



Boulder Bird Club Newsletter

January, February, March 2025

Dedicated to the Field Observation of Birds since 1947

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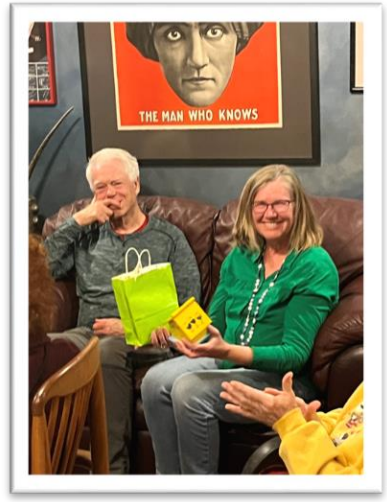
Letter from the outgoing President

Winter already? After a warm and dry October, snow and cooler weather returned in November. It's time to refresh our memories, relearn tricky female ducks as well as junco subspecies, and look for those gorgeous winter buteos: Ferruginous and Rough-legged hawks. Emily and I are personally off to a good start. A few winters ago, a Canyon Wren frequently visited us at our Lyons home. It would scour every crevice - rocks, wood siding, treads of car tires - looking for tasty bits and doing it's 'veet' call but never singing. To our delight, it or its progeny has returned this winter.

The BBC officers held their annual meeting in early October. Jane Baryames will take over as President. Pat Cullen will be our new Secretary, taking over from Janice Rogers who served the post for at least six years (thanks Janice!). Jenny Desmond has agreed to be the Recognition Coordinator. Lonny Frye will continue as VP-for-life, Sharon Norfleet as Treasurer, Pat Heller and Valerie Crecco as co-Field Trip Coordinators, Cynthia Kosso as Newsletter Editor, and Eileen Rutherford as Membership Chair. These members put in lots of time to keep the BBC running smoothly so we can all go out and have fun. Give 'em a high-five next time you see them.

Our annual BBC December party was a hit. Lonny Frye kindly hosted us all once again. Sharon Norfleet and Gary Baxley brought us a variety of libations and soft drinks. Folks brought lots of yummy food to share, so nobody went home hungry. Jane Baryames (our retiring and instigating Recognition Coordinator) passed out thank-you gifts for BBC officers, including cool little bird houses with hand-painted birds and sayings. Iris Sherman and Emily Walker together won the 2024 "Seer" award for correctly predicting, using statistical analysis or perhaps simple magic, the 210 species seen on various BBC outings. Now, ask them if they can name them all....





Wishing you a Happy New Year of birding!

Rolf Hertenstein

Note from the Editor

Many thanks to Rolf for being our President and fearless leader! A first-rate birder and guide, it has been a pleasure learning from you Rolf! We look forward to seeing you on the trails without the burden of high office:-). Thanks to all the Board members and general membership for a great year of birding!

On the [News and Events](#) section of the BBC Webpage, you can find [Guidelines](#) for submissions of photos and text to the newsletter. Submissions are always welcome!

Members and Officers

Welcome to our New BBC members:

Tim Blair
Charles Cooper
Nicole Fisher
Jessica Feld
Davis Hapman
Gail Sundberg-Douse
Trudy Turvey

Officers

President: Jane Baryames
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Research Request

From: **Graydon Prosser Hidalgo** <Graydon.ProsserHidalgo@colorado.edu>

Date: Wed, Oct 16, 2024, 1:50 PM

Subject: Barn Swallow Research @ CU Boulder

Dear Boulder Birding Club,

My name is Graydon Hidalgo. I am a graduate student in the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology department at the University of Colorado, Boulder. I work in a lab that has studied barn swallows worldwide for nearly three decades. I am currently investigating the migratory behavior of the American barn swallow to help inform future conservation efforts.

In the summers, these birds nest in barns and other human made structures across Colorado, and I wanted to ask if you, or any of your members, might know of any nests along or close to highway I-70.

I've attached a photo of a barn swallow below for your review. Barn swallows build mud cup nests inside barns and buildings [photo below]. The birds stand out because of their long, forked tails.



If you, or any of your group members, know where these birds may be nesting, it would be very helpful for my efforts to research how to help sustain their populations.

Once I have an idea of where I could find breeding colonies, I will safely catch a few adults using mist nets, collect some samples for genetics work, and release each bird minutes later. I have all of the associated federal and state permits for this work.

I look forward to hearing back from you. Thank you for your time.

Best,

Graydon "Gray" Prosser-Hidalgo (they/them)

Ph.D. Student | Department of Evolutionary Biology

Member of the [Safran Lab](#) & [McNair Scholar's Program](#)

graydon.prosserhidalgo@colorado.edu

A Poem for a bird

Mary Oliver, "Little Owl Who Lives in the Orchard"

His beak could open a bottle,
and his eyes - when he lifts their soft lids -
go on reading something
just beyond your shoulder -
Blake, maybe,
or the Book of Revelation.

Never mind that he eats only
the black-smocked crickets,
and the dragonflies if they happen
to be out late over the ponds, and of course
the occasional festal mouse.
Never mind that he is only a memo
from the offices of fear -

it's not size but surge that tells us
when we're in touch with something real,
and when I hear him in the orchard
fluttering
down the little aluminum
ladder of his scream -
when I see his wings open, like two black ferns,

a flurry of palpitations
as cold as sleet
rackets across the marshlands
of my heart
like a wild spring day.

Somewhere in the universe,
in the gallery of important things,
the babyish owl, ruffled and rakish,
sits on its pedestal.
Dear, dark dapple of plush!
A message, reads the label,
from that mysterious conglomerate:
Oblivion and Co.
The hooked head stares
from its house of dark, feathery lace.
It could be a valentine.

From the Boulder County Christmas Bird Count

Area 3 Christmas Count results (December 15, 2024)

R. J. Pautsch

Thanks to everyone for coming out (and to those of you who wanted to come, but couldn't make it). It was a fun morning of birding, coffee and brunch, despite the wind. Here's the summary of our area that I sent to the Boulder Audubon Christmas Count coordinator:

The wind kept the bird activity down, and we only saw 19 species, versus a 10 year average of 28. Small birds like Chickadees, Juncos, Nuthatches, and Goldfinches seemed to be tucked away somewhere awaiting calmer conditions, and soaring birds like Ravens and Red-tails were also scarce. We also missed Robin and Solitaire for the first time-- perhaps they went elsewhere for a better food crop after our dry summer. Our only new high count was House Sparrow.....

