



## Boulder Bird Club Newsletter

July, August, September 2025

*Dedicated to the Field Observation of Birds since 1947*

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### Letter from the President

I love Spring Migration and observing First-of-Year (FOY) species. At the Wheat Ridge Greenbelt on May 14<sup>th</sup> we were fortunate to have good looks at three FOY species: Common Yellowthroat, Gray Catbird and Black-chinned Hummingbird. Now we are well into the nesting season. It has been fun to watch birds carrying nesting material.

Over the past spring on our field trips, we've witnessed several nests: Pygmy Nuthatches, Northern House Wrens, American Robins, Great Blue Herons, Double-crested Cormorants, Ospreys, Killdeer, Northern Flickers, Black-billed Magpies, Bushtits. It was a special thrill to observe an American Barn Owl in a cavity nest at Barr Lake State Park on our April 23<sup>rd</sup> field trip. A nearby sign warned us not to linger or get too close to the nest so as not to disturb the owl. It's good advice for any species of owl you observe in a nest.

What should you do if you spot a baby bird on the ground? Chances are it is a bird that has recently fledged, and the parents are keeping a watchful eye on it and feeding it. Here's a helpful article from the website Cornell Ornithology maintains: [All About Birds](#).

Last year, we had a fledgling Blue Jay soggy from the day's rainstorm in our basement window well, looking positively helpless. I made several trips down to the basement to keep an eye on it through the window. The following morning, I witnessed one of the parents bringing it food. It eventually made its way out of the window well into the side yard. I trust it survived successfully. Then, I experienced that familiar empty-nest syndrome.

We had a fun walk on May 21<sup>st</sup> with Dave Sutherland on the Bear Canyon Trail. It was one of his famous Jungle Bird walks where we learned 20 of the 30 species we observed spend most of the year in rainforests, coming up here to breed. Many of those species can be found in the Costa Rica field guide. By the way, the Bear Canyon Trail is one of the best places to find Lazuli Buntings.

This was my fourth year participating in the Club's trip to Nebraska to go birding around Lake Ogallala and the Crescent Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. Many thanks to Carolyn Beach for organizing this trip once again, all 8 of us agreed it was wonderful. You can read [her review](#) of this year's trip in this newsletter. If you get the chance next year, I highly recommend signing up for this 3-day field trip.

Pat Heller and Valerie Crecco have lined up some great field trips this summer. Jenny Desmond arranged for Rafael Salgado, Executive Director of the Cal-Wood Educational Center to lead us on a bird walk at Cal-Wood on July 16<sup>th</sup>. Be sure to mark your calendar with all the times, dates and locations of our walks – you won't want to miss one! If there are changes, you'll get an email from one of them, and you'll want to edit your calendar.

Some of you met Annaluna this past year as she filmed a documentary of birding with the Boulder Bird Club. Here is the [LINK](#). Great job, Annaluna Grandt!

Be sure and mark your calendar for our annual picnic on August 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Walden Ponds Picnic Shelter near Cottonwood Marsh. Enjoy the bird walk and then come straight to the Picnic Shelter for lunch. The Club will provide all the refreshments.

I'm looking forward to seeing you out there on our bird walks – good birding, everybody!

*Jane Baryames*

## Note from the Editor

We have an extraordinarily rich group of travel reports this issue. I hope you enjoy them as much as I have!

### Reminder about Posting Boulder Bird Club lists to eBird

When we go birding as a group, eBird recommends that we keep one list for the entire group and share it with group members afterwards. Once shared, each person can edit their personal copy of the list to reflect just the birds they observed.

Historically, we only post to the Boulder Bird Club eBird list if at least 3 members observe the bird. Otherwise, if you are the only one who observed a particular bird, you should edit your own personal list and add that species. Remember that it benefits the group if when you observe a particular bird (especially if it is an uncommon one) to bring it to everyone's attention.

If you are new to eBird and/or want to improve your skills, we recommend taking the eBird Essentials Course, which is a free, self-paced, course that will walk you step-by-step through eBird's most popular features. You'll learn how to keep checklists, explore data, and make your observations more valuable for science and conservation - all on your own time and all completely for free! Here is the [link](#).

The eBird.org website contains a lot of helpful information to get you started recording. Here's the link to a [video](#). And here's another [link](#) to get you started.

If you are interested in keeping up to date on reclassifications of birds from around the work, go to eBird's taxonomy webpage [HERE](#). For more general information on the science of birds and their habitats, visit [this page](#).

Also: 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!

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## Members and Officers

### Welcome to our New BBC members:

Michael Hoffert & Emily Kaegi  
Debra and Tom Sparn  
Judy Stone

## Officers

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## Mark your Calendars!

**July 10, 2025**

David Gessner, a former Boulder resident who now lives and teaches in North Carolina, will speak about and sign his new book, *The Book of Flaco: The World's Most Famous Bird*, on Thursday, July 10th at 6:30pm, at Boulder Bookstore. Tickets for this event are \$5 (plus a small processing fee) and are [available on Eventbrite](#).

### About the Book:

This is a parable of freedom, wildness, and our urban ecosystems. Flaco has been dubbed "the world's most famous bird." From the night in February of 2023 when vandals cut a hole in his cage until his death a year later in a courtyard on the Upper West Side, his is a story full of adventure and unexpected turns.

Nature writer David Gessner chronicles the year-long odyssey of Flaco and the human drama that followed the owl who captured the imaginations of New Yorkers and people around the world. Though he'd spent his life in a cage, Flaco learned to survive in New York City by eating rats, squirrels, and birds. He was an immigrant coming from elsewhere to make it in the big city. Central Park, the island of green in an urban sea, was his new home territory.

Flaco's urban adventure brought controversy, pitting those who felt he should be returned to the safety of the zoo against those who created the "Free Flaco" movement. The birding world was fractured over the ethics of the online sharing of his location that brought scores of enthusiasts to view him each day. And his end--with a grim necropsy revealing Flaco had suffered a viral infection from eating pigeons and had multiple rodenticides in his system--serves as a Rachel Carson-esque warning about the harm we've done to our urban environments, inspiring the passage of long-sought legislation protecting urban birds and regulations meant to reduce the use of rodenticides in New York City.

