



# Colorado Field Ornithologists

## 2020 - Pueblo Convention Field Trips

Participants for all field trips will meet at the Holiday Inn Express on the north side of Pueblo. This will also be the pickup point for any optional meals that you may have ordered. Vehicles not needed for the trips can be parked for the day in any of the lots at the hotel. **Trip departure times are the "wheels up" time**, so be sure to arrive at least 10 minutes before your scheduled departure time, fully ready to depart, so you won't be left behind. Some field trip sites are also more fully described in our Colorado County Birding website. NOTE: All leader assignments and itineraries are potentially subject to change! We are pleased to offer convention field trips at an incredibly productive time of year for birds and birders, but we also caution that road closures, high water, impassable snow banks, etc., are always possible and may not be known in advance. Note too that several field trips visit sites with day-use fees, that are not covered by your convention registration.

Thursday, May 7		
Th-1 - Arrival Trip from Northern Front Range Depart: 7:00 AM (Full Day - 3:40, 172 miles) - Easy	Th-2 - Arrival Trip from SW Colorado Depart: 7:00 AM (Full Day - 6:06, 284 miles) - Easy	Th-3 - Rails in the Dark Depart: 8:00 PM (Evening - 1:00, 60 miles) - Easy
The leader will contact you with more information. It is possible to join the trip on its route if you are further south than the starting point. Leader: Nicholas Komar	The leader will contact you with more information. Leader: Eric Hynes	We will try for Black Rail, Virginia Rail and Sora. In addition, we never know what birds might be migrating through this marsh. Because the Black Rail is under review as an endangered or threatened species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, we will need to follow these guidelines. We will all drive out to the same marsh together; carpooling is a must. All parking will be on the same side of the road, no door slamming, all lights extinguished and no talking once arriving at our destination. Only the leaders will be talking. After standing for 10-15 minutes to let the birds settle back down, we will try for these rare birds. Cupping your ears and concentrated listening will be required as the rails may be on the other side of the marsh. Leaders: Sue Riffe and Diana Beatty
Friday, May 8		

<p>Fr-1 - Brett Gray Ranch (restricted access)  Depart: 5:00 AM  (Full Day - 4:38, 278 miles r.t.)  Fee \$ 20 - More Difficult</p> <p>The eastern plains have their own unique beauty, as you'll discover at the 50,000 acres Brett Gray Ranch, managed in partnership with The Nature Conservancy. This working cattle ranch is devoted to humane beef production that is ecologically kind to our native prairie ecosystem. Located on short-grass prairie east of Colorado Springs, the ranch offers widely diverse habitats that attract birds from miles around. Dry grasslands, riparian cottonwoods, and marshes and ponds give us plenty of opportunity to look for flycatchers, sparrow and raptors. Warblers and a Black Tern may fill out the day. Expect uneven ground and trail less walks as we look for prairie species and spring migrants here. Leader: Mark Peterson</p>	<p>Fr-2 - John Martin and the Arkansas River Valley  Depart: 5:00 AM  (Full Day - 4:02, 214 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>The Arkansas River, the 6th longest in the United States, and the valley provides us plenty of fantastic birding spots to explore. The vast array of riparian areas, quiet wooded lots and marshes provide days of exploring. We have picked the best for you. Destinations include Van's Grove, Van's Marsh, Wood Thrush Grove, Fort Lyons Wildlife Easement and Hasty Campground. Migrants, migrants and even more migrants will be the targets for the day. Expect to walk around a bit at each location so a small day pack might be useful. The final spot is John Martin Reservoir State Park. Piping Plovers and Least Terns have bred here in the past so keep an eye out. State park pass/fee is required for the drivers. Leader: Peter Burke</p>	<p>Fr-3 - Migrating Hotspots of Lamar  Depart: 5:00 AM  (Full Day - 4:18, 246 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>Hasty Campground, Temple's Grove, Lamar Community College, Willow Creek Park and Stulp's Farm are our destinations for this adventure. We are looking for passerines that are migrating north to their breeding grounds and the eastern species that stray too far west from the Central Flyway. Anything is possible. Expect walking, standing, listening, and waiting to get on the birds for this field trip. What do all these locations have in common? They all have water, deciduous trees, shrubs and thick undergrowth. We should find some great birds to make up for the long drive out and back. State park pass/fee is required for the drivers. Leader: David Leatherman</p>
<p>Fr-4 - Higbee and Purgatoire River Valley  Depart: 5:15 AM  (Full Day - 4:10, 205 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>The Purgatoire River provides lush riparian habitat through arid pinyon-juniper canyonlands south of La Junta. Many species that are usually found further south can be seen in small numbers in this area. Patience is required but should pay off for a fantastic day list! Locations include Higbee Cemetery, Higbee Valley Road along the river and then down to Picket Wire Canyon. Here we will hike about 3 miles on an uneven trail. Targets include Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Scaled Quail, Greater Roadrunner, Black Phoebe, Juniper Titmouse, Curve-billed Thrasher, Summer Tanager and Rufous-crowned Sparrow. The area around Higbee has attracted numerous rarities in the past including nesting Vermilion Flycatcher, Painted Bunting, Black-throated Sparrow and Zone-tailed Hawk. Hepatic Tanagers breed nearby as well. Leader: Eric DeFonso</p>	<p>Fr-5 - Rocky Ford SWA and the amazing lakes of Otero and Crowley Counties  Depart: 5:15 AM  (Full Day - 3:14, 158 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>It's all about the Arkansas River at this SWA. This is a good spot for migrating land birds and is the westernmost location where Northern Bobwhite may be heard calling