And here's the list of what we saw:

Checklist: Fill in the count for each species.
Please fill out a Rare Bird Report Form for each species not on the list.
Please differentiate "White-checked Geese" (Cackling/Canada), Flickers, and Juncos when possible.

Species	Count	Species	Count	Species	Count
Gr. White-fr. Goose		Golden Eagle (total)		Rock Wren	
Snow Goose (total)		(Immature)	()	Canyon Wren	
(White morph)	()	(Adult)	()	Winter Wren	
(Blue morph)	()	Virginia Rail		Marsh Wren	
Ross's Goose		American Coot		American Dipper	
Cackling Goose		Killdeer		Golden-crowned Kinglet	
Canada Goose	99	Wilson's Snipe		Ruby-crowned Kinglet	
Trumpeter Swan		Ring-billed Gull		Eastern Bluebird	
Tundra Swan		California Gull		Western Bluebird	
Wood Duck		Herring Gull		Mountain Bluebird	
Gadwall		Lesser Black-backed Gull		Townsend's Solitaire	
American Wigeon		Rock Pigeon	18	American Robin	
Mallard		Eurasian Collared-Dove	6	European Starling	59
Northern Shoveler		Mourning Dove		American Pipit	
Northern Pintail		Barn Owl		Bohemian Waxwing	
Green-winged Teal		Eastern Screech-Owl		Cedar Waxwing	
Canvasback		Great Horned Owl		Yellow-rumped Warbler	
Bufflehead		Northern Pygmy-Owl		Spotted Towhee	5
Ring-necked Duck		Long-eared Owl		American Tree Sparrow	
Lesser Scaup		Northern Saw-whet Owl		Song Sparrow	
Bufflehead		Belted Kingfisher		Swamp Sparrow	
Common Goldeneye		Downy Woodpecker		White-throated Sparrow	
Hooded Merganser		Hairy Woodpecker		Harris's Sparrow	
Common Merganser		Am. 3-toed Woodpecker		White-crowned Sparrow	
Red-br. Merganser		Northern Flicker (total)	16	Dark-eyed Junco (total)	23
Ruddy Duck		(undifferentiated)	()	(undifferentiated)	()
Ring-necked Pheasant		(Red-shafted)	()	(Gray-headed)	()
Dusky Grouse		(Yellow-shafted)	()	(Oregon)	()
Wild Turkey		(hybrid)	()	(Pink-sided)	()
Pied-billed Grebe		American Kestrel		(Slate-colored)	()
Horned Grebe		Merlin		(White-winged)	()
Western Grebe		Prairie Falcon		(Cassiar)	()
Clark's Grebe		Northern Shrike		Red-winged Blackbird	1
Double-cr. Cormorant		Canada Jay		Western Meadowlark	
Great Blue Heron		Stellar's Jay	12	Rusty Blackbird	
Bald Eagle (total)		Blue Jay	1	Brewer's Blackbird	
(Immature)	()	Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay		Great-tailed Grackle	
(Adult)	()	Pinyon Jay		Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch	
Northern Harrier		Clark's Nutcracker		Pine Grosbeak	
Sharp-shinned Hawk		Black-billed Magpie	43	Cassin's Finch	
Cooper's Hawk		American Crow	47	House Finch	88
American Goshawk		Common Raven	2	Red Crossbill	
Accipiter sp.		Horned Lark		Pine Siskin	
Red-tailed Hawk (total)	2	Black-capped Chickadee	13	Lesser Goldfinch	
(non-Harlan's form)	()	Mountain Chickadee		American Goldfinch	
(Harlan's form)	()	Bushtit		Evening Grosbeak	
Ferruginous Hawk		Red-breasted Nuthatch		House Sparrow	21
Rough-legged Hawk		White-breasted Nuthatch	2	*Other:	
		Pygmy Nuthatch	1	*Other:	
		Brown Creeper		*Other:	

At the Boulder Christmas Count compilation dinner last night (December 15), the total number of species seen within the count circle was approaching 100. Most groups reported fewer birds due to the winds, a number of species weren't seen this year, and nothing very surprising turned up, outside of a report of a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, a White-winged Scoter, and 2 Ross' Geese.

An interesting note--the Boulder Christmas Count is in the top 20 in the world for number of participants. That's why we enjoy the luxury of having over 30 different count segments.

Area 1 and 3, Longmont Bird Count December 14, 2024

Jenny Desmond

I've never heard of leucism before the Christmas Bird Count on 12/14/24 when Cynthia Kosso, Pete Christiansen, and I joined Ann Delzell for the Longmont Bird Count. We were in Areas 1 & 3, between Hwy 66 and Berthoud and west past Carter Lake. Ann lives here and has been counting bird in this area for decades, she knows all the great spots!

As we were coming down from Carter Lake, and I was in the back seat fighting car sickness, we drove by yet another flock of geese, out in a corral with a handful of happy bovine. Suddenly my brain clicked and realized that they were not geese. We turned around quickly and counted 30 turkeys contentedly snacking in the corral. As I was taking photos, I noticed one odd one.

"It's a leucistic turkey!" Cynthia told me. Huh?

Apparently, leucism is a rare occurrence in nature and doesn't usually impact a bird's health, however they are more likely to be preyed upon because they lack camouflage. Leucistic turkeys have little to no pigment in their feathers and tend to have normal eye color, while albinos have pick or red eyes. They have a naked head and neck, and their spurs and toenails are almost white. This leucistic turkey was the supermodel of the day! For more about the phenomenon click [here](#).

We counted 31 species total across all areas including the Leucistic Turkey, 6 Eared Grebes, and a Pink-sided Junco. Another big highlight of the day was catching sight of a rebellious Red-Tailed hawk with its lunch. It stayed on the fencepost at eye-level only for a moment with the squirrel clutched in his talons. If you look closely in the photo, you can see why I call it rebellious.... "No Hunting". Well, I guess he got away with it this time!