**August 3, 2025**

Remember come enjoy our annual picnic on August 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Walden Ponds Picnic Shelter near Cottonwood Marsh.

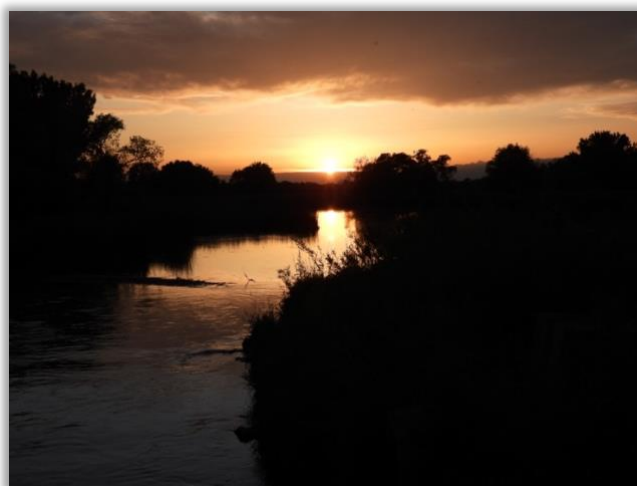
## Birding trips by club members

In this section, enjoy news about birding and nature trips to [Nebraska](#) (Carolyn Beach, Jane Baryames and others from BBC), [Belize](#) (Carolyn Sanders and Eric Boysen), [Kenya](#) (Burr Toohey), [Holland](#) (Jim and Deb Ward), [Texas](#) (Diana Egan and Peggy Gonder), [Western US](#) (Rutherfords), [Cuba](#) (Cynthia Kosso, Jenny Desmond, Sonya Keene, Taina Brin from BBC and several other friends), Photos are by the author unless otherwise noted. Birds in bold type are pictured in the essay.



Nebraska Trip May 2025

Carolyn Beach, Jane Baryames and others



Nebraska Sunset, C. Beach

On May 28 – 30<sup>th</sup>, eight Boulder Bird Club members traveled to the western Nebraska Sand Hills for a birding adventure. This was the fourth annual Crescent Lakes trip for the BBC and, as always happens, no two are alike. This year, the first day was mostly a wash out, as it was raining hard when we arrived at Lake McConaughy, near Ogallala. We waited an hour or so, while we ate lunch and looked at the exhibits at the Visitor's center, but the rain didn't let up, so we gave up on our afternoon birding at Lake Ogallala and headed to our hotel in Lewellen.

The rain stopped when we got there around 3:30, so we decided to walk to the old bridge over the North Platte River a mile outside of town. The birds were rejoicing at the end of

the rain, and we saw many species including **Bobolinks** (photo below by J. Baryames), Orchard Orioles, Eastern Phoebe, Western Grebe, Bell's Vireo, Red-headed Woodpecker and more.



Thursday morning dawned clear and we set out from Lewellen at 5:30am to head for Crescent Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. As we headed north and west from Lewellen, the skies clouded over, and while it didn't rain again, we drove in and out of clouds for several hours. After a dry winter and early spring, the area had received a week's worth of hard rain just prior to our arrival. The roads in the area are sand and they were exciting to traverse, to say the least. A four-wheel-drive automobile was a necessity, but we got to the Refuge unscathed.

We stopped many times along the farm roads that lead to Crescent Lakes and saw Red-headed Woodpeckers, Western and Eastern Kingbirds, a Brown Thrasher, Lark and Vesper Sparrows, Lark Buntings, **Horned Larks**, Orchard Orioles, a **Baltimore Oriole**, **Blue Grosbeaks**, Dickcissels, Upland Sandpiper, Curlews and **Burrowing Owls**. We also had an encounter with a goat with his head stuck in a fence. We tried to extricate him, but had no luck, so we flagged down a couple of farmers who were able to get him loose, to our cheers and thanks. The farmers laughed and said "he'll just do it again." Oh well, we felt good about it. Thanks to Anne Skok for going over to pet the goat and discovering his predicament.

It took several hours just to get to the entrance to the Refuge, because of the plethora of birds along the route. We had to reach our main goal pretty early as we had a full day of exploring Crescent Lakes ahead of us. Once we drove down into the valley where Crescent Lakes is located, the skies cleared and we had good weather the rest of the day.

Our first stop was just inside the entrance where we always see plenty of Burrowing Owls. As we continued along the winding road through the sand hills, we encountered many ground-water-fed lakes and ponds full of birds including, Trumpeter Swans, **Ruddy Ducks** in their wonderful breeding plumage, a huge flock of Wilson's Phalaropes, Blue-winged and Green-winged teal, Eared Grebes, **Nighthawks**, Killdeer, Black-necked Stilt, Avocets, American Bittern, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Lesser Scaup, Ring-necked



Pheasants, and more. At the end of the Refuge, we continued along the sandy roads and eventually got back to Lewellen. We again decided to take a pre-dinner walk to the bridge, where we saw a Forster's Tern, a Red-bellied Woodpecker, a **White-faced Ibis** flyover, many Cliff Swallows, a Gray Catbird, Bobolinks and Orchard Orioles.



Horned Lark, J. Baryames



Blue Grosbeak, J. Baryames



Baltimore Oriole, J. Baryames



Common Nighthawk, C. Beach



Burrowing Owl, J. Baryames



Ruddy Duck, C. Beach



White-faced Ibis, C. Beach



The next morning we slept in a little and left to head back to Lake Ogallala at 7:00am. The next three hours were magical and more than made up for not being able to visit this site on Wednesday afternoon. We saw a Brown Thrasher, a Wood Duck in a tree, a Baltimore Oriole, a Red-bellied Woodpecker, a Northern Flicker (Yellow-shafted), Tree Swallows, Bobolinks, a Black-necked Stilt, a Piping Plover, a Stilt Sandpiper, a flock of Franklin's Gulls, a Lesser Black-backed Gull, Forster's Terns, Pelicans, Cormorants, Great Egret, Red-headed Woodpecker, Semi-palmated Sandpipers and a huge flock of Black Terns. It was almost overwhelming, and we had a hard time pulling ourselves away, but alas, it was time to head home.