from the thickets. Paths wander through sunny meadows and shaded woods along the riparian corridor, revealing all the usual suspects. Expect to walk a couple of miles here. Keep an eye out for a Mississippi Kite and warblers. Other places we'll visit include Lakes Holbrook, Cheraw, Meredith and Henry, shallow reservoirs that are terrific for migrating shorebirds and waterfowl. Our targets here are double-digit shorebirds species, including Snowy Plovers. Leader: David Tonnessen</p>	<p>Fr-6 - The Best of Huerfano County  Depart: 5:15 AM  (Full Day - 3:25, 178 miles) - Easy</p> <p>This under birded county has many exciting locations to explore. Huerfano (Ware-fuh-no) County elevations range from 4,665 feet to 10,187 and that range supports many habitats. The Pryor area has had a Hepatic Tanager singing in the area for the last several years. We hope to find one this year. Ash-throated Flycatcher, Western Wood-Pewee, Cassin's Kingbird, Plumbeous Vireo, Lazuli Bunting, Black-headed and Blue Grosbeaks are all possible here. Lathrop Sate Park has two large lakes, Pinyon-Juniper woodlands, wetlands and riparian areas. We could add many water birds, 4 species of grebes, Juniper Titmouse, Yellow-breasted Chat and Say's Phoebes. The La Veta town area has several smaller ponds that should give us opportunity for a few shorebirds. Old La Veta Pass is a quiet road up the Sangre de Cristo Mountains where we could see Warbling Vireo, Green-tailed Towhee, Virginia's and MacGillivray's Warblers. State park pass/fee is required for the drivers Leader: Sue Riffe</p>

<p>Fr-7 - The Best of Custer County  Depart: 5:30 AM  (Full Day - 3:20, 150 miles) - Easy</p> <p>Unlike many of Colorado's small mountain counties, Custer County includes a surprising large range of habitats, and the potential to rack up a list of 100 or more on a good day during migration. We'll explore DeWeese Reservoir at an elevation of 7,671 feet, Towns of Westcliffe and Silver Cliff, Ophir Creek Road, Lakes of the Clouds, Alvarado Campground, Greenwood Area and Wetmore area. Target birds include Violet-green Swallow, Western Tanager, White-faced Ibis, Lewis's Woodpecker, Cordilleran Flycatcher and Evening Grosbeak. Plan on birding all elevations and habitats of this beautiful under birded county. Leader: Nicholas Komar</p>	<p>Fr-8 - Chico Basin Ranch  Depart: 5:30 AM  (Full Day - 1:46, 80 miles) Fee \$ 20 - Moderate</p> <p>Chico Basin Ranch is an 87,000-acre working cattle and dude ranch 30 miles southeast of Colorado Springs that allows bird watchers to visit and roam. Short grass and sand-sage prairie is dotted with spring-fed lakes, creeks, and ponds, creating an irresistible stopping place for weary migrants. Over 330 species have been sighted here. A banding station operates in spring and fall. The ranch's website has a birding trail map with descriptions of various hot spots. Migrant traps yield Northern Waterthrush, Green-tailed Towhee, and a variety of thrushes. Many sparrows and warblers can be seen. Marshy areas conceal Sora and Virginia Rail while shorebirds and terns visit the ponds. Red-necked Phalarope and Sanderling are two of the rarer ones that have been found here. Leader: Marcel Such</p>	<p>Fr-9 - Canon City and Penrose  Depart: 5:45 AM  (Full Day - 2:25, 99 miles) - Easy</p> <p>Many species reach the limit of their range in this area including Black Phoebe, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Gray Flycatcher and Rufous-crowned Sparrow. All will be targets for the day. Expect to spend time looking for the cactus cousin the cholla. Many of our targets can be found in or near this prickly plant or in quality Pinyon Juniper ecosystem all over this area. Canon City Riverwalk is a gorgeous paved trail running along the Arkansas River through town. We'll try to find a quieter section to explore. The road to Temple Canyon Park is right in the middle of pristine Pinyon Juniper habitat and should yield many of its breeders. Finally, Brush Hollow SWA will give us access to some water birds on this 400-acre water source for Penrose. The targets in the Pinyon Juniper include Black-throated Gray and Virginia's Warbler, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Juniper Titmouse, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and Gray Flycatcher, the species hiding in cholla plants include Curved-billed Thrasher, Scaled Quail and Canyon Towhee and riparian specialists including Black Phoebe and Yellow-breasted Chat. Leader: Mark Amershek</p>
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<p>Fr-10 - Fountain Creek and Big Johnson/Bluestem Prairie Depart: 6:00 AM (Full Day - 1:23, 75 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>Migrants moving along the eastern edge of the Rocky Mountains are drawn to Fountain Creek, a major north-south drainage flowing along the foothills. The park's 460 acres run along the water, encompassing the broad flood plain habitat to the east. The park includes ponds, marshes, tall cottonwoods and grassy meadows, providing cover and food for a variety of migrants and breeders. Over 250+ sp. has been recorded here. We'll look for migrating warblers, flycatchers and thrushes, along with sparrow and waterfowl. Following wide trails along the riparian corridor, we may even come across a rail. Bluestem Prairie Open Space has become a refuge for a variety of native wildlife and vegetation including Burrowing Owls and sparrows. We will target Vesper, Savannah and Lark. Big Johnson Reservoir has been drained for repairs but is starting to be refilled. This could be a spectacular spot for shorebirds and other water birds. Co-leading trip is Anna Joy Lehmicke Leader: Clark Jones</p>	<p>Fr-11 - Aiken Canyon Preserve and Brush Hollow SWA Depart: 6:00 AM (Full Day - 1:54, 99 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>This beautiful foothill preserve is 1,621 acres of shrublands, tallgrass prairie meadows, pinyon juniper, and mixed coniferous woodlands owned by The Nature Conservancy. We will hike a 3.7-mile loop trail with an elevation gain of 446 feet while enjoying this pristine canyon ecosystem. With a mosaic of habitats comes a large variety of birds, making this a promising destination. Because we will hike through three different ecosystems, the