Postscript: After Jenny shared this story, I (Cynthia) followed up with Ann Delzell and Ronald Harden for the full list of species. Ann noted that in addition to the species we saw together, she saw a Great Horned Owl, and a Downy Woodpecker. Also, on Thursday before count day, but during count week, she saw a [Kridler's Hawk](#). She said it was the most beautiful one she's ever seen as, other than the light reddish tail and some orange-like flacks on the breast, it was completely white. Ronald speculated that, like the turkey we saw, it is also leucistic given how much absence of melanin colored pigment. Rolf Hertenstein also pointed out that turkeys come in color phases and our leucistic turkey, might be in a "smoke phase." Below is the complete list from the count day.

Checklist	LONGMONT CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT	December 12/14/24 Area 143
A "CBC RARE BIRD DOCUMENTATION FORM" must be filled out at time of sighting, for any species the name of which is underlined or not listed, for it to be included in the compilation. These are species unusual for our area or time of year.		
Greater White-fronted Goose		Dusky Grouse
Snow Goose white morph		Wild Turkey
Snow Goose blue morph		Northern Bobwhite
SnowXCanada Goose hybrid		Pacific Loon
SnowXCackling Goose hybrid		Common Loon
Ross's Goose		Pied-billed Grebe
Cackling Goose	7	Horned Grebe
Canada Goose	932	Eared Grebe
Trumpeter Swan		Western Grebe
Tundra Swan		Clark's Grebe
Wood Duck		Double-crested Cormorant
Gadwall		White Pelican
Furcled Wigeon		Great Blue Heron
American Wigeon	20	Black-crowned Night Heron
Mallard	8	Turkey Vulture
Blue-winged Teal		Osprey
Cinnamon Teal		Golden Eagle
Northern Shoveler		adult
Northern Pintail		immature
American Green-winged Teal	45	Northern Harrier
Canvasback		Sharp-shinned Hawk
Redhead		Cooper's Hawk
Ring-necked Duck		Northern Goshawk
Greater Scaup		Bald Eagle
Lesser Scaup		adult
White-winged Scoter		immature
Long-tailed Duck		Sunni's Hawk
Bufflehead	22	Red-tailed Hawk
Common Goldeneye	29	Harlan's
Barrow's Goldeneye		Kridler's
Hooded Merganser		Rough-legged Hawk
Common Merganser		Ferruginous Hawk
Red-breasted Merganser		Virginia Rail
Ruddy Duck		Sora
Chukar		American Coot
Pine-necked Pheasant		Killdeer

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Solitary Sandpiper	American Kestrel 7
Least Sandpiper	Merlin
Wilson's Snipe	Peregrine Falcon
Greater Yellowlegs	Prairie Falcon
American Woodcock	Eastern Phoebe
Marbled Murrelet	Say's Phoebe
Black-legged Kittiwake	Loggerhead Shrike
Sabine's Gull	Northern Shrike
Bonaparte's Gull	Pinyon Jay
Franklin's Gull	Steller's Jay (I.)
Mew Gull	Blue Jay
Ring-billed Gull	Western Scub-Jay (Wo.)
California Gull	Black-billed Magpie
Herring Gull	Clark's Nutcracker
Thayer's Gull	American Crow
Iceland Gull	Chihuahuas Raven
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Common Raven
Glaucous Gull	Horned Lark
Great Black-backed Gull	Black-capped Chickadee
Rock Pigeon	Mountain Chickadee
Eurasian Collared-Dove	Bushitt (I.)
White-winged Dove	Red-breasted Nuthatch
Mourning Dove	White-breasted Nuthatch (I.W.)
Barn Owl	Pygmy Nuthatch
Western Screech Owl	Brown Creeper
Eastern Screech Owl	Rock Wren
Great Horned Owl	Canyon Wren
Northern Pygmy Owl (R.M.)	House Wren
Long-eared Owl	Pacific Wren
Short-eared Owl	Winter Wren
Northern Saw-whet Owl	Marsh Wren
Belted Kingfisher	American Dipper
Lewis's Woodpecker	Golden-crowned Kinglet
Red-headed Woodpecker	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Western Bluebird
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Mountain Bluebird
Downy Woodpecker	Townsend's Solitaire
Hairy Woodpecker	Herm's Thrush
Northern Flicker	American Robin
Red-shafted	Varied Thrush
Yellow-shafted	
Intergrade	

Arcas 123

Gray Catbird _____
 Brown Thrasher _____
 Northern Mockingbird _____
 European Starling 90 _____
 American Pipit _____
 Bohemian Waxwing _____
 Cedar Waxwing _____
 Ovenbird _____
 Common Yellowthroat _____
 Yellow Warbler (Northern) _____
 Palm Warbler (Western) _____
 Pine Warbler _____
 Yellow-rumped Warbler _____
 Myrtle _____
 Audubon's _____
 American Tree Sparrow _____
 Chipping Sparrow _____
 Clay-colored Sparrow _____
 Field Sparrow _____
 Lark Sparrow _____
 Fox Sparrow _____
 Dark-eyed Junco _____
 Slate-colored 4 _____
 Cassiar _____
 Oregon _____
 Pink-sided 3 _____
 White-winged _____
 Gray-headed _____
 White-crowned Sparrow 31 _____
 Golden-crowned Sparrow _____
 Harris's Sparrow _____
 White-throated Sparrow _____
 Vesper Sparrow _____
 Song Sparrow _____
 Swamp Sparrow _____
 Green-tailed Towhee _____
 Spotted Towhee _____
 Rufous-sided Towhee _____
 Summer Tanager _____
 Rose-breasted Grosbeak _____

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Red-winged Blackbird 80 _____
 Western Meadowlark 3 _____
 Yellow-headed Blackbird _____
 Rusty Blackbird _____
 Brewer's Blackbird _____
 Common Grackle _____
 Great-tailed Grackle _____
 Brown-headed Cowbird _____
 Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch _____
 Black Rosy-Finch _____
 Pine Grosbeak _____
 House Finch 4 _____
 Purple Finch _____
 Cassin's Finch _____
 Red Crossbill _____
 Common Redpoll _____
 Pine Siskin _____
 Lesser Goldfinch _____
 American Goldfinch _____
 Evening Grosbeak _____
 House Sparrow _____

A species seen in the three days before or three days after count day – and not likely to have been seen in other areas count day, note with "cw" in its line.

Form revision 2024. Lists all species reported in the history of the Longmont, CO CBC on count day or count week – even if just one sighting.

Some species listed, if reported, would be highly questionable, e.g. Swainson's Hawk, Chipping Sparrow, and should be carefully scrutinized before reporting.