A great time was had by all including Jane Baryames, Len and Teresa Gehring, Burr Toohey, Charlie Cooper, Jay Zola, Ann Skok, and leader Carolyn Beach.



### Spring trip to Belize

Carolyn Sanders and Eric Boysen

Carolyn and I really enjoyed a week-long trip to Belize at the end of March and the first week of April. Though not exclusively a birding trip, (we wanted to see some Mayan ruins and enjoy the ocean as well) we stayed in a couple of wonderful jungle lodges with excellent guides and were treated to some fantastic birding. Beginning at the Jade Jungle Resort in Cayo we woke up each morning to an amazing chorus of bird song (punctuated by Howler Monkeys). We were lucky to spot the sometimes difficult to catch **Squirrel Cuckoo**! We did not have to leave the very extensive resort property to be treated to great birding.

On our way to the next destination, Black Rock Lodge, we traveled to Las Cuevas in the Mountain Pine Ridge Reserve for a boat excursion with a guide on the remote reservoir and its tributaries primarily to see nesting **Scarlet Macaws**. Black Rock, located on the Macal River, was a much larger and more developed lodge that specialized in birding, again with fantastic guides. Our final birding stop was at the Bird's Eye View Lodge in the Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary, where we explored the huge wetlands with a guide and encountered thousands of herons, including the **Bare-throated Tiger-Heron** and the **Boat-billed Heron**, and other non-jungle species. We had a wonderful time.

Here are just a few of the species that we saw!



Bare-throated Tiger-Heron



Boat-billed Heron



White Hawk



Blue-gray Tanager



Crimson-collared Tanager



Yellow-winged Tanager



Red-legged Honeycreeper



Scarlet Macaw



Squirrel Cuckoo



Nairobi, Kenya April 15 – 27, 2025

Burr Toohey



**Oserengoni Wildlife Preserve**

I went to Nairobi as the guest of my oldest friend, whose son and family are stationed in Nairobi. Husband and wife are employed by the US Embassy. I spent most of my time in a Nairobi suburb, Runda, an area of Nairobi where there are Embassies with many employees. I also went to a private reserve for 3 days – north of Nairobi, as well as to Nairobi National Park. There are live links to these sites in the following text for your enjoyment.

### **Nairobi**

Well, all I can say is that Nairobi is nuts. A population just shy of 5.7 million. There are no traffic lights, no stop signs, no speed limit signs, no yield signs; a lot of roundabouts with 3 to 4 lanes. The traffic is dangerous; little trucks the size of mini-coopers that go 15 mph and huge double trailer trucks that go 75 mph. There are no sidewalks and there are lots of people on the side of the road, selling stuff, pushing themselves into the path of your car. We did eat at some fabulous restaurants.

### **Runda**

The house where I stayed was gated, large solid metal gate where there is a guard who unlocked the gate. Inside is a guardhouse (standard for US Embassy employees) – bathroom, bed. The guard walks the property perimeter every 20 mins. The walls are high, maybe 8+ feet and topped with curled barb wire. This particular home on two sides had properties that had no houses, just vacant lots, cared for by day people (because of crime, they need daily tending – one had corn planted). As a result, I think there were more birds there than in neighbors' yards.

My bird list:

Lifers: Rufous Sparrow; Pied Crow; Yellow-billed Kite (local name), but actually a subspecies of the Black Kite (*Milvus migrans parasitus*; and has a yellow bill); Grey-rumped Swallow; Black-back Puffback; [Hedada Ibis](#) - you can hear them before you see them - very loud (click on above link for eBird views and sounds of this Ibis).

Other birds:

House Sparrow; Streaky Seedeater; Baglafaecht Weaver; Yellow-billed Oxpecker (in a city!); Fork-tailed Drongo - plentiful; Speckled Mousebird pair; Hammerkop, nest in an adjacent property - high in tree top; Bronze Sunbird and nest; African Wagtail; Grey Heron; Common Bulbul; African Firefinch - beautiful, little red bird; Speke's Weaver; Speckled Mousebird; Little Bee-eater on the utility wires; juvenile White-eyed Slaty-Flycatcher - I had seen adults before but never a juvenile. Another example of a very difficult ID. Thank goodness I had access to multiple bird books.

Chui Lodge - [Oserengoni Wildlife Preserve](#) - private - very small, 18,000 acres. The website linked above provides beautiful views of the land and creatures on it. We had great views of 2 pairs of Bushbucks, Waterbucks - a pair - stunning, Warthogs (oh so many - called Kumba); Impalas; 2 types of Gazelles (Grant and Thompson); African Buffaloes; Topi; Hartebeest; Wildebeest (they are nuts, always running and bumping into one another; Spotted Hyenas. Lots of Vervet Monkeys trying to get your food on your table. And a female leopard with her prey (an Impala) that she had dragged to a spot up in an Acacia tree. Hyenas were close by waiting for her (photo from preserve website).



The animals that were the most impressive to me were lifers: a tortoise on the grounds of the lodge; Grévy's Zebra (the largest living species of wild equid and the most threatened of the three species of zebras) - we saw 4; a Bat-eared Fox family of 3 (Fossil records indicate this canid first appeared during the middle Pleistocene. They have huge ears); an Aardvark (Afrikaans for "earth pig"; photo from [this site](#)) - although I have seen others before, they have always been in their burrow. They have burrows everywhere; you have to watch out for these in the Jeep going off trail. One was walking around - very cool, very prehistoric looking with their bare skin, rabbit ears and kangaroo-like tail.