possible bird list is wonderfully large. When the canyon narrows and we come to the birdiest spot, we will spend some extra time. Expect lots of flycatchers, wrens and warblers. On the full day trips, we'll also visit the 404-acre Brush Hollow SWA. Here we could add some water birds and a possible Pinyon Jay to round out the trip list. Leader: Stan Oswald</p>	<p>Fr-12 - Burnt Mill Road Area in SW Pueblo County Depart: 6:15 AM (Full Day - 1:15, 60 miles) - Easy</p> <p>For a field trip closer to the convention hotel, the Burnt Mill Road area is the one for you. This wonderful loop route takes us through canyon country, pinyon juniper, cholla, shortgrass prairie, ponderosa pine habitats plus a small reservoir. Much of our route takes us along the St. Charles River and Soda Creek. Water always provides a birdy diverse habitat and the possibility of migrants. Some of the birds we may encounter include Greater Roadrunner, Green-tailed Towhee, Cassin's Kingbird and our state bird, the Lark Bunting. To top off the trip, we'll add some water birds at Lake Minnequa. We should add ducks and swallows, and if the water level is right, shorebirds. Enjoy this relaxing trip with classic Pueblo habitat. Leader: Peter R. Gent</p>
<p>Fr-13 - The Best of Pueblo Depart: 6:15 AM (Full Day - 1:11, 37 miles) - Easy</p> <p>The old-growth urban forest of City Park, including pines and sycamores, attracts numerous songbirds in migration. We'll look for Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Yellow-rumped Warblers in the trees. We may see Wood Duck in the small pond. A wooded area west of The Nature Center on the Arkansas River is usually good for migrants. Look for Canyon Towhees and Rock Wrens on the cliffs on the north side of the trail. We'll look around the Pueblo West neighborhood for cholla species like Curved-billed Thrasher and Scaled Quail. At Pueblo Reservoir, we'll concentrate on the Rock Creek Canyon area below the dam. Trails wander along the north side of the river through trees with a good understory where we might see any migrant. Other targets include White-winged Dove, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Bullock's Oriole, Plumbeous and Warbling Vireos. State park pass/fee is required for the drivers. Leader: Eric Hynes</p>	<p>Fr-14 - Mueller SP and Dome Rock SWA Depart: 6:30 AM (Full Day - 1:22, 70 miles) - More Difficult</p> <p>On the western foothills of Pike's Peak lies the 5121-acre Mueller State Park. At an elevation of more than 9,500' this area introduces us to the middle montane habitats — mixed coniferous and aspen forests dotted by massive rocks of Pike's Peak granite. Possibilities include any higher elevation species like Williamson's Sapsucker, Steller's Jay and Red-breasted Nuthatch. In nearby Dome Rock SWA we could find eagles and other raptors. Scenery and views abound, and the eagle-eyed birder might even spot one of the local Big Horn sheep that breed in the area. State park pass/fee is required for the drivers. Leader: Deborah Barnes</p>	<p>Fr-15 - Colorado City and the Rye area Depart: 6:30 AM (Full Day - 1:41, 85 miles) - Easy</p> <p>At just over 12,000' elevation, Greenhorn Mountain is the highest point in Pueblo County and towers over the 6000' valley below. Although this area is near a major highway, it is usually bypassed for more spectacular peaks to the west or south, leaving some fine hidden spots for us to explore. Leaving the highway, we come quickly to a pond in town that is good for waterfowl in migration. Below the dam at Lake Beckwith is some of the best passerine habitat in the valley. A nice city park is bisected by the creek and provides excellent riparian areas, especially during migration. We'll also stop at a spot known to locals as the "Frog Pond," a migrant mecca for many years. Moving closer to the Wet Mountains, we'll check out the city park in Rye where we'll look for Dusky and Cordilleran Flycatchers in the trees and nesting McGillivray's Warblers in the willow along the creek. Leader: Diana Beatty</p>

<p>Fr-16 - San Isabel NF and the Wet Mountains Depart: 6:45 AM (Full Day - TBD) - Easy</p> <p>The Wet Mountains are largely softened, rounded humps accented by occasional rugged outcrops just southwest of Pueblo. The range provides the eastern boundary of the Wet Mountain Valley and bordered on the west by the Sangre de Cristos. Depending on winter snowpack, we will explore all the range has to offer for mountain species. Lake Beckwith, Rye Mountain Park, Lake Isabel, Davenport and Ophir Creek Road should be our destinations. Expect to walk along the road and through early season campgrounds. Targets include typical mountains species like Violet-green Swallow, Steller's Jay, Mountain Bluebird, all three nuthatches and Williamson's Sapsucker. Bring layers for this trip. Leader: TBD</p>	<p>Fr-17 - Cheyenne Mountain SP Depart: 7:00 AM (Half Day - 1:18, 76 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>A nice web of trails provides access to everything from short-grass prairies to Gambel oak woodlands and ponderosa pine/Douglas fir forests in this lovely state park just south of Colorado Springs. Mule deer, elk, and wild turkeys are plentiful. In addition to different raptors, we might see Olive-sided, Dusky, Hammond's and Cordilleran Flycatchers, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Western Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, Lesser Goldfinch, Vesper and Lincoln's Sparrows. Other possible birds include Yellow-breasted Chat, Ovenbird, Virginia's, MacGillvray's and Graces Warblers and Lazuli and Indigo Buntings. Cliff faces might yield Canyon or Rock Wrens and Virginia's Warblers breed in the scrub oak. If you'd like to stay closer to home, enjoy some nice views and see some of our best foothill's birds, join us as we explore Cheyenne Mountain SP. State pass pass/fee is required for the drivers. Leader: Stephanie Pitt</p>	<p>Fr-18 - Owls and Night Birds Depart: 7:00 PM (Evening - 1:40, 100 miles) - Easy</p> <p>Our targets include Flammulated Owl and Common Poorwill. The Wet Mountains and environs provide us with high quality places to try for these birds. As with all owling trips, carpooling is a must. Leaders: Nicholas Komar and Van Truan</p>