Carefully note that species underlined require a Rare (and out of season) Report that was filled out from observations made at the time of the sighting. Species requiring that report cannot be counted on the Count Compilation without it.

Birding trips by club members

In this section, enjoy the descriptions of several trips by members of our birding group: Peter Christiansen (Las Gallinas Valley, California), Leif Saul (Alaska), Eileen and Kevin Rutherford (Arizona), Burr Toohey (Cape Cod). If you travel to wonderful birding areas, please feel free to share your experiences and photos. Many of us love to travel vicariously! Please note: I bold the names of birds or other animals when they are depicted in these reports, adding the photographer's name only when it is not the author or it would otherwise be unclear.

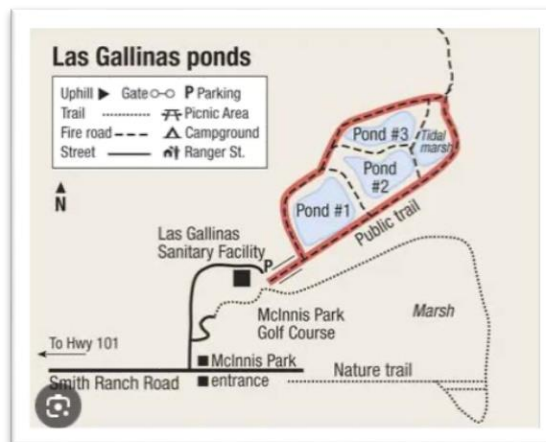


Las Gallinas Valley, California

Peter (Pete) Christiansen

Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District is a favorite stop for me and my mom when we visit my older brother (an Irish twin for me) in San Rafael, CA (Marin county). ([E-bird list from the area](#))

There are two main “[ponds](#)” that seem to regularly turn up exciting birds for us. The ponds are bordered by salt marsh to the South and fallow fields/irrigated pasture to the North. We typically stick to Pond #1 but we have explored Pond #2 & 3 that has yielded river otters on occasion. Plus, there seems always to be American White Pelicans there, which I used to think they were only inland birds, but I see them on the coast often.



Pond #1 has a little set of islands - a favorite roosting spot for Black-Crowned Night Herons and we have seen stunted black-tail deer as well.

This past Thanksgiving holiday there was one little stretch on the SE corner of Pond # 1, heading North for about 35 yards, that gave me two life birds. The Rails and Herons love the dense Cattails and Thule reeds. They were: Least Bittern (1) and Common Gallinule (6) plus a Sora, American Coot, Virginia Rail, Common Yellowthroat, Black Phoebe, White & Golden-crowned Sparrow, Bewick's & Marsh Wren, Yellow-rumped Warbler and Ruby-crowned Kinglet. When you're hot, you're hot. As Amy Tan would call it, "New bird tachycardia." What a rush.

Off the 101 take the Smith Ranch Rd./Lucas Valley exit (East) and head to McInnis Park. Once you cross the railroad tracks take a left and follow the road to the parking area.

Here was [our tally](#):

Nov 26, 2024

8:14 AM

Traveling 1.05 miles

75 Minutes

2 Canada Goose	1 Least Bittern -- Heard.	3 Marsh Wren
16 Cinnamon Teal	Merlin ID	1 Bewick's Wren
2 American Wigeon	4 Black-crowned Night	3 House Finch
46 Mallard	Heron	10 Lesser Goldfinch
11 Green-winged Teal	8 Snowy Egret	12 White-crowned
2 Redhead	2 Great Egret	Sparrow
1 Ring-necked Duck	1 Great Blue Heron	6 Golden-crowned
18 Bufflehead	14 American White	Sparrow
24 Common Goldeneye	Pelican	2 Song Sparrow
2 Mourning Dove	5 Turkey Vulture	1 California Towhee
1 Virginia Rail	1 White-tailed Kite	35 Red-winged
1 Sora	3 Northern Harrier -- 2	Blackbird
6 Common Gallinule	Grey ghost + female	1 Common Yellowthroat
38 American Coot	1 Red-tailed Hawk	6 Yellow-rumped
3 Ring-billed Gull	1 American Kestrel	Warbler
8 Pied-billed Grebe	3 Black Phoebe	
5 Double-crested	1 Common Raven	
Cormorant	6 Ruby-crowned Kinglet	

Number of Taxa: 42

For a short YouTube video on the Birds of Las Gallinas Marsh, click [here](#).



Birds and beasts of Alaska

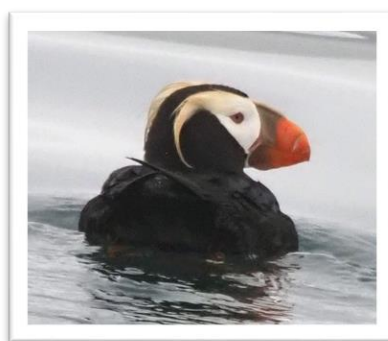
Leif Saul

My wife and I traveled to Alaska during July 21-28. It was our second time to Alaska (the first was a family reunion with a tour of Denali and Kenai Fjords). This time, the hub of our activities was Homer, several hours southwest of Anchorage, and the planned



highlight was a flight out to Brooks Falls in Katmai NP. Since the pandemic, we have been followers of “Fat Bear Week” and the bear cams at explore.org. Many individual grizzly bears are identifiable by markings and have a large fan club of expert-amateurs posting daily updates. So visiting the site of the bear cams became a bucket list item for my wife. She is not a birder but she was patient as I paused for bird photos.

After landing in Anchorage on Sunday the 21st, we spent the first night in the small town of Moose Pass, about halfway to Homer. A couple hours before reaching Homer on Monday, Route 1 joined the coastline of the Cook Inlet, where we were stunned by the sight of an enormous **volcano** (view of peak, above) across the way in Lake Clark NP. We stopped at a beach where the waterline was strewn with the remains of many fish (salmon, halibut, etc.) left behind by fishermen, attracting lots of Glaucous-winged Gulls and American Crows.



