife Habitat.* Meet at Cottonwood Marsh at 9:00 AM, bird until noon. Leader - Gary Matthews (303-447-1463.)

June 9: Wednesday Roadrunners. Meet at East Boulder Rec Center at 7:30 AM, bird until 10:30 AM. Leaders - Myron and Suzi Plooster (303-494-6708.)

June 12: Bluebird Trail at Walker Ranch. Joint trip with Boulder Audubon. Easy hike. Check on Mountain Bluebirds and other local nesting birds, crossbills, hummers. Meet at 8:00 AM at the Dept. of Commerce,* bird until noon. Leader - Barbara Beall (303-655-6044.)

June 16: Wednesday Roadrunners. Meet at East Boulder Rec Center at 7:30 AM, bird until 10:30 AM. Leaders - Suzi and Myron Plooster (303-494-6708.)

June 18 (Friday): Surprise night trip. 7:00 PM until 10:30. Must register with the leaders to receive further information. BBC members only. Please carpool. Leaders - Suzi and Myron Plooster (303-494-6708.)

June 23: Wednesday Roadrunners. Meet at East Boulder Rec Center at 7:30 AM, bird until 10:30 AM. Leaders - Suzi and Myron Plooster (303-494-6708.)

June 27 (Sunday): Golden Gate State Park. Meet at Dept. of Commerce, north parking lot, at 8:00 AM, bird until 2:00 PM. Look for sapsuckers and flycatchers. Carpool. Cars need State Parks pass. Bring lunch and drink. Leader - Paula Hansley (303-642-3361.)

June 30: Wednesday Roadrunners. Meet at East Boulder Rec Center at 7:30 AM, bird until 10:30 AM. Leaders - Suzi and Myron Plooster (303-494-6708.)

*Dept. of Commerce - 325 Broadway (Broadway & 27th), north parking lot.

*Walden Ponds Wildlife Habitat - off N 75th Between Valmont and Jay Rd to Cottonwood Marsh parking lot.

*East Boulder Recreation Center - 5660 Sioux Drive, off 55th St. between Baseline and South Boulder Road, west end of parking lot.

Contact Trip Leaders For Information On Their Trips. Our weather can be unpredictable. If you have questions about details or whether the trip will take place contact the trip leader. Trip Coordinators: Carol and Ken Fredericks (303-499-3438.)

Trip Sign-Up Sheets

Everyone who attends a Boulder Bird Club trip MUST sign the trip sign-up sheet before being allowed on the trip. By signing the sheet and participating in the trip, each person declares that he or she is solely responsible for his or her safety, and in no way will hold the Club, any trip leader or participating person responsible for individual safety. Remember to sign in every time, please. Anyone under the age of 16 must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

Trip Leaders:

Remember the Boulder Bird Club scope is available for use by trip leaders on all trips they lead. It may be picked up before your trip from Pete Plage (303-494-7182) and should be returned following the trip.

Carpooling On Trips

We carpool on all Boulder Bird Club trips. Your share on trips within city limits is \$.50 each. Countywide trips are \$1.00 each. For trips farther afield, we will give the amount with the trips description. Please be prepared with the right amount.

BBC Membership And Dues

We invite you to join Boulder Bird Club. All abilities and ages are welcome. Membership is \$6.00 per year for any number of persons at one address. Please send your check with a completed membership form to Marje Foland, Treasurer, 6738 Lakeview Drive, Boulder, CO 80303. Because our dues are minimal no partial-year memberships are available. Members receive our quarterly newsletter, 10% discount on merchandise and 5% on optics from the Wild Bird Center, and the opportunity to take part in more than 50 field trips each year - a real bargain for \$6.00.

Newsletter deadline:

The newsletter is published four times a year. We welcome your news, short write-ups of your activities, etc. Please notify me of all changes of address or phone numbers. The deadline for the July - September issue is June 15. Send all articles, etc. to Joan Dawson, 1057 Columbia Place, Boulder, CO 80303, call 303-494-8252 or email jwdii@bouldernews.infi.net.

Please save your newsletter and membership list as a future resource for trips and activities.