I have seen many Hippos, but one never on the dirt jeep trail, out of water completely and within 20 feet in front of our vehicle. It was amazing and dangerous. It was a hot day and the animal was sweating profusely. And we had to go forward but there was no room for both the Jeep and the Hippo. The driver had to maneuver the vehicle to force the Hippo into the woods. A Hippo cannot be out of water long because its skin is so sensitive. We just prayed that it found its way back to the water; it seemed lost.

My bird list:

Lifers: Tambourine Dove; Tropical Boubou – has 9 different calls; Ring-necked Dove (looks like our Eurasian Collared-Dove, but a slightly different species, i.e. *Streptopelia capicola* vs ours, i.e. *Streptopelia decaocto*); Richard's Pipit; African Red-rumped Swallow; African or possibly Eastern Black-headed Oriole; Northern Masked-Weaver; Olive Thrush; White-crested Helmetshrike – 8 fly overs; Red-headed Weaver – female only (has a yellow head); *Coqui Francolin Campocolinus coqui* – *ebird* does not agree with me and I cannot prove the sighting but it was a very clear view; Somali Ostrich.

Other birds: Fiscal Shrike; N. Anteater Chat; Cape Robin-Chat; African Hoopoe; Brown-crowned Tchagra; Fish Eagles; Rüppell's (Griffon) Vulture; Crowned Plover (Lapwing now, I think); Helmeted Guinea Fowl; Klaas Cuckoo 3-banded Plover.

A morning at [Lake Navaisha](#) before breakfast (very close to Chui Lodge):

Steve Frye (Flying Circus Birders) told me he knows this area well and he was in the Peace Corps around there! The lake used to be fresh water and thousands of Flamingos flocked there, but no longer. It is now brackish and without Flamingos. There were, however, lots and lots of Hippos.

My bird list:

Lifers: Hildebrandt's Spurfowl; Black Crake; Reed Cormorant; Giant Kingfisher; Yellow-billed Stork; Nubian Woodpecker; Pale Flycatcher.

Other birds: Pied Kingfisher; Squacco Heron; Purple Heron; Great White Egret; Long-toed Lapwing; Arrow-marked Babbler; Golden-breasted Bunting; African Spoonbills at water edge.

**Nairobi National Park**, about 45 sq miles, just south of the city:

We saw lots of Giraffes, S. Kenyan Rhinos (lifer), Nile Crocodiles (lifer), 2 Lionesses, Elands, Hippos, Impalas, Vervet Monkeys, Buffaloes.

My bird list:

Lifers: Spur-winged Lapwing; Long-tailed Fiscal; Red-nobbed Coot (not in breeding so no red nob).

Other birds: White-backed Vultures by the dozens; African Spoonbills; Black-winged Stilts; Blacksmith Lapwing; 3-banded Plover; Black-winged Kite; Go-Away Bird (white bellied); Maribou Stork; White-browed Coucal; Red-necked Spurfowl; Immature Secretary Bird; Sacred Ibis; Cisticola (sp); Barn Swallow – fun to see an old friend; Black-headed Heron; Cattle Egret on the Rhinos.

**Kiambethu Tea Farm** in Limuru (north of Nairobi) – absolutely fascinating, a must do if you are in this neck of the woods.

The tour and information about tea in general and its history in Kenya are very interesting. One fact that I will share with you: No reason to go organic for tea or coffee as caffeine is a natural insecticide! This farm began in 1912 or thereabouts and is still owned and operated by the same Scottish family.

My bird list:

Pin-tailed Whydah; Red-billed Firefinch; Grosbeak Weaver; Variable Sunbird; Black - and - white- Mannikin (a lifer).



Road Scholar's "Bountiful Holland" trip, April 29<sup>th</sup> to May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Jim Ward

My wife, Deb, planned a trip to the Netherlands taking a river cruise which exposed us to the Netherlands' history, culture, art, horticultural heritage, cheeses, water management, and the population's overwhelming use of bicycles.

Although this was not a bird trip, I did manage to see a few avian creatures while walking around. My bird count was 61 species, of which 53 were lifers. All of the observed birds are included in the eBird trip report: [Trip to the Netherlands - eBird Trip Report](#).

Of all the birds seen, I found three that I found particularly interesting:



We saw a **Mandarin Duck** in Rotterdam located in a small park. It is a small exotic-looking duck typically found at lakes and parks, usually with nearby trees. The male is very ornate with big orangey "sail fins" on the back, streaked orangey cheeks, and a small red bill with a whitish tip. They are native to East Asia but have established feral populations throughout Western Europe.

We also spotted several **Rose-ringed Parakeets** in Amsterdam and Rotterdam. They are a vibrant green parakeet, frequently found in woodland, parks, and gardens, where they feed mainly in trees. They're easily overlooked if quiet, as the bright green plumage blends easily with the foliage. Like other parakeets, they appear in noisy groups giving sharp screeching calls. They are native to Africa and South Asia and have been introduced around the world, including Europe, the Caribbean, Japan and Hawaii.

The **Egyptian Goose** is a striking "goose" that is more closely related to shelducks. They have a distinctive look with a pale eye surrounded by a dark patch, pink legs, and overall gray and buffy plumage. They are native to Africa, mainly the eastern and southern parts of the continent, and have been introduced across Europe and parts of the U.S.



Mandarin Duck



Rose-ringed Parakeet



Egyptian goose



### **Birding the Upper Texas (and Louisiana) Coast During Spring Migration, April 23-30, 2025**

Peggy Gonder; photos by Diana Egan

The second half of April is a prime time to see migrating warblers and shorebirds on the Upper Texas Coast. Diana Egan and Peggy Gonder birded east and south of Houston this year. Some of our best birds were at well-known hotspots, including High Island,

Anahuac Wildlife Refuge and Galveston Island. A great discovery was Sea Rim State Park, which has a 3,500-foot boardwalk that brought us close to the birds without spooking them.

