



Colorado Field Ornithologists Pueblo Convention

May 19-23, 2022

FIELD TRIPS

General Information

All field trips will meet in the lobby of the Hampton Inn & Suites, 4790 Eagleridge Circle, Pueblo unless otherwise noted. Please arrive to meet your group 15 minutes prior to departure. Also, make sure you have picked up or brought your breakfast and/or lunch for the full day trips.

Masks should be worn in the cars during carpooling unless everyone decides otherwise.

Plan for the carpool group to reimburse the driver at the rate of 50 cents per mile. The driver is included in the calculations when figuring out the per person costs.

State Parks Pass – Field trips that include a State Park visit, will require **the driver** to have a State Parks Pass. These can be obtained at most entrance stations or <https://cpw.state.co.us/buyapply/Pages/AnnualPassInfo.aspx>

State Wildlife Area – Field trips that include a State Wildlife Area visit, **require everyone** to have a valid hunting or fishing license or a SWA pass. Learn more about passes:

<https://cpw.state.co.us/Documents/LandWater/SWA/License-Requirements-SWA-STL-Access-FAQ.pdf> Passes can be purchased at <https://www.cpwshop.com/poshome.page>

The following abbreviations are used in the trip descriptions.

Th – Thursday trips
Fr – Friday trips
Sa – Saturday trips
Su – Sunday trips
Mo – Monday trips

Th 1, Sa 1 – All trips have an alpha-number code in their description. Please reference this code if you are asking a question about a trip.

Full Day– full day trip ending at 4:00 PM

Half Day – half day trip ending at 12:00 PM

Difficulty Rating

1 – easy, mostly flat on solid surfaces, less than one mile walking

2 – medium, walking could include some moderate elevational changes at slower speeds, trails may be uneven, walking less than 2 miles

3 – difficult, 1000-foot elevational walking at slow speeds, uneven trails, could walk as much as three miles.

Arrival/Departure Trips

Arrival Trip from the Northern Front Range - Trip leader will contact everyone to determine where to meet. We will be birding hotspots on the way to Pueblo. Please bring your lunch. (Th 1, 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day, difficulty 1-2) [Leader - Nick Komar]

Arrival Trip from the Southwest - Trip leader will contact everyone to determine where to meet. We will be birding hotspots on the way to Pueblo. Please bring your lunch. (Th 2, 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day, difficulty 1-2) [Leader - Eric Hynes]

Departure Trip to the Northern Front Range - Please meet in the hotel lobby to discuss the birding route. We will be birding hotspots on the way back north along the front range. Please bring your lunch. (Mo 1, 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day, difficulty 1-2) [Leader - Nick Komar]

Departure Trip to the Southwest - Please meet in the hotel lobby to discuss the birding route. We will be birding hotspots on the way back west. Please bring your lunch. (Mo 2, 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day, difficulty 1-2) [Leader - Will Anderson]

Evening Trips

Rails in the Dark – We will try for Black Rail, Virginia Rail, and Sora. In addition, you never know what birds might be migrating through the 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 as there is limited parking. 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. We will not be using flashlights to see these birds. This trip is only offered on

Thursday. (Th 3, 8:00 PM – 10:00 PM, difficulty 1, 60 miles round trip) [Leaders - Sue Riffe, Diana Beatty, Will Anderson, and Joe Kipper]

Owls and Night Birds – 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. This trip is offered on Friday and Sunday evenings. (Fr 18 & Su 19, 7:00 PM – 9:30 PM, difficulty 1, 100 miles round trip) [Friday Leaders - Paul Hurtado and Sue Riffe, Sunday Leaders - Van Truan and Nick Komar]

Full Day Trips

If you want to attend the scientific session on Saturday, do NOT choose a full day trip for Saturday.