On Tuesday, having settled in at our rental cottage in Homer, we took a Rainbow Tours boat trip to see wildlife in the surrounding Kachemak Bay and visit the town of Seldovia across the bay. We saw several **sea otters** (above right) and swimming **Tufted Puffins** (above left), lots of Common Murres and Pigeon Guillemots, and a few Harlequin Ducks. The boat stopped at Gull Island, which was covered with nesting **Black-legged Kittiwakes** (right). The island also had Pelagic Cormorants and at the top of the rocks there were a few nesting **Tufted Puffins** (above left). Returning to Homer, we found a **sea otter** in the middle of the harbor (below right) undisturbed by kayakers.

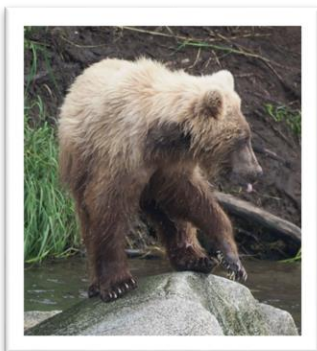


Wednesday began with another boat trip across Kachemak Bay where we spent the morning kayaking, which afforded close looks at starfish, jellyfish and other invertebrates. In the afternoon we explored the tourist areas along the Homer Spit.

Thursday was our big trip to Brooks Falls. We used Destination Alaska Adventure Co. It was a wonderful experience, although the timing was tight (3.5 hours total between the plane's arrival at Katmai NP and its departure), the bear platforms are crowded with other bear fans, and the price is about what you might pay for flights to



Europe! After a mandatory "Bear 101" class, we hustled out to the platforms. The **Brooks Falls Platform** (left), which has the most "iconic" views of bears catching salmon, is so popular you are limited



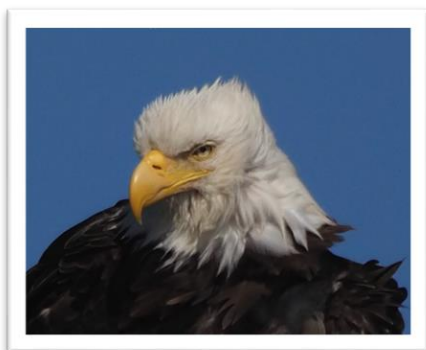
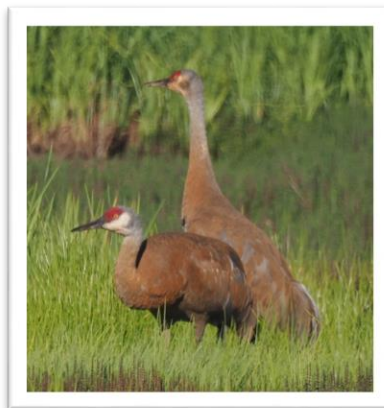
to 30 minutes. The nearby Riffles Platform is almost as good and with a long lens, you can get great photos with no time limit. We identified a handful of bears we knew from the webcams, including the notorious **Chunk** (Bear 032, above right). (Although Chunk was a contender for Fattest Bear, he killed the cub of Grazer this summer, which helped tilt public opinion and Grazer easily won the vote for Fattest Bear in October.) We also observed a **cub with porcupine quills in its left paw** (left) who was another popular subject on the bearcams. With very limited time before takeoff, we decided

to walk the dirt road to Brooks Lake, hoping to have a more “unscripted” bear experience. We did not encounter any bears along the way, which was actually somewhat of a relief.



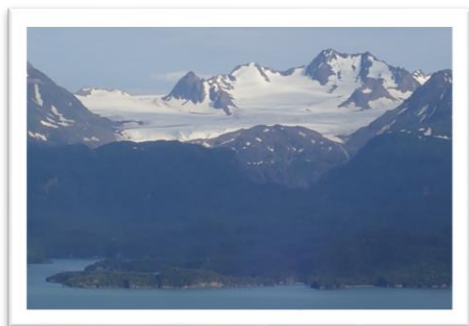
We did see a **snowshoe hare** (left). There were also Common Merganser, Goldeneye sp., and Black-billed Magpie. We did not see the porcupine or the lynx that had both been reported shortly before our visit. We estimated that we saw around 30 grizzly bears in our brief visit to Brooks Falls – most were near the platforms, and a few were seen (always near water) along the boardwalk leading to the platforms.

On Friday and Saturday we did some exploring on our own. In the hills above Homer, we visited the Wynn Nature Center, where my Merlin app heard a Boreal Chickadee, but all I managed to photograph and see were Red-breasted Nuthatch, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and a soaring Bald Eagle (one of perhaps a dozen we saw on the trip). The best birding by foot was at Bishop’s Beach and Beluga Slough (a marshy spot). In the meadow near the slough, we watched a foraging pair of **Sandhill Cranes** (above right). Later we observed more pairs of Sandhill Cranes

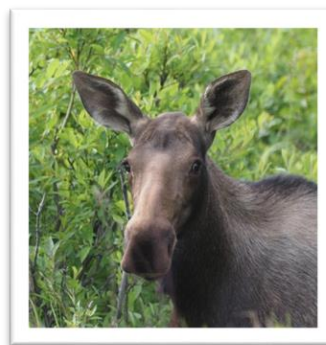


in front yards around town. The abundance of breeding cranes was a complete surprise to me and one of the highlights of the trip. A lifer for me on this trip was the Whimbrel, seen across the slough along with Trumpeter Swan, Short-billed Dowitcher, and American Wigeon. On the beach we had Black Turnstone, and great views of a pair of **Bald Eagles** in a tree (close-up, left). Greater Yellowlegs were common on both the beach and the slough. Finally we

took a drive to the east to get better views of the spectacular glaciers across Kachemak Bay in the **Kenai Mountains** (left).



Near the end of the road, we saw our one and only **moose** of the trip (right). Back at our rental cottage, I saw an Orange-crowned



Warbler. In total, I tallied 24 bird species on this trip. Along the drive back to Anchorage, we enjoyed watching baby musk ox and other captive and rehabilitating wildlife at the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center.



Southern Arizona

Kevin and Eileen Rutherford

In early November, we headed out on a road trip to southern Arizona, one of our favorite birding locations. The timing worked out well, as we left just before the big November snow event at home and didn't return until well after it was over.