Peggy had birded High Island in the 1990s when it was already a famous spot. It was heavily damaged by Hurricane Harvey, but the trees have grown back. It is not truly an island, but an oak motte where dirt deposits grew trees on top of a salt dome, creating an "island" of trees that provides an oasis for exhausted birds as they completed their journey northward over the Gulf of Mexico. It is a few miles inland and surrounded by cattle pastures and ponds, so the wooded groves are a magnet for warblers and waterfowl.

High Island is comprised of two properties about 10 minutes apart by car: Smith Oaks, which contains a fabulous rookery, and Boy Scout Woods. Houston Audubon owns and manages the sanctuary. They charge a modest daily fee but staff it with volunteers who are available to answer questions. "Prior to Houston Audubon's ownership, the birds, turtles and alligators were often used for target practice," the rookery brochure notes. In 1994, the oil company Amoco "generously donated Claybottom Pond at Smith Oaks Sanctuary and adjacent acreage to Houston Audubon, who implemented a no hunting policy. In 1995, there were 50 heron nests. The number of pairs grew to 1,083 in 2003 and now it is quite a show," the brochure explains.

We loved the rookery! We took a U-shaped walk where we looked across at a small island with alligators and birds nesting in trees. The trail took us to the bottom of the U, where a small canal separated birders from a narrow island about 50 feet away parallel to us. We were able to take close-up looks at the birds on nests from a wooded area that allowed the birds to relax and ignore the spectators.



Spoonbill rookery next to Great Egrets



Anhinga



Little Blue Heron



Neotropic Cormorant and young

The **Roseate Spoonbills** were large and showy. Fellow nesters included Great and Snowy Egrets and Cattle Egrets. The stars of the show (for us) were a stunning **Anhinga** with white feathers on its black back. The **Little Blue Heron** was also striking. The female **Neotropic Cormorant** was caring for several young. We saw both male and female Summer and **Scarlet Tanagers** as well as a **Purple Gallinule**.



Purple Gallinule



Scarlet Tanager



Bay-breasted Warbler

Another great birding spot was Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, which is quite close to High Island. It was recently renamed for Jocelyn Nangaray in memory the young teenager who was killed in Houston in 2024. The refuge has a wildlife drive around several shallow ponds where you see shorebirds and waterfowl. The showy draw for us were the White Ibis and **Bay-breasted Warbler**.

Local hotspots have dripping water into pools that are a magnet for the birds. We night owls were delighted to learn that the best birding is from 2 to 6 pm, after the birds have flown all night across the Gulf of Mexico!

Diana found an inexpensive Airbnb in Port Arthur, about 90 minutes east of Houston near the Louisiana border. We drove into Louisiana one day to check it out. We researched the eBird lists in deciding our options. Some East Texas birders recommended



Peveto Woods. It was also a wooded spot with a variety of trees. We went to a wildlife refuge where the highlight was three **Clapper Rails**. Two gave us brief looks or noises. The third stood along a grassy walkway for several minutes!



Clapper Rail

Since the woods have manmade drips that bring the birds into ponds and logs where the birds land to bathe and drink, we were provided with good photo opportunities.

We went to Martin Dies State Park on the recommendation of a San Antonio birder Peggy encountered at Cherry Creek State Park. It was hot and muggy and not recommended by us! The state park was an hour north of Beaumont/Port Arthur and the birds were nesting in trees fully leafed out. We could hear Prothonotary Warblers, but could never see them.

Very productive were the salt water marshes and the Gulf of Mexico at Boliver Peninsula and Galveston Island. There are free ferries that travel between the mainland all day long. We spotted some dolphins on the way back and got some great looks at birds. We highly recommend a trip to the Upper Texas Coast the second half of April!



Western US Spring 2025

Kevin and Eileen Rutherford

Since our last trip report, we have enjoyed three more birding trips. We had never birded California before, and we decided to start with the San Diego area. In March we visited a number of eBird hotspots along the coast from San Diego to Los Angeles, as well as a few spots near Joshua Tree National Park. We saw 141 species on that trip, and managed to

pick up over a dozen lifers, including Allen's Hummingbird, Ridgway's Rail, **Black Turnstone**, **Surfbird**, **Nuttall's Woodpecker**, **Red-whiskered Bulbul**, **Scaly-breasted Munia**, and **Swinhoe's Whiteye**. Several of our lifers are exotic species which have been naturalized, or are provisional exotic species. Birding southern California was a bit different than our usual trips as it included much more urban birding than we are used to. But there are lots of interesting birds there which you can't see outside of California.



Black Turnstone,  
San Diego, CA



Surfbird, San Diego, CA



Nuttall's Woodpecker, Big  
Morongo Canyon, CA



Red-whiskered Bulbul,  
Pasadena, CA



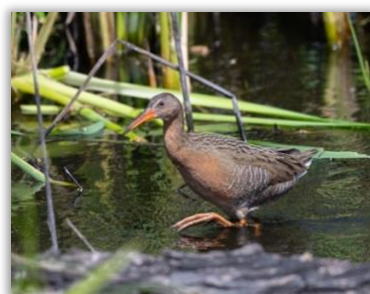
Scaly-breasted Munia,  
Pasadena, CA



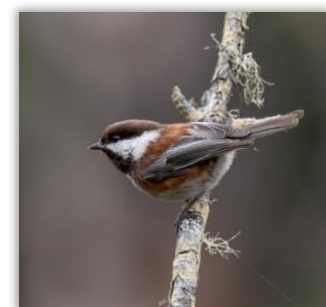
Swinhoe's Whiteye,  
San Diego, CA



Yellow-billed Magpie,  
Sacramento, CA



Ridgway's Rail,  
Huntington, CA



Chestnut-backed  
Chickadee, Sea Ranch, CA

In April we headed back to California to visit friends as well as get in some fun birding. This time we went to areas north of San Francisco, from Point Reyes to the Sea Ranch. Including some birding we did along the way, we ended up with 137 species, and two lifers: **Yellow-billed Magpie** and Glaucous-winged Gull. It is a very pretty area, and we may have to go back again some time.