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## Saturday, May 9

<p>Sa-1 - John Martin and the Arkansas River Valley Depart: 5:00 AM (Full Day - 4:02, 214 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>The Arkansas River, the 6th longest in the United States, and the valley provides us plenty of fantastic birding spots to explore. The vast array of riparian areas, quiet wooded lots and marshes provide days of exploring. We have picked the best for you. Destinations include Van's Grove, Van's Marsh, Wood Thrush Grove, Fort Lyons Wildlife Easement and Hasty Campground. Migrants, migrants and even more migrants will be the targets for the day. Expect to walk around a bit at each location so a small day pack might be useful. The final spot is John Martin Reservoir State Park. Piping Plovers and Least Terns have bred here in the past so keep an eye out. State park pass/fee is required for the drivers. Leaders: Sue Riffe and Duane Nelson</p>	<p>Sa-2 - Rocky Ford SWA and the amazing lakes of Otero and Crowley Counties Depart: 5:15 AM (Full Day - 3:14, 158 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>It's all about the Arkansas River at this SWA. This is a good spot for migrating land birds and is the westernmost location where Northern Bobwhite may be heard calling from the thickets. Paths wander through sunny meadows and shaded woods along the riparian corridor, revealing all the usual suspects. Expect to walk a couple of miles here. Keep an eye out for a Mississippi Kite and warblers. Other places we'll visit include Lakes Holbrook, Cheraw, Meredith and Henry, shallow reservoirs that are terrific for migrating shorebirds and waterfowl. Our targets here are double-digit shorebirds species, including Snowy Plovers. Leaders: Van Truan and Stan Oswald</p>	<p>Sa-3 - Chico Basin Ranch Depart: 5:30 AM (Full Day - 1:46, 80 miles) Fee \$ 20 - Moderate</p> <p>Chico Basin Ranch is an 87,000-acre working cattle and dude ranch 30 miles southeast of Colorado Springs that allows bird watchers to visit and roam. Short grass and sand-sage prairie is dotted with spring-fed lakes, creeks, and ponds, creating an irresistible stopping place for weary migrants. Over 330 species have been sighted here. A banding station operates in spring and fall. The ranch's website has a birding trail map with descriptions of various hot spots. Migrant traps yield Northern Waterthrush, Green-tailed Towhee, and a variety of thrushes. Many sparrows and warblers can be seen. Marshy areas conceal Sora and Virginia Rail while shorebirds and terns visit the ponds. Red-necked Phalarope and Sanderling are two of the rarer ones that have been found here. Leaders: Mark Amershek and Nicholas Komar</p>
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<p>Sa-4 - Canon City and Penrose  Depart: 5:45 AM  (Full Day - 2:25, 99 miles) - Easy</p> <p>Many species reach the limit of their range in this area including Black Phoebe, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Gray Flycatcher and Rufous-crowned Sparrow. All will be targets for the day. Expect to spend time looking for the cactus cousin the cholla. Many of our targets can be found in or near this prickly plant or in quality Pinyon Juniper ecosystem all over this area. Canon City Riverwalk is a gorgeous paved trail running along the Arkansas River through town. We'll try to find a quieter section to explore. The road to Temple Canyon Park is right in the middle of pristine Pinyon Juniper habitat and should yield many of its breeders. Finally, Brush Hollow SWA will give us access to some water birds on this 400-acre water source for Penrose. The targets in the Pinyon Juniper include Black-throated Gray and Virginia's Warbler, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Juniper Titmouse, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and Gray Flycatcher, the species hiding in cholla plants include Curved-billed Thrasher, Scaled Quail and Canyon Towhee and riparian specialists including Black Phoebe and Yellow-breasted Chat. Leader: Tyler Stewart</p>	<p>Sa-5 - Fountain Creek and Big Johnson/Bluestem Prairie  Depart: 5:45 AM  (Full Day - 1:23, 75 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>Migrants moving along the eastern edge of the Rocky Mountains are drawn to Fountain Creek, a major north-south drainage flowing along the foothills. The park's 460 acres run along the water, encompassing the broad flood plain habitat to the east. The park includes ponds, marshes, tall cottonwoods and grassy meadows, providing cover and food for a variety of migrants and breeders. Over 250+ sp. has been recorded here. We'll look for migrating warblers, flycatchers and thrushes, along with sparrow and waterfowl. Following wide trails along the riparian corridor, we may even come across a rail. Bluestem Prairie Open Space has become a refuge for a variety of native wildlife and vegetation including Burrowing Owls and sparrows. We will target Vesper, Savannah and Lark. Big Johnson Reservoir has been drained for repairs but is starting to be refilled. This could be a spectacular spot for shorebirds and other water birds. For the Saturday trip, we will likely join in on an annual bird count at Fountain Creek Regional Park for the morning and spend the afternoon at Big Johnson and possibly other nearby areas. We will keep the options open if there is something from the count people want to chase. Leaders: Diana Beatty and Tyler Stuart</p>	<p>Sa-6 - Burnt Mill Road Area in SW Pueblo County  Depart: 6:00 AM  (Full Day - 1:15, 60 miles) - Easy</p> <p>For a field trip closer to the convention hotel, the Burnt Mill Road area is the one for you. This wonderful loop route takes us through canyon country, pinyon juniper, cholla, shortgrass prairie, ponderosa pine habitats plus a small reservoir. Much of our route takes us along the St. Charles River and Soda Creek. Water always provides a birdy diverse habitat and the possibility of migrants. Some of the birds we may encounter include Greater Roadrunner, Green-tailed Towhee, Cassin's Kingbird and our state bird, the Lark Bunting. To top off the trip, we'll add some water birds at Lake Minnequa. We should add ducks and swallows, and if the water level is right, shorebirds. Enjoy this relaxing trip with classic Pueblo habitat.  Leader: Peter Burke</p>