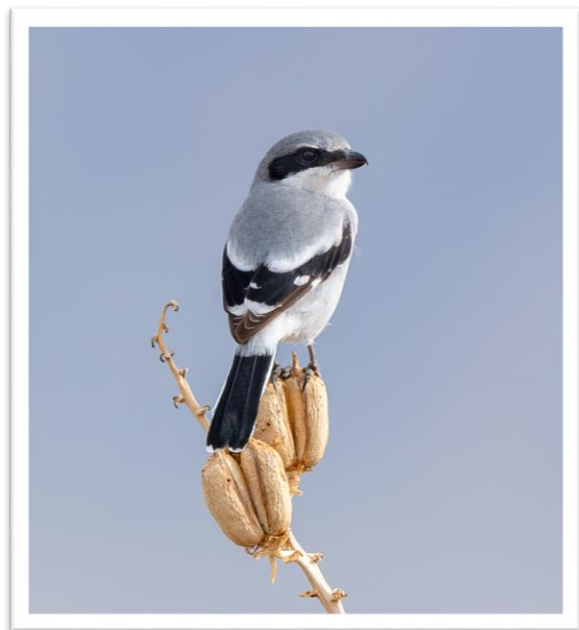
We stayed for three nights at the Ramsey Canyon Inn B&B near Sierra Vista, visiting a few locations that were new to us, as well as some old favorites. The feeders at the Paton Center for Hummingbirds in Patagonia is always a treat. Highlights included **Violet-crowned Hummingbirds** and a very colorful **Painted Bunting** who posed nicely for photos (both below). At the Ramsey Canyon Preserve we saw two Olive Warblers - a lifer for us! And we even had an Elegant Trogon fly right over our heads!



Then we headed west a bit to Green Valley, visiting favorite locations such as Madera Canyon, Historic Canoa Ranch, and Sweetwater Wetlands. At the feeders at the Santa Rita Lodge in Madera Canyon we managed to get some good looks at another lifer, a **Berylline Hummingbird** (below)!



Other good bird photo opportunities, see below, included the **Scaled Quail** (in Wilcox, AZ), the **Loggerhead Shrike** (also in Wilcox), a **Vermillion Flycatcher** (Sweetwater Wetlands) and a **Louisiana Waterthrush** (Madera Canyon)!





For the trip we ended up with 134 species, including the two lifers and a lot of really fun birds.



Cape Cod and Rhode Island VENT (Victor Emanuel Nature Tour)

Burr Toohey

This trip (October 16 – 22, 2024) began and ended in Providence, RI, after which I spent some time in Rye Beach, NH (along the 13 miles of NH coastline). I was joined by my sister-in-law, Debbi Toohey.

Day ONE: Watch Hill/Fort Hill

The first stop took us to Watch Hill, Rhode Island. It was cold and windy but sunny. This small community in the very southwestern part of the state is a beautiful setting for some initial sea watching. The Watch Hill Lighthouse allowed access to a rocky point jetting out into Block Island Sound. The mansions along the coast were lovely. Clapboard homes in various sizes – so New England. Our first looks at all three scoter species were here. We had extended views of all three species and our first rarity of the trip, a King Eider – female – a lifer for me. I was told that the ‘fellow’ was probably out to sea.

We drove to Cape Cod after Watch Hill, having lunch on the Cape Cod Canal watching gulls, cormorants, and even a cooperative Belted Kingfisher from our tables.

The afternoon consisted of wandering around Fort Hill. Fort Hill is a part of the Cape Cod National Seashore and had the second highest eBird checklist on the cape. Our first looks at American Black Duck were here along with passerines such as **Yellow-billed Cuckoo**, below, (and what a thrill! Photo by Kevin Burke) and Golden-crowned Kinglet.



Day TWO, the cape, Marconi Station/Wellfleet Bay/Provincetown/Race Point Beach

It was supposed to include a whale watch out of Provincetown, but high winds all week prohibited this from happening. We were all a little bummed, because this was a big part of the trip. So, we shifted plans and had a wonderful day exploring the outer cape. We took a wonderful walk around Wellfleet Bay Audubon Sanctuary with birds such as Blue-headed Vireo, Blackpoll Warbler, **Semipalmated Plover** (below, photo by Kevin Burke), and cooperative Greater Yellowlegs.



Any trip to that neck of the cape is not complete without a trip to the [Bird Watcher's General Store](#) in Orleans. Read about the [Marconi Station](#) re: transmitting wireless signals.

After lunch, we traveled up to Provincetown to walk around downtown and MacMillan Wharf. This is where we learned that the rescheduled whale watch for the next day was cancelled again. Ugh! A sliver of light was seeing a Great Cormorant on the rock jetty. Our last stop of the day was out to Race Point Beach. Here we had a few long-distance Great Shearwaters and Northern Gannets among the swells of sea ducks. We learned that our whale watch for tomorrow was cancelled again but the leaders made plans to take another company's whale watch out of Hyannis the next day. We were very fortunate to find another company running a trip to the same area! This turned out to be the best decision because despite the very turbulent sea, this boat was bigger and could handle the waves. (I put on my seasick patch and I did not get sea sick ☺; unlike the Bay of Fundy a few years ago.)

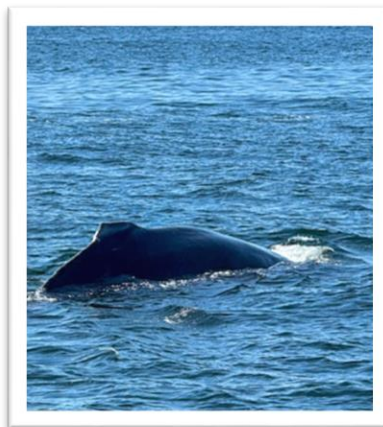
We made a quick stop to Nauset Lighthouse before our boat tour and had the surprise of the trip! A Gray Kingbird was on the wires in the parking lot—a most welcome and unexpected surprise. I had never heard of a Gray Kingbird, definitely a lifer for me and most others on the trip. It sat on the wires for at least 10 minutes; so, we all got a good look.

We departed Hyannis around 11 AM and headed all the way up Cape Cod Bay towards Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary. Stellwagen Bank is famous for its deep water coming right offshore at the North end of Cape Cod. This brings all kinds of marine life near the shore and makes for easier viewing than almost anywhere else on the east coast. We had a huge surprise while we were still in the marina in the form of a Manx

Shearwater. Wow! As we traveled up Cape Cod Bay, we had great looks at Great Shearwater, Northern Gannet, and all three scoter species. Provincetown was getting closer, and we rounded the cape's northern end to find **Corey's Shearwater** (photo by Kevin Burke), Northern Fulmar, Parasitic Jaeger, and Razorbill. With the exceptions of the Scoters and the Razorbill, these were lifers for me. The Northern Fulmar surprised us – what a treat.