Brett Gray Ranch [restricted access] – The eastern plains have their own unique beauty, as you will 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, sparrows, 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. This trip is offered on Friday and Sunday with a cost of \$20. (Fr 1 & Su 1, 5:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day, difficulty 3, 278 miles round trip, \$20 fee) [Leaders Friday - Mark Peterson and Megan Jones Patterson, Leader Sunday - Mark Peterson]

John Martin and the Arkansas River Valley – The Arkansas River, the sixth 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. This trip is offered Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. (Fr 2, Sa 1, Su 2, 5:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day all three days, difficulty 2, 214 miles round trip) [Leader Friday - Peter Burke, Leader Saturday & Sunday - Duane Nelson]

Migrating Hotspots of Lamar - Hasty Campground, Temple's Grove, Lamar Community College and Willow Creek Park 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. This trip is offered Friday and Sunday. (Fr 3 & Su 3, 5:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day, difficulty 2, 246 miles round trip) [Friday Leader - Luke Pheneger, Sunday Leader - Joe Kipper]

Higbee and Purgatoire River Valley - 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 three 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. This trip is offered Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. (Fr 4, Sa 16 & Su 4, 5:15 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day difficulty 2+, 205 miles round trip) [Friday Leader - Eric DeFonso, Saturday Leader – Sue Riffe, Sunday Leader - Nick Komar]

Rocky Ford SWA and the amazing lakes of Otero and Crowley Counties - It is 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 Mississippi Kite and warblers. Other places we will visit include Lakes Holbrook, Cheraw, Meredith and Henry, all shallow reservoirs that are terrific for migrating shorebirds and waterfowl. Our targets here are double-digit shorebirds species, including Snowy Plovers. This trip is offered Friday, Saturday, and Sunday and a State Wildlife pass is required. (Fr 5, Sa 2, & Su 5, 5:15 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day all three days, difficulty 2, 158 miles round trip) [Friday Leader - Will Anderson, Saturday Leader - TBD, Sunday Leader - Megan Jones Patterson]

The Best of Huerfano County - This under birded county has many exciting locations to explore. Elevations ranging here from 225 feet to 14,320, many habitats can be found in Huerfano (War-fa-no) County. 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 State Park has two large lakes, Pinyon-Juniper woodlands, wetlands, and riparian areas. We could add many water birds, four 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. This trip is offered Friday and Sunday. (Fr 6 & Su 6, 5:15 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day, difficulty 1, 178 miles round trip) [Friday Leader - Sue Riffe, Sunday Leader - Eric DeFonso]

The Best of Custer County - Unlike many of Colorado's small mountain counties, Custer County includes a surprisingly large range of habitats, and the potential to rack up a list of 100 or more species on a good day during migration. We will 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 to bird all elevations and habitats of this beautiful under birded county. This trip is offered Friday and Sunday. (Fr 7 & Su 7, 5:30 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day, difficulty 1, 150 miles round trip) [Friday Leader - Nick Komar. Sunday Leader - Sue Riffe]

Chico Basin Ranch - Chico Basin Ranch is an 87,000-acre working cattle and dude ranch thirty 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 within the ranch. 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. This is an amazing birding location! This trip is offered Friday, Saturday, and Sunday and has a \$20 fee. (Fr 8, Sa 3, Su 8, 5:30 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day all three days, difficulty 2, 80 miles round trip, \$20 fee) [Friday Leaders - Brandon Percival, John Drummond. Saturday Leaders - Peter Burke, Helen Butts, Mark Peterson. Sunday Leaders - Brandon Percival, Don Marsh, John Drummond.]