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<p>Sa-7 - Venetucci Farm (restricted access) and Cross Creek Park  Depart: 6:00 AM  (Half Day - 1:15, 74 miles) Fee \$ 20 - Moderate</p> <p>Venetucci Farm dates back to the late 1800s and has been a Colorado Springs landmark since the 1940s, when the Venetucci family began giving away pumpkins to school children. It boasts a variety of habitats, including willow thickets, riparian forest, and open farm fields. Because the farm borders Fountain Creek, a variety of birds associated with water visit the site, as do many migrant and breeding songbirds. Cross Creek Park offers a great complement to Venetucci Farm. This 60-acre park in Fountain, CO punches well above its weight class with 156 bird species seen, mostly in the last couple of years as the park has caught on with birders. This concentration of birds is thanks to 1940's era Hale Reservoir and the abundant riparian vegetation hiding Soras, Virginia Rails and Marsh Wrens. Possible bird species include: Bullock's and Orchard Orioles, Lazuli Bunting, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Vesper Sparrow, American Avocet, Double-crested Cormorant and a variety of ducks. Leader: David Rudin</p>	<p>Sa-8 - Aiken Canyon Preserve and Brush Hollow SWA  Depart: 6:00 AM  (Half Day - 1:54, 99 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>This beautiful foothill preserve is 1,621 acres of shrublands, tallgrass prairie meadows, pinyon juniper, and mixed coniferous woodlands owned by The Nature Conservancy. We will hike a 3.7-mile loop trail with an elevation gain of 446 feet while enjoying this pristine canyon ecosystem. With a mosaic of habitats comes a large variety of birds, making this a promising destination. Because we will hike through three different ecosystems, the possible bird list is wonderfully large. When the canyon narrows and we come to the birdiest spot, we will spend some extra time. Expect lots of flycatchers, wrens and warblers. On the full day trips, we'll also visit the 404-acre Brush Hollow SWA. Here we could add some water birds and a possible Pinyon Jay to round out the trip list. Leader: Eric DeFonso</p>	<p>Sa-9 - The Best of Pueblo  Depart: 6:15 AM  (Half Day - 1:11, 37 miles) - Easy</p> <p>The old-growth urban forest of City Park, including pines and sycamores, attracts numerous songbirds in migration. We'll look for Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Yellow-rumped Warblers in the trees. We may see Wood Duck in the small pond. A wooded area west of The Nature Center on the Arkansas River is usually good for migrants. Look for Canyon Towhees and Rock Wrens on the cliffs on the north side of the trail. We'll look around the Pueblo West neighborhood for cholla species like Curved-billed Thrasher and Scaled Quail. At Pueblo Reservoir, we'll concentrate on the Rock Creek Canyon area below the dam. Trails wander along the north side of the river through trees with a good understory where we might see any migrant. Other targets include White-winged Dove, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Bullock's Oriole, Plumbeous and Warbling Vireos. State park pass/fee is required for the drivers. Tony will be providing eBird application instruction for this trip. Leader: Tony Leukering</p>
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<p>Sa-10 - San Isabel NF and the Wet Mountains  Depart: 6:30 AM  (Half Day - TBD) - Easy</p> <p>The Wet Mountains are largely softened, rounded humps accented by occasional rugged outcrops just southwest of Pueblo. The range provides the eastern boundary of the Wet Mountain Valley and bordered on the west by the Sangre de Cristos. Depending on winter snowpack, we will explore all the range has to offer for mountain species. Lake Beckwith, Rye Mountain Park, Lake Isabel, Davenport and Ophir Creek Road should be our destinations. Expect to walk along the road and through early season campgrounds. Targets include typical mountains species like Violet-green Swallow, Steller's Jay, Mountain Bluebird, all three nuthatches and Williamson's Sapsucker. Bring layers for this trip. Leader: Marcel Such</p>	<p>Sa-11 - Mueller SP and Dome Rock SWA  Depart: 6:30 AM  (Half Day - 1:22, 70 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>On the western foothills of Pike's Peak lies the 5121-acre Mueller State Park. At an elevation of more than 9,500' this area introduces us to the middle montane habitats — mixed coniferous and aspen forests dotted by massive rocks of Pike's Peak granite. Possibilities include any higher elevation species like Williamson's Sapsucker, Steller's Jay and Red-breasted Nuthatch. In nearby Dome Rock SWA we could find eagles and other raptors. Scenery and views abound, and the eagle-eyed birder might even spot one of the local Big Horn sheep that breed in the area. State park pass/fee is required for the drivers. Leader: Stephanie Pitt</p>	<p>Sa-12 - Colorado City and the Rye area  Depart: 6:45 AM  (Half Day - 1:41, 85 miles) - Easy</p> <p>At just over 12,000' elevation, Greenhorn Mountain is the highest point in Pueblo County and towers over the 6000' valley below. Although this area is near a major highway, it is usually bypassed for more spectacular peaks to the west or south, leaving some fine hidden spots for us to explore. Leaving the highway, we come quickly to a pond in town that is good for waterfowl in migration. Below the dam at Lake Beckwith is some of the best passerine habitat in the valley. A nice city park is bisected by the creek and provides excellent riparian areas, especially during migration. We'll also stop at a spot known to locals as the "Frog Pond," a migrant mecca for many years. Moving closer to the Wet Mountains, we'll check out the city park in Rye where we'll look for Dusky and Cordilleran Flycatchers in the trees and nesting McGillivray's Warblers in the willow along the creek. Leader: Eric Hynes</p>