The **Humpback Whale** show was awesome too (photo below on left by Kevin Burke. Others by Burr Toohey). We had a single individual first, and then three individuals together feeding and interacting with one another. They were so close to the boat that everyone had great views.



Common Dolphins (photo below by Kevin Burke) saw us back to Hyannis by putting on a show off the stern of the boat riding our wake. We made our way to Newport Rhode Island with great memories of the cape and its abundant wildlife.



Day THREE, Rhode Island

We started the morning at Sachuest National Wildlife Refuge, a peninsula refuge near Newport that can produce some great birds. We did the 1.5-mile loop walk. Sweeping views of the Rhode Island coastline surrounded us as we walked. A single Harlequin Duck flew in and was foraging in the surf. Great Cormorant, Ruddy Turnstone, and Common Yellowthroat were among the other birds we had here. Albro Woods was our next stop, to chase a state first Tropical Kingbird. We didn't see the kingbird, but quite a few other birds were active in the woods. Hairy Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Brown Creeper, and White-breasted Nuthatch were among the birds we saw here. A nice lunch at a local farmstand was a welcome treat. The farm was good for birding, with a Palm Warbler in the sunflowers. Our afternoon was spent amongst the famous mansions of Newport near Brenton Point State Park.

Day FOUR: Greene Family farm (Cranberry Bog)/Marsh Point/Goddard SP

The visit to the cranberry bog/farm was a first for VENT and the family opened up the farm to us to see the operation and bird the property. Production was done for the year, but we got to explore the farm and hear all about how cranberries are farmed. The setting was beautiful, as the fall color in Western Rhode Island was near peak. A fifty-acre pond on the property had Green-winged Teal, Bald Eagle, and three adorable River Otters. We learned how cranberry bogs are mined for the berries, different berries from red to white.



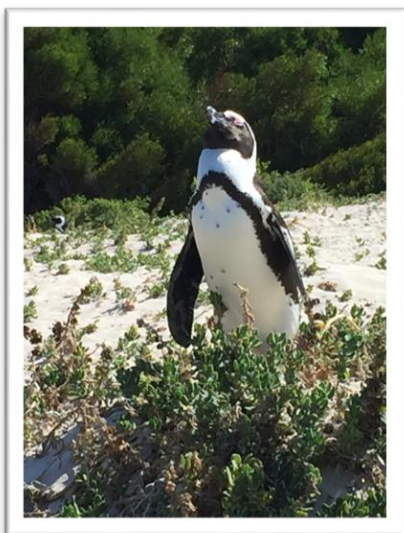
Debbie Toohey and Burr Toohey

RYE BEACH, NEW HAMPSHIRE

We had walks along the beach and town. Best birds were the Black-backed Gulls which I only see along this coast and where I spent summers in my youth. Oh, and there was a Carolina Wren trying to get food from my sister-in-law's feeder which was empty – shame on her!

Photos from BBC Members

Charles (Charlie) Cooper (new member), photos from the archives



South African Penguin, January 30, 2019, just up the coast from the Boulders Beach colony near Capetown, South Africa



Completely melanistic black American Robin from July 2023 in Lexington, MA (in Charlie's former backyard, taken through the screen)

Jim Ward - including 4 lifers (Sedge Wren, Pectoral Sandpiper, Curved billed Thrasher, Long-tailed Duck)



Sedge Wren, Jim Hamm Nature Center, 10-26-24



Pectoral Sandpiper, Lagerman Reservoir, 10-28-24



Curve-billed Thrasher, Louisville Arboretum,
11-20-24



Long-tailed Duck, Lagerman Reservoir,
12-3-24



American Robin (Leucistic), Old Saint Vrain Rd,
10-16-24



Gray Catbird, Old Saint Vrain Rd,
10-16-24



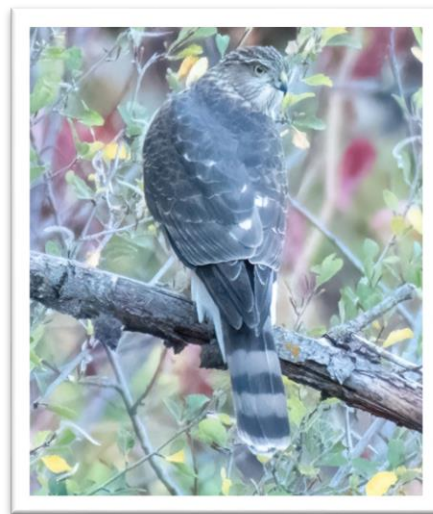
Hermit Thrush, Old Saint Vrain Rd, 10-16-24



Great Horned Owl, Old Saint Vrain Rd,
10-16-24



Red-tailed Hawk, Old Saint Vrain Rd,
10-16-24



Sharp-shinned Hawk, Old Saint
Vrain Rd, 10-16-24

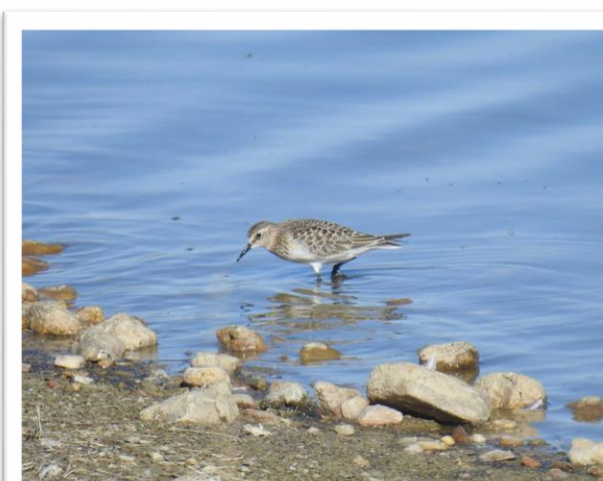


White-throated Sparrow, Waneka Lake, 12-26-24

Jane Baryames



Juvenile Green Heron, Walden Pond,
10-6-24



Baird's Sandpiper, Lagerman Reservoir,
10-2-24

Upcoming Field Trips

ORGANIZERS:

Valerie Crecco

valerie.crecco@comcast.net

303-886-4898

Pat Heller

pat_heller@msn.com

303-819-6745

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are the highlights of our group activities! **Typically, we meet on Wednesday mornings and the first Sundays of the month.**

For Wednesday outings we'll continue to send an email via BBC Google Groups on Tuesday mornings with the following day's location and time to meet. In April the protocol changes and the trips will be listed in the newsletter, with a reminder by email. Occasionally trips are scheduled on other days as well! We hope to see you at as many as you can attend.