In May we met Eileen's relatives in Klamath Falls, Oregon for some family time and more birding. As we passed through the Salt Lake City area, we spent a little time at the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, which we always really enjoy. We also stopped at a few new places along our route, such as the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge in Nevada. For the trip, we ended up with 146 species, including one lifer: **Tricolored Blackbird**. They are only found in Pacific coast states, but we happened upon an area with hundreds of them.



Tricolored Blackbird, Klamath Falls, OR

It was a LOT of driving! But we thoroughly enjoyed each one of the trips.





Western Cuba: Birds and Culture  
March 21, 2025-April 1, 2025

Cynthia Kosso, Sonya Keene, Jenny Desmond, Terry Master and others



Roadside Scene, Cuba (C. Kosso)

Twelve people plus our guide Roger and driver Ernesto met in Havana to begin our ten-day tour of birding spots in western Cuba. The tour started on March 21. The tour company was the local Vive Mas Tours ([www.vivemastours.com](http://www.vivemastours.com)), owned by Boulder Bird Club member Jenny Desmond.

Our participants came from the Denver/Boulder area, Pennsylvania, and New York. The group was almost entirely experienced travelers and birders, including an ornithologist (Professor Terry Master who managed our e-Bird reports, and you can see many of his photos in our eBird lists, links below. Many more photos can be found in the e-Bird reports) and an environmental scientist, and professionals in other fields, along with our expert guide Roger! All were up for anything, extremely flexible, and good natured. Our opinion: one of the best groups ever!

We landed in Havana and began getting to know one another as we headed west for our first birding stops. The tour was very well organized. (Thank you, Jenny and crew.) Most days we got going fairly early and explored until the early afternoon, followed by a couple of hours of free time and then some early evening birding before dinner. Our guide Roger was an experienced birder in Cuba, and we employed local guides in several locations who knew for sure where the birds were.

We spent the first night in the village of Artemisia and then moved on to Vinales (a charming and friendly town in western Cuba) for three nights and thoroughly explored that region. From there we headed back east, up to Havana for a refueling stop and then down to Playa Largo, the Bay of Pigs, Cienfuegos (\*two nights) and back to Havana. Because of the nature of our visa, which intends to support the people of Cuba, we stayed in what are known as *Casa Particulares*, smaller privately owned bed-and-breakfast type establishments. These were comfortable with very friendly and caring local owners. Though we experienced a fair number of power blackouts, we were always able to keep our camera batteries charged and get a warm shower☺. The food was great and the people everywhere warm and welcoming. I think we all would go on a Vive Mas tour again, and indeed several of our group are going to Colombia with Jenny's company in the fall.

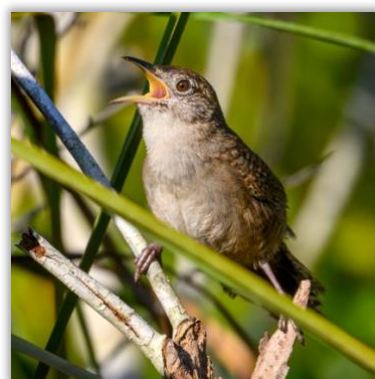
Now for the birds!

The trip report and checklists include all the birds heard and/or seen during the tour. (Cuba Trip [report](#).) We observed 118 species of birds, almost one-third (30.8%) of the 383 species that have been found in the country. In addition, a larger, unidentified swift was seen at the Havana Golf Club, likely a White-collared Swift, but it flew by too quickly to identify it. The largest number of species seen in a single day (36) was on March 23 during the early morning hike and subsequent visit to an orchid garden.

We were very fortunate to see 22/27 extant endemic species (81%). The endemic species that we saw only once were the **Fernandina Flicker**, **Zapata Wren** (we are still discussing the exact location of the Wren), Zapata Sparrow, **Blue-headed Quail-Dove**, and the **Cuban Parakeet** (not including the pair of unrestrained, but tame, birds that we saw) and Olive-capped Warbler.



Fernandina Flicker, David Husic



Zapata Wren, David Husic



Blue-headed Quail Dove, David Husic



Cuban Parakeet, Terry Master

The endemic species seen most frequently was probably the Cuban Blackbird, but it was difficult to distinguish from other blackbirds, including the endemic Tawny-Shouldered Blackbird. The **Cuban Tody** was seen 4 times and heard in a few additional instances. Among other birds, we also viewed the **Cuban Pygmy Owl**, Stygian Owl, Cuban Oriole, Cuban Vireo, **Cuban Pewee**, American Flamingo, **Cuban Red-legged Thrush**, Cuban Bullfinch, **Cuban Trogon**, **Great Lizard Cuckoo**, Western Spindalis, White crowned pigeon, Cuban Nightjar, **Bee Hummingbird**, **Cuban Emerald**, **Cuban Grassquit**.



Cuban Trogon, S. Keene



Great Lizard Cuckoo, S. Keene



Cuban Pygmy Owl, Terry Master



Cuban Pewee, C. Kosso



Cuban Tody, David Husic



Cuban Emerald, C. Kosso





Bee Hummingbird,  
David Husic



Cuban Grassquit, David Husic



Cuban Red-legged Thrush,  
C. Kosso

We had truly excellent views of the **Cuban Solitaire**, a bird often difficult to see, but with an astoundingly unusual and memorable song (you can listen to an example [here](#)). Most of us, surprisingly, got a photo of this endemic bird.



Cuban Solitaire, Sonya Keene

A bit more about the people and culture:

Most tour participants took photographs. There were two categories of photos. First, the birds. Second, the people, places, scenery, and cultural spots. One person had a full-on professional camera, and his photos were superb, due both to the gear and the photographer's skill. There were several pro-am level cameras, and a couple super-zoom cameras we used for birds. The ubiquitous cell-phone cameras were great for the people/places/scenery/culture type photos.