<p>Sa-13 - Cheyenne Mountain SP  Depart: 6:45 AM  (Half Day - 1:18, 76 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>A nice web of trails provides access to everything from short-grass prairies to Gambel oak woodlands and ponderosa pine/Douglas fir forests in this lovely state park just south of Colorado Springs. Mule deer, elk, and wild turkeys are plentiful. In addition to different raptors, we might see Olive-sided, Dusky, Hammond's and Cordilleran Flycatchers, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Western Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, Lesser Goldfinch, Vesper and Lincoln's Sparrows. Other possible birds include Yellow-breasted Chat, Ovenbird, Virginia's, MacGillivray's and Graces Warblers and Lazuli and Indigo Buntings. Cliff faces might yield Canyon or Rock Wrens and Virginia's Warblers breed in the scrub oak. If you'd like to stay closer to home, enjoy some nice views and see some of our best foothill's birds, join us as we explore Cheyenne Mountain SP. State pass/fee is required for the drivers. Leader: Deborah Barnes</p>	<p>Sa-14 - Pueblo Mountain Park  Depart: 7:00 AM  (Half Day - 1:30, 70 miles) - Easy</p> <p>Here in the lush pine forests of the Wet Mountains, this 611-acre park is home to the Mountain Park Environmental Center whose well-stocked feeders are worth checking anytime. In late spring and summer, the park hosts large populations of Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak and other mountain birds. Look for American Dipper in the stream running through the park. Habitats include spruce/fir, ponderosa pine savannah, and scrub oak/mountain mahogany. Ponderosa forest is the only place you'll find the scarce tassel-eared Abert's Squirrel. The area also has beetle-killed ponderosa pine snags, perfect habitat for Red-naped Sapsucker and nuthatches. Visionary environmental planner Arthur Carhart, who in 1920 encouraged the city of Pueblo to buy the land as a wilderness preserve, conceived this park. He also designed the nearby Squirrel Creek Campground, the first national forest campground in the nation. This is the perfect trip for a relaxing half-day in the field. Leader: Peter R. Gent</p>	

## Sunday, May 10

<p>Su-1 - Brett Gray Ranch Depart: 5:00 AM (Full Day - 4:38, 278 miles r.t.) Fee \$ 20 - More Difficult</p> <p>The eastern plains have their own unique beauty, as you'll discover at the 50,000 acres Brett Gray Ranch, managed in partnership with The Nature Conservancy. This working cattle ranch is devoted to humane beef production that is ecologically kind to our native prairie ecosystem. Located on short-grass prairie east of Colorado Springs, the ranch offers widely diverse habitats that attract birds from miles around. Dry grasslands, riparian cottonwoods, and marshes and ponds give us plenty of opportunity to look for flycatchers, sparrow and raptors. Warblers and a Black Tern may fill out the day. Expect uneven ground and trail less walks as we look for prairie species and spring migrants here. Leader: Mark Peterson</p>	<p>Su-2 - John Martin and the Arkansas River Valley Depart: 5:00 AM (Full Day - 4:02, 214 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>The Arkansas River, the 6th longest in the United States, and the valley provides us plenty of fantastic birding spots to explore. The vast array of riparian areas, quiet wooded lots and marshes provide days of exploring. We have picked the best for you. Destinations include Van's Grove, Van's Marsh, Wood Thrush Grove, Fort Lyons Wildlife Easement and Hasty Campground. Migrants, migrants and even more migrants will be the targets for the day. Expect to walk around a bit at each location so a small day pack might be useful. The final spot is John Martin Reservoir State Park. Piping Plovers and Least Terns have bred here in the past so keep an eye out. State park pass/fee is required for the drivers. Leaders: Duane Nelson and Eric DeFonso</p>	<p>Su-3 - Migrating Hotspots of Lamar Depart: 5:00 AM (Full Day - 4:18, 246 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>Hasty Campground, Temple's Grove, Lamar Community College, Willow Creek Park and Stulp's Farm are our destinations for this adventure. We are looking for passerines that are migrating north to their breeding grounds and the eastern species that stray too far west from the Central Flyway. Anything is possible. Expect walking, standing, listening, and waiting to get on the birds for this field trip. What do all these locations have in common? They all have water, deciduous trees, shrubs and thick undergrowth. We should find some great birds to make up for the long drive out and back. State park pass/fee is required for the drivers. Leader: David Leatherman</p>
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<p>Su-4 - Higbee and Purgatoire River Valley  Depart: 5:15 AM  (Full Day - 4:10, 205 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>The Purgatoire River provides lush riparian habitat through arid pinyon-juniper canyonlands south of La Junta. Many species that are usually found further south can be seen in small numbers in this area. Patience is required but should pay off for a fantastic day list! Locations include Higbee Cemetery, Higbee Valley Road along the river and then down to Picket Wire Canyon. Here we will hike about 3 miles on an uneven trail. Targets include Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Scaled Quail, Greater Roadrunner, Black Phoebe, Juniper Titmouse, Curve-billed Thrasher, Summer Tanager and Rufous-crowned Sparrow. The area around Higbee has attracted numerous rarities in the past including nesting Vermilion Flycatcher, Painted Bunting, Black-throated Sparrow and Zone-tailed Hawk. Hepatic Tanagers breed nearby as well. Leader: Nicholas Komar</p>	<p>Su-5 - Rocky Ford SWA and the amazing lakes of Otero and Crowley Counties  Depart: 5:15 AM  (Full Day - 3:14, 158 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>It's all about the Arkansas River at this SWA. This is a good spot for migrating land birds and is the westernmost location where Northern Bobwhite may be heard calling from the thickets. Paths wander through sunny meadows and shaded woods along the riparian corridor, revealing all the usual suspects. Expect to walk a couple of miles here. Keep an eye out for a Mississippi Kite and warblers. Other places we'll visit include Lakes Holbrook, Cheraw, Meredith and Henry, shallow reservoirs that are terrific for migrating shorebirds and waterfowl. Our targets here are double-digit shorebirds species, including