Canon City and Penrose - 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 will 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. This trip is offered on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and requires a State Wildlife pass. (Fr 9, Sa 4, Su 9, 5:45 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day all three days, difficulty 1, 99 miles round trip) [Friday Leader - TBD. Saturday Leaders Eric DeFonso, David Wade. Sunday Leader - Mark Amershek]

Fountain Creek and Big Johnson/Bluestem Prairie - 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 floodplain 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 will look for migrating warblers, flycatchers, and thrushes, along with sparrows 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. This trip is offered Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. (Fr 10, Sa 5, Su 11, 6:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day all three days, difficulty 2, 75 miles round trip) [Friday Leader - David Wade. Saturday Leader - Don Marsh. Sunday Leader - Joel Such]

Trinidad Lake and Fishers Peak State Parks - Our newest park, Fishers Peak and Trinidad Lake State Parks are nestled in the Southern Colorado foothills of the Culebra Range of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and is a 2,700-acre park filled with wildlife and natural beauty in Las Animas County. At an average elevation of 6,300 feet, the lake, forest, hills, and wetlands of the park offer a wide variety of recreational activities and birds. Ten miles of trails wander through the pinyon juniper forests at the park, which is part of the Purgatoire River Valley. The park's 800-acre lake provides lots of activities and water birds. Target birds include Juniper Titmouse, Bushtit, Western and Mountain Bluebirds, Orchard Oriole, Cassin's Kingbird, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Black-headed and Blue Grosbeak. We will also keep an eye out for migrants. Expect to hike up to four miles on dirt trails. Plenty of bathrooms are available. State Park pass required for the drivers. This trip is offered Saturday and Sunday. (Sa 6 & Su 10, 5:45 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day, difficulty 3, 188 miles round trip) [Saturday Leader - Diana Beatty. Sunday Leader - Chuck Hundertmark]

Aiken Canyon Preserve and Brush Hollow SWA - 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 will also visit the 404-acre Brush Hollow SWA. Here we could add some water birds and a Pinyon Jay to round out the trip list. This trip is offered all three days but Friday and Sunday or full days. State Wildlife pass required. (Fr 11 & Su 12, 6:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day, difficulty 2, 99 miles round trip) [Friday Leader - Joel Such. Sunday Leader - David Wade]

Burnt Mill Road Area in SW Pueblo County - 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 will 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. This trip is offered all three days but only Friday and Saturday are full days. (Fr 12 & Sa 7, 6:15 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day, difficulty 1, 60 miles round trip) [Friday Leader - Peter Gent. Saturday Leader - Paul Hurtado]

The Best of Pueblo - The old-growth urban forest of City Park, including pines and sycamores, attracts numerous songbirds in migration. We will 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 will look around the Pueblo West neighborhood for cholla species like Curved-billed Thrasher and Scaled Quail. At Pueblo Reservoir State Park, we will 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. This trip is offered on all three days, but Friday and Sunday are full days. (Fr 13 & Su 14, 6:15 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day, difficulty 1, 37 miles round trip) [Friday Leader - Dom Marsh. Sunday Leader - Paul Hurtado]

Mueller SP and Dome Rock SWA - 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 and State Wildlife pass is required for all persons. This trip is offered all three days with Friday and Sunday as full days. (Fr 14 & Su 15, 6:30 AM-4:00 PM, Full Day, difficulty 3, 70 miles round trip) [Friday Leader - Debbie Barnes. Sunday Leaders - Sondra Bland, Bob Spencer]

Colorado City and the Rye area - 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 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 will 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 will check out the city

park in Rye where we will look for Dusky and Cordilleran Flycatchers in the trees and nesting McGillivray's Warblers in the willow along the creek. This trip is offered all three days with Friday and Sunday full days. (Fr 15 & Su 16, 6:30 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day, difficulty 1, 85 miles round trip) [Friday Leader - TBD. Sunday Leader - Diana Beatty]

Beulah Valley and the Wet Mountains – The Wet Mountains, a small sub-range of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, are named for the amount of snow they receive each winter. Nestled inside of the San Isabel National Forest, this range holds an abundance of fantastic birds. The Beulah Valley, just on the east side, will provide even more species to see and hear. We will explore Pueblo Mountain Park, Lake Isabel, and Ophir Creek Road just to name a few locations. Expect lots of flycatchers, bluebirds, woodpeckers, and other high elevation species to round out your trip list. Bring a jacket for this trip. This trip is offered all three days with Friday and Sunday as full days. (Fr 16 & Su 17, 6:45 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day, difficulty one, mileage 110 round trip). [Friday Leader - Van Truan. Sunday Leader - Luke Pheneger]

Cheyenne Mountain State Park - 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 would 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 Park pass/fee is required for the drivers. This trip is offered all three days with Friday as the only full day trip. (Fr 17, 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Full Day, difficulty 2, 76 miles round trip) [Friday Leader - Diana Beatty]

Half Day Trips

If you want to attend the scientific session on Saturday, choose a half day trip for Saturday.