Our guide Roger explained a lot about Cuban history, Cuban culture, and Cuban/American relations as well as local regional variations. [Vinales Valley is a World Heritage Site](#) and in that area, farmers use only the traditional methods and tools, no modern automation. It was interesting to see people riding horses as a matter of transportation, and see horses pulling carts carrying harvest goods, including sugar cane. We got an in-depth visit to a family-owned tobacco farm, and saw an expert roll a cigar in the traditional way, including a fingerful of honey to further flavor the smoking experience. We were all offered the cigar to try. Some of us inhaled, some declined, and some tried to smoke a cigar for the first time, feeling twelve years old again. In Havana, we visited Ernest Hemingway's house and property, which he called his Finca (estate). We rode around in gorgeously maintained Classic cars from the 1950s. Cuban rum was enjoyed frequently by most of us.

It was a great pleasure to learn the birds and about local culture and history with other people who were equally interested. Our ornithologist prepared the thorough eBird reports with locations and photographs, which was an invaluable service to everyone else. One trip participant called this trip a Peak Lifetime Experience, and many agreed. It was a wonderful mix of birds, culture, and strangers who became friends.



American Flamingo, David Husic

## Local Photos - BBC Members



Heil Ranch walk, led by Pat Cullen, 6/25/25, photo by J. Baryames

### Views of the Lewis's Woodpecker, Heil Ranch, June 25-26, 2025



A. Sheets

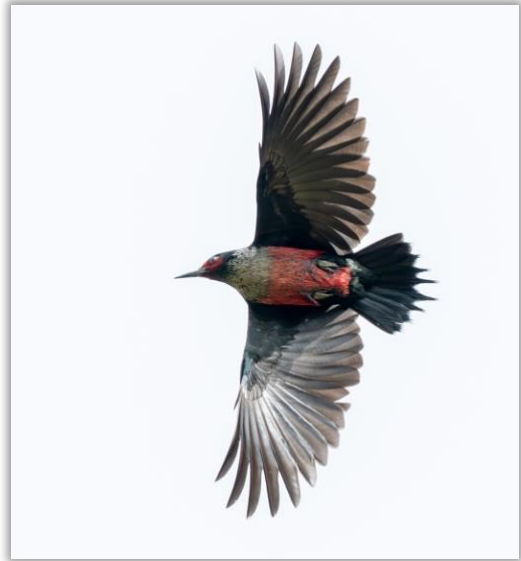


A. Sheets





K. Rutherford



K. Rutherford



J. Ward



J. Ward

**Jane Baryames**



Red-headed Woodpecker, Heil Ranch, 6/25/25



Blue Grosbeak, Sage Trail, Boulder County Ranch. 6/28/25



Western Bluebird, Betasso Reserve, 6/4/25



Vesper Sparrow, Betasso Reserve, 6/4/25



Bullock's Oriole, Wheat Ridge Greenbelt, 5/15/25



Common Yellowthroat, Wheat Ridge Greenbelt, 5/15/25

## Upcoming Field Trips

### ORGANIZERS:

Valerie Crecco

[valerie.crecco@comcast.net](mailto:valerie.crecco@comcast.net)

303-886-4898

Pat Heller

[pat\\_heller@msn.com](mailto: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 changed and the trips are 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.**

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](mailto: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.

Boulder Bird Club Wednesday field trips will continue to start at 8:00 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.

Keep in mind that there may be last minute changes due to weather. 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](mailto:pat_heller@msn.com)

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or Valerie Crecco at [valerie.crecco@comcast.net](mailto:valerie.crecco@comcast.net) to request adding your email address to this list.

We send out reminder emails a day or two prior to each field trip. If you're on the Googlegroups list, you'll receive these emails.

**WEDNESDAY, July 2, 2025 - BRAINARD LAKE - 8:00 am**

Leaders: Sharon Norfleet & Gary Baxley - 720-273-5689

[maeedw3017@gmail.com](mailto:maeedw3017@gmail.com)

All drivers will need to make to reserve a parking space, fee \$2. You must email [reservation.gov](https://reservations.colorado.gov) and on the search bar type Brainard Lake Picnic Site/Trailhead Day Use Parking which is where we'll all meet. Probably best if you make your own carpool arrangements. Contact Jane at 303-910-0293 if you need help with carpooling. Plan to arrive at 8:00 am.

**SUNDAY, July 6, 2025 -FIRST SUNDAY BIRDING AT WALDEN PONDS -**

8:00 am

3893 N. 75<sup>th</sup> St., Boulder

Leader: Valerie Crecco - 303-886-4898 - [valerie.crecco@comcast.net](mailto:valerie.crecco@comcast.net)

Meet at the Cottonwood Marsh parking lot on the Walden Ponds Road off 75<sup>th</sup> Street, just south of Jay Road. 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, July 9, 2025 - WALKER RANCH - MEYERS GULCH - 8:00 am**

7800 Flagstaff Road, Boulder

Leader: Cathy Comstock - 303-819-1447

One of the treasures of Boulder County Open Space, magical and remote.

To carpool from Boulder, meet at the East Boulder Community Center west parking lot for a 7:30 am departure. If you drive straight there, plan to arrive at 8:00 am.

**WEDNESDAY, July 16, 2025 - CAL-WOOD EDUCATION CENTER - 8:00 am**

2282 Co Rd 87, Jamestown, CO 80455

[Calwood.org](https://calwood.org); 2282 Co Rd 87, Jamestown, CO 80455 - 8:00 am until lunchtime

Leaders: Rafael Salgado, Executive Director of Cal-Wood and Jenny Desmond, 303-775-3131

We'll meet up at Cal-Wood a little before 8:00 am for a walk led by Rafael. Expect uneven terrain, so bring your walking sticks. Bring a bag lunch to enjoy at the end of our walk.