Snowy Plovers. Leader: Marcel Such</p>	<p>Su-6 - The Best of Huerfano County  Depart: 5:15 AM  (Full Day - 3:25, 178 miles) - Easy</p> <p>This under birded county has many exciting locations to explore. Huerfano (Wáre-fuh-no) County elevations range from 4,665 feet to 10,187 and that range supports many habitats. The Pryor area has had a Hepatic Tanager singing in the area for the last several years. We hope to find one this year. Ash-throated Flycatcher, Western Wood-Pewee, Cassin's Kingbird, Plumbeous Vireo, Lazuli Bunting, Black-headed and Blue Grosbeaks are all possible here. Lathrop Sate Park has two large lakes, Pinyon-Juniper woodlands, wetlands and riparian areas. We could add many water birds, 4 species of grebes, Juniper Titmouse, Yellow-breasted Chat and Say's Phoebes. The La Veta town area has several smaller ponds that should give us opportunity for a few shorebirds. Old La Veta Pass is a quiet road up the Sangre de Cristo Mountains where we could see Warbling Vireo, Green-tailed Towhee, Virginia's and MacGillivray's Warblers. State park pass/fee is required for the drivers. Tony will be providing eBird application instruction for this trip. Leader: Tony Leukering</p>
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<p>Su-7 - The Best of Custer County  Depart: 5:30 AM  (Full Day - 3:20, 150 miles) - Easy</p> <p>Unlike many of Colorado's small mountain counties, Custer County includes a surprising large range of habitats, and the potential to rack up a list of 100 or more on a good day during migration. We'll explore DeWeese Reservoir at an elevation of 7,671 feet, Towns of Westcliffe and Silver Cliff, Ophir Creek Road, Lakes of the Clouds, Alvarado Campground, Greenwood Area and Wetmore area. Target birds include Violet-green Swallow, Western Tanager, White-faced Ibis, Lewis's Woodpecker, Cordilleran Flycatcher and Evening Grosbeak. Plan on birding all elevations and habitats of this beautiful under birded county. Leader: Sue Riffe</p>	<p>Su-8 - Chico Basin Ranch  Depart: 5:30 AM  (Full Day - 1:46, 80 miles) Fee \$ 20 - Moderate</p> <p>Chico Basin Ranch is an 87,000-acre working cattle and dude ranch 30 miles southeast of Colorado Springs that allows bird watchers to visit and roam. Short grass and sand-sage prairie is dotted with spring-fed lakes, creeks, and ponds, creating an irresistible stopping place for weary migrants. Over 330 species have been sighted here. A banding station operates in spring and fall. The ranch's website has a birding trail map with descriptions of various hot spots. Migrant traps yield Northern Waterthrush, Green-tailed Towhee, and a variety of thrushes. Many sparrows and warblers can be seen. Marshy areas conceal Sora and Virginia Rail while shorebirds and terns visit the ponds. Red-necked Phalarope and Sanderling are two of the rarer ones that have been found here. Leaders: John Drummond and Peter Burke</p>	<p>Su-9 - Canon City and Penrose  Depart: 5:45 AM  (Full Day - 2:25, 99 miles) - Easy</p> <p>Many species reach the limit of their range in this area including Black Phoebe, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Gray Flycatcher and Rufous-crowned Sparrow. All will be targets for the day. Expect to spend time looking for the cactus cousin the cholla. Many of our targets can be found in or near this prickly plant or in quality Pinyon Juniper ecosystem all over this area. Canon City Riverwalk is a gorgeous paved trail running along the Arkansas River through town. We'll try to find a quieter section to explore. The road to Temple Canyon Park is right in the middle of pristine Pinyon Juniper habitat and should yield many of its breeders. Finally, Brush Hollow SWA will give us access to some water birds on this 400-acre water source for Penrose. The targets in the Pinyon Juniper include Black-throated Gray and Virginia's Warbler, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Juniper Titmouse, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and Gray Flycatcher, the species hiding in cholla plants include Curved-billed Thrasher, Scaled Quail and Canyon Towhee and riparian specialists including Black Phoebe and Yellow-breasted Chat. Leader: Tyler Stewart</p>
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<p>Su-10 - Fountain Creek and Big Johnson/Bluestem Prairie  Depart: 6:00 AM  (Full Day - 1:23, 75 miles) - Easy</p> <p>Migrants moving along the eastern edge of the Rocky Mountains are drawn to Fountain Creek, a major north-south drainage flowing along the foothills. The park's 460 acres run along the water, encompassing the broad flood plain habitat to the east. The park includes ponds, marshes, tall cottonwoods and grassy meadows, providing cover and food for a variety of migrants and breeders. Over 250+ sp. has been recorded here. We'll look for migrating warblers, flycatchers and thrushes, along with sparrow and waterfowl. Following wide trails along the riparian corridor, we may even come across a rail. Bluestem Prairie Open Space has become a refuge for a variety of native wildlife and vegetation including Burrowing Owls and sparrows. We will target Vesper, Savannah and Lark. Big Johnson Reservoir has been drained for repairs but is starting to be refilled. This could be a spectacular spot for shorebirds and other water birds. Leaders: Kip Miller and Tyler Stuart</p>	<p>Su-11 - Aiken Canyon Preserve and Brush Hollow SWA  Depart: 6:00 AM  (Full Day - 1:54, 99 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>This beautiful foothill preserve is 1,621 acres of shrublands, tallgrass prairie meadows, pinyon juniper, and mixed coniferous woodlands owned by The Nature Conservancy. We will hike a 3.7-mile loop trail with an elevation gain of 446 feet while enjoying this pristine canyon ecosystem. With a mosaic of habitats comes a large variety of birds, making this a promising destination. Because we will hike through three different ecosystems, the possible bird list is wonderfully large. When the canyon narrows and we come to the birdiest spot, we will spend some extra time. Expect lots of flycatchers, wrens and warblers. On the full day trips, we'll also visit the 404-acre Brush Hollow SWA. Here we could add some water birds and a possible Pinyon Jay to round out the trip list. Leader: Mark Amershek</p>	<p>Su-12 - Burnt Mill Road Area in SW Pueblo County  Depart: 6:15 AM  (Half Day - 1:15, 60 miles) - Easy</p> <p>For a field trip closer to the convention hotel, the Burnt Mill Road area is the one for you. This wonderful loop route takes us through canyon country, pinyon juniper, cholla, shortgrass prairie, ponderosa pine habitats plus a small reservoir. Much of our route takes us along the St. Charles River and Soda Creek. Water always provides a birdy diverse habitat and the possibility of migrants. Some of the birds we may encounter include Greater Roadrunner, Green-tailed Towhee, Cassin's Kingbird and our state bird, the Lark Bunting. To top off the trip, we'll add some water birds at Lake Minnequa. We should add ducks and swallows, and if the water level is right, shorebirds. Enjoy this relaxing trip with classic Pueblo habitat. Leader: Stephanie Pitt</p>