Aiken Canyon Preserve and Brush Hollow SWA - 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 will also visit the 404-acre Brush Hollow SWA. Here we could add some water birds and a Pinyon Jay to round out the trip list. This trip is offered all three days, but Saturday is a half day trip. State Wildlife pass required. (Sa 9, 6:00 AM – 12:00 PM, difficulty 2, 99 miles round trip) [Saturday Leader - Mark Amershek]

Burnt Mill Road Area in SW Pueblo County - 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 will 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. This trip is offered all three days but only Sunday is half day. (Su 13, 6:00 AM – 12:00 PM, difficulty 1, 60 miles round trip) [Sunday Leader - Van Truan]

Venetucci Farm and Cross Creek Park (restricted access) - Venetucci Farm dates 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. This trip is only offered on Saturday. (Sa 8, 6:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Half Day, difficulty 2, 74 miles round trip, \$20 fee) [Saturday Leader - David Rudin]

The Best of Pueblo - The old-growth urban forest of City Park, including pines and sycamores, attracts numerous songbirds in migration. We will 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 will look around the Pueblo West neighborhood for cholla species like Curved-billed Thrasher and Scaled Quail. At Pueblo Reservoir State Park, we will 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. This trip is offered all three days, but Saturday is for half day. (Sa 10, 6:15 AM – 12:00 PM, Half Day, difficulty 1, 37 miles round trip) [Saturday Leader - Brandon Percival]

Mueller SP and Dome Rock SWA - 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 and State Wildlife pass is required for all persons. This trip is offered all three days with Saturday as half day. (Sa 12, 6:30 AM-12:00 PM, Half Day, difficulty 3, 70 miles round trip) [Saturday Leader - Joel Such]

Colorado City and the Rye area - 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 migration. Below the dam at Lake Beckwith has 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 will 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 will check out the city park in Rye where we will look for Dusky and Cordilleran Flycatchers in the trees and nesting McGillivray's Warblers in the willow along the creek. This trip is offered all three days with Saturday as half day. (Sa 13, 6:45 AM – 12:00 PM, Half Day, difficulty 1, 85 miles round trip) [Saturday Leader - Van Truan]

Beulah Valley and the Wet Mountains – The Wet Mountains, a small sub-range of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, are named for the amount of snow they receive each winter. Nestled inside of the San Isabel National Forest, this range holds an abundance of fantastic birds. The Beulah Valley, just on the east side, will provide even more species to see and hear. We will explore Pueblo Mountain Park, Lake Isabel, and Ophir Creek Road just to name a few locations. Expect lots of flycatchers, bluebirds, woodpeckers, and other high elevation species to round out your trip list. Bring a jacket for this trip. This trip is offered all three days with Friday and Sunday as full days. (Sa 11, 6:30 PM – 12:00 PM, Half Day, difficulty one, 110 miles). [Saturday Leader - Nick Komar]

Cheyenne Mountain State Park - 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 would 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 Park pass/fee is required for the drivers. This trip is offered all three days with Saturday and Sunday as half day trips. (Sa 14 is 6:45 – 12:00 PM, Su 18 is 7:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Half Day, difficulty 2, 76 miles round trip) [Saturday & Sunday Leader - Debbie Barnes]

Pueblo Mountain Park - 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 will 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. This trip is only offered on Saturday. (Sa 15, 7:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Half Day, difficulty 1, 70 miles round trip) [Saturday Leader - Peter Gent]