Those from Boulder who wish to carpool can meet at the Foothills Trailhead parking lot which is located on the right-hand side of the highway 0.2 miles north of the intersection of Broadway and North Foothills Highway (28th St.) by 7:10 am to be on time for a 7:20 am departure. Otherwise, from Boulder take Broadway, Olde Stage Road, Lefthand Canyon Drive and James Canyon Drive (about 16 miles) to CO Rd 87, turn right on 87 and continue for 2.8 miles (rough, dirt road). Enter the Cal-Wood property and park in the large lot by a pond on your right side. Leader:

**WEDNESDAY, July 23, 2025 - LAIR O' THE BEAR - 8:30 am**

22550 State Highway 74, Idledale, CO 80453, 8:30 am.

Leader: Carolyn Beach - 303-443-0129 - beachcarolyn1@gmail.com

To carpool from Boulder, meet at the Eldorado Park and Ride at the NE corner of Highway 93 (Broadway) and Eldorado Springs Drive by 7:20 am for a 7:30 am departure. The parking area is approximately 4 miles west of Morrison on the south side of State Highway 74. If you go directly there, try to arrive by 8:15 am.

**WEDNESDAY, July 30, 2025 - DAVIS' HOUSE FOR HUMMINGBIRD VIEWING - 8:30 am**

938 Colard Lane, Lyons, CO

This year, we are going straight to Ray and Nina Davis' house to watch their hummingbird feeders and bird feeders. We'll stay for an hour or two, and those who choose to continue birding in Lyons can go to Old S. St. Vrain Road.

Thank you, Davis, in advance for your hospitality!

**SUNDAY, August 3, 2025 -ANNUAL CLUB PICNIC and FIRST SUNDAY BIRDING AT WALDEN PONDS - 8:00 am**

3893 N. 75<sup>th</sup> St. Boulder

Leader: Iris Sherman-Boemker - 303-817-9838 - irisshermanb@gmail.com

Birding will begin at 8:00 am and the picnic will follow at about 10:30 am.

We will bird for a couple of hours before our annual summer picnic in the covered shelter near our usual meeting spot at the Cottonood Marsh parking lot on the Walden Ponds Road off 75<sup>th</sup> Street, just south of Jay Road. Food and soft drinks will be provided. There will be coolers with ice. ALL welcome to come for birding and/or for the picnic. No reservations needed!

**WEDNESDAY, August 6, 2025 - WHITE ROCKS - 8:00 am**

8700 Valmont Road, Boulder

Leader: Valerie Crecco

Meet at the Teller Farm North Trailhead parking lot on Valmont Road, between 75<sup>th</sup> and 95<sup>th</sup> Sts. for an 8:00 am start.

**WEDNESDAY, August 13, 2025 – PESCHEL OPEN SPACE TO SANDSTONE RANCH – 8:00 am**

Leaders: Jenny Desmond - 303-775-3131 - jenny@vivemastours.com - & Cynthia Kosso - 928-220-5397 - ckkosso@gmail.com

Meet at the parking lot at 10552 East County Line Road (or Weld County Road 1), Longmont, which is located 0.8 mile south of Highway 119, or 4.2 miles north of Highway 52. We'll walk east towards Sandstone Ranch for as far as we like.

**WEDNESDAY, August 20, 2025 – RABBIT MOUNTAIN – 8:00 am**

15140 N 55th St. Longmont, CO

Leader: Jane Baryames - 303-910-0293 - janeb1952@gmail.com

To carpool from Boulder, meet at the North Foothills Trailhead parking lot which is located 0.2 miles north of the intersection of Broadway and North Foothills Highway (28th St.) by 7:20 am to be on time for 7:30 am departure. Otherwise, meet there at 8:00 am. You might consider wearing long pants, socks and boots or sturdy hiking shoes. Wear a hat and bring plenty of water, and maybe a hiking pole.

Some may want to hike the entire Eagle Wind Trail which is optional (4 miles round trip from the parking lot). The plan is to hike up to the overlook and then turn around and come back to the parking lot down the road.

**WEDNESDAY, August 27, 2025 – BOYD LAKE STATE PARK – 8:30 am**

3720 N County Road 11C – Loveland, CO

Leader: Pat Cullen – 303-506-0405 – hathcockcolorado@gmail.com

A new hotspot for Boulder Bird Club! Shore birds! State Park Pass required or \$10 daily fee. We will offer more details, including carpooling, as the date gets closer.

**WEDNESDAY, September 3, 2025 – LAGERMAN RESERVOIR – 8:00 am**

7100 Pike Rd, Longmont, CO

Leader: Carolyn Beach - 303-443-0129 – beachcarolyn1@gmail.com

We'll look for returning ducks, grebes and shorebirds among many other possible species as we walk around the reservoir. Bring a scope if you have one and a water bottle.

**SUNDAY, September 7, 2025 - FIRST SUNDAY BIRDING AT WALDEN PONDS –**

7:30 am

3893 N. 75<sup>th</sup> St. Boulder

Leader: Pete Christiansen – pschristiansen1967@gmail.com



Meet at the Cottonwood Marsh parking lot on the Walden Ponds Road off 75<sup>th</sup> Street, just south of Jay Road. 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, September 10, 2025 - BARR LAKE STATE PARK**

7:30 am for banding; 8:30 for the walk

13401 Picadilly Rd, Brighton, CO

Leader: TBD

Banding Station - Limited to 15 participants.

\$10.00 fee unless you have an annual State Park Pass on your car registration.

More details will be shared as we get closer to the date.

**WEDNESDAY, September 17, 2025 - WANEKA LAKE/GREENLEE PRESERVE - 8:00 am**

Leader: Jim Ward - 303-482-6170 - [darthgeek.jw@gmail.com](mailto:darthgeek.jw@gmail.com)

Meet at the East parking lot off of Caria Drive and West Emma St for an 8:00 am start.

**WEDNESDAY, September 24, 2025 - CARIBOU RANCH OPEN SPACE - 8:00 am**

144 Co Rd 126 #86, Nederland, CO 80466

Leaders: Gary Baxley and Sharon Norfleet (720) 273-5689 - [maeedw3017@gmail.com](mailto:maeedw3017@gmail.com)

Hopefully we'll enjoy beautiful fall foliage as well as observing the birds on this walk.

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

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**\$ 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](http://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](mailto:BBC.Rutherford@gmail.com)**

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