<p>Su-13 - The Best of Pueblo  Depart: 6:15 AM  (Full Day - 1:11, 37 miles) - Easy</p> <p>The old-growth urban forest of City Park, including pines and sycamores, attracts numerous songbirds in migration. We'll look for Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Yellow-rumped Warblers in the trees. We may see Wood Duck in the small pond. A wooded area west of The Nature Center on the Arkansas River is usually good for migrants. Look for Canyon Towhees and Rock Wrens on the cliffs on the north side of the trail. We'll look around the Pueblo West neighborhood for cholla species like Curved-billed Thrasher and Scaled Quail. At Pueblo Reservoir, we'll concentrate on the Rock Creek Canyon area below the dam. Trails wander along the north side of the river through trees with a good understory where we might see any migrant. Other targets include White-winged Dove, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Bullock's Oriole, Plumbeous and Warbling Vireos. State park pass/fee is required for the drivers. Leader: Paul Hurtado</p>	<p>Su-14 - Mueller SP and Dome Rock SWA  Depart: 6:30 AM  (Full Day - 1:22, 70 miles) - More Difficult</p> <p>On the western foothills of Pike's Peak lies the 5121-acre Mueller State Park. At an elevation of more than 9,500' this area introduces us to the middle montane habitats — mixed coniferous and aspen forests dotted by massive rocks of Pike's Peak granite. Possibilities include any higher elevation species like Williamson's Sapsucker, Steller's Jay and Red-breasted Nuthatch. In nearby Dome Rock SWA we could find eagles and other raptors. Scenery and views abound, and the eagle-eyed birder might even spot one of the local Big Horn sheep that breed in the area. State park pass/fee is required for the drivers. Leader: TBD</p>	<p>Su-15 - Colorado City and the Rye area  Depart: 6:30 AM  (Full Day - 1:41, 85 miles) - Easy</p> <p>At just over 12,000' elevation, Greenhorn Mountain is the highest point in Pueblo County and towers over the 6000' valley below. Although this area is near a major highway, it is usually bypassed for more spectacular peaks to the west or south, leaving some fine hidden spots for us to explore. Leaving the highway, we come quickly to a pond in town that is good for waterfowl in migration. Below the dam at Lake Beckwith is some of the best passerine habitat in the valley. A nice city park is bisected by the creek and provides excellent riparian areas, especially during migration. We'll also stop at a spot known to locals as the "Frog Pond," a migrant mecca for many years. Moving closer to the Wet Mountains, we'll check out the city park in Rye where we'll look for Dusky and Cordilleran Flycatchers in the trees and nesting McGillivray's Warblers in the willow along the creek. Leader: TBD</p>

<p>Su-16 - San Isabel NF and the Wet Mountains  Depart: 6:45 AM  (Full Day - TBD) - Easy</p> <p>The Wet Mountains are largely softened, rounded humps accented by occasional rugged outcrops just southwest of Pueblo. The range provides the eastern boundary of the Wet Mountain Valley and bordered on the west by the Sangre de Cristos. Depending on winter snowpack, we will explore all the range has to offer for mountain species. Lake Beckwith, Rye Mountain Park, Lake Isabel, Davenport and Ophir Creek Road should be our destinations. Expect to walk along the road and through early season campgrounds. Targets include typical mountains species like Violet-green Swallow, Steller's Jay, Mountain Bluebird, all three nuthatches and Williamson's Sapsucker. Bring layers for this trip. Leader: Eric Hynes</p>	<p>Su-17 - Cheyenne Mountain SP  Depart: 7:00 AM  (Half Day - 1:18, 76 miles) - Moderate</p> <p>A nice web of trails provides access to everything from short-grass prairies to Gambel oak woodlands and ponderosa pine/Douglas fir forests in this lovely state park just south of Colorado Springs. Mule deer, elk, and wild turkeys are plentiful. In addition to different raptors, we might see Olive-sided, Dusky, Hammond's and Cordilleran Flycatchers, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Western Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, Lesser Goldfinch, Vesper and Lincoln's Sparrows. Other possible birds include Yellow-breasted Chat, Ovenbird, Virginia's, MacGillvray's and Graces Warblers and Lazuli and Indigo Buntings. Cliff faces might yield Canyon or Rock Wrens and Virginia's Warblers breed in the scrub oak. If you'd like to stay closer to home, enjoy some nice views and see some of our best foothill's birds, join us as we explore Cheyenne Mountain SP. State pass pass/fee is required for the drivers. Leader: Deborah Barnes</p>	<p>Su-18 - Owls and Night Birds  Depart: 7:00 PM  (Evening - 1:40, 100 miles) - Easy</p> <p>Our targets include Flammulated Owl and Common Poorwill. The Wet Mountains and environs provide us with high quality places to try for these birds. As with all owling trips, carpooling is a must. Leaders: Stephanie Pitt and Tyler Stewart</p>
<b>Monday, May 11</b>		
<p>Mo-1 - Departure Trip to Northern Front Range  Depart: 7:00 AM  (Full Day - 3:40, 172 miles) - Easy</p> <p>The leader willll contact you with more information. Leader: Nicholas Komar</p>	<p>Mo-2 - Departure Trip to SW Colorado  Depart: 7:00 AM  (Full Day - 6:06, 284 miles) - Easy</p> <p>The leader willll contact you with more information. Leader: Eric Hynes</p>	