In general, please note the time listed in the trips section carefully, because they can vary from trip to trip. **The START time is listed after the date and place and before the leader.** Obviously, there may be last minute changes due to inclement weather, so the best way to stay up to date is via our Boulder Bird Club Google Groups list. If you are not already receiving emails from the group, contact Pat Heller at pat_heller@msn.com or Valerie Crecco at valerie.crecco@comcast.net to add your email address to this list.

We encourage carpooling whenever possible. Please consider offering to help defray the cost of gas when you carpool! If you are looking for a ride, please reach out to the BBC List-serve: boulder-bird-club@googlegroups.com. **Recommendations:** for each field trip, bring binoculars, a scope if you have one; wear a hat, appropriate footwear, water and a snack, sunscreen, and if necessary, insect repellent.

From now until mid-April, the Boulder Bird Club Wednesday field trips will start at the later time of 8:30 am (unless otherwise noted). If you have a particular local hotspot in mind for a Wednesday bird walk, please let Valerie or Pat know, they welcome your suggestions.

SUNDAY, January 5, 2025 -FIRST SUNDAY BIRDING AT WALDEN PONDS - 8:30 am

3893 N. 75th St., Boulder

Leader: Dick Pautsch - (303)818-5711

Be sure to dress appropriately for the day's weather conditions. Bring your binoculars, a scope if you have one, and your water bottle.

WEDNESDAY, January 8, 2025 -ALLENSPARK MOUNTAIN FEEDERS – 9:00 am

Leader: Rolf Hertenstein (303)823-6269

We'll meet at The Greenbriar Restaurant parking lot (we have permission to park there) at the corner of N. Foothills Highway and Lefthand Canyon Drive at 9:00 am. We may go to Ward, depending on the feeder situation there. We'll head to Allenspark and check out feeders and whatever else we can find. If you're interested, the Rock Creek Tavern & Pizzeria opens at 11:00 am, they've moved to the former Fawn Brook Inn property. We could have lunch there. In any case, bring plenty of warm clothes!

SUNDAY, February 2, 2025 -FIRST SUNDAY BIRDING AT WALDEN PONDS – 8:30am

3893 N. 75th St. Boulder

Leader: Jane Baryames (303)910-0293

Be sure to dress appropriately for the day's weather conditions. Bring your binoculars, a scope if you have one, and your water bottle.

SATURDAY, February 8, 2025 - DUCKAPALOOZA – South Platte River – 8:30 am

Leader: Valerie Crecco (303)886-4898

Meet at the Steele Street Park in Denver next to the S. Platte River at 78th & Steele St. Allow enough time to arrive there by 8:30 am. Take US 36 (Boulder Turnpike) east and exit on Broadway. In a ¼ mile, turn left on CO 224/E. 70th Avenue. In 1 ½ miles, turn left on York Street. In ½ mile turn right on E. 78th Avenue. Continue a short distance to Steele Street and enter the parking lot. We'll walk up to 2 miles on a paved trail along the river (note: there are no restrooms along the trail). There's a possibility of seeing 17 waterfowl species including Barrow's Goldeneye. We will bird until about 11:00 am.

SATURDAY, February 22, 2025 - ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL NWR – 9:00 am

6550 Gateway Rd, Commerce City, CO 80022

Leader: Carolyn Beach (303)443-0129

We'll start at the Visitors Center and bird the lakes and trails on the Arsenal. Then we will drive the wildlife loop. Meet at East Boulder Community Center west lot a little before 8:00 am for carpooling from Boulder. Otherwise, meet at the Arsenal at 8:45 am. Scopes are helpful on this trip. Maybe we'll stop for lunch somewhere on the way home.

SUNDAY, March 2, 2025 - FIRST SUNDAY BIRDING AT WALDEN PONDS – 8:30 am

3893 N. 75th St. Boulder

Leader: Pat Heller (303)819-6745 / Valerie Crecco (303)886-4898

Be sure to dress appropriately for the day's weather conditions. Bring your binoculars, a scope if you have one, and your water bottle.

WEDNESDAY, March 12, 2025 - JODER RANCH TRAILHEAD – 8:30 am

7481 N Foothills Hwy, Boulder

Leader: Valerie Crecco (303)886-4898

Meet at the Joder Ranch Trailhead on Foothills Highway. Try to arrive as early as possible, or carpool if you can, the parking lot is small. We'll be looking for the Mountain Bluebirds which are due to arrive shortly.

Reminder from the Editor

eBird Protocol

“Per eBird protocol, a bird organization should not be the primary observer on any checklist since they aren't a real person. BBC has been doing this for a while, but the error was brought to my attention mid- November 2021. The appropriate protocol is to have one person in the group enter the checklist in their personal eBird account, then share the checklist with the BBC account and the others in the group with eBird accounts. This is explained here:

<https://support.ebird.org/en/support/solutions/articles/48000795623-ebird-rules-and-best-practices#Best-practicesfor-group-accounts-in-eBird>

The eBird.org website contains a lot of helpful information to get you started recording. Here's the link to the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-t-0xAjxakw>

And, here's another link to get you started:

<https://support.ebird.org/en/support/solutions/articles/48001158707>

**Boulder Bird Club
Membership and Dues Form
2025**

Member Name (s) _____

Date: _____

Address _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Phone _____

(We send the newsletter by email & post on the website.)

Please check:

New Member _____ or Renewal _____

\$ 10.00 Annual Dues enclosed: \$ _____ (to Boulder Bird Club)

Donation enclosed: \$ _____

Please mail this form and dues to:

**Boulder Bird Club
2272 W Hecla Dr.
Louisville, CO 80027**

Check our website for the quarterly newsletter and field trips:

www.boulderbirdclub.org

Please pass along to your friends: ALL inexperienced and experienced birders are welcome!

Any questions? Call Eileen Rutherford at 303-513-9971 (please leave a message)

Email: BBC.Rutherford@gmail.com