



CFO Annual Convention
Grand Junction, Colorado
June 5-8, 2025

Convention Program

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Schedule

Schedule is subject to change. Check the schedule on the website and posted each day in the hotel lobby for any changes. All activities are at the Hilton DoubleTree Grand Junction except the Welcome Picnic.

Thursday June 5, 2025

7:00 am - 4:00 pm	Arrival field trips	
5:00 pm - 11:00 pm	Uncompahgre Evening Trip	
5:30 pm - 8:00 pm	Welcome picnic w/ packet pick up	Lincoln Park, Oak Pavillion
	<i>Catering starts at 6 pm</i>	

Friday June 6, 2025

5:00 am - 4:00 pm	Field trips (full & half day trips)	Ballroom Foyer
5:00 am - 6:45 am	Breakfast/lunch pick up	Ballroom Foyer
5:00 am - 6:45 am	Info Table w/ packet pick up	Ballroom Foyer
2:00 pm - 7:30 pm	Exhibits/Vendors open	Monument Room
4:30 pm - 8:00 pm	Info Table w/ packet pick up	Ballroom Foyer
4:30 pm - 8:00 pm	Silent Auction	Ballroom
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm	Social	Peachtree Terrace
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm	Student Social	Ballroom

Saturday June 7, 2025

5:00 am - 4:00 pm	Field trips (full & half day trips)	Ballroom Foyer
5:00 am - 6:45 am	Breakfast/lunch pick up	Ballroom Foyer
5:00 am - 6:45 am	Info Table	Ballroom Foyer
12:00 pm - 5:30 pm	Exhibits/Vendors open	Monument Room
12:00 pm - 4:30 pm	Silent Auction (last chance!)	Ballroom
12:30 pm - 4:30 pm	Info Table	Ballroom Foyer
1:30 pm - 4:30 pm	Science Session	Ballroom
5:30 pm - 8:00 pm	Banquet & CFO Annual Meeting	Ballroom
8:00 pm - 8:30 pm	Silent Auction Payment/Pickup	Ballroom

Sunday June 8, 2025

5:00 am - 4:00 pm	Field trips (half & full day trips)	Ballroom Foyer
5:00 am - 6:15 am	Breakfast/lunch pick up	Ballroom Foyer
5:00 am - 6:15 am	Info Table	Ballroom Foyer
5:00 am - 6:15 am	Silent Auction Payment/Pickup	Ballroom

Venue Locations

Convention Hotel: Grand Junction DoubleTree - 743 Horizon Dr. Grand Junction, CO.

All events and field trips, except the Welcome Picnic and MO1 Departure Trip, meet or occur at the convention hotel. Parking is free for those participating in the CFO Convention.

Welcome Picnic: Lincoln Park Oak Shelter -- 12th Street and Gunnison Avenue. The Oak Pavilion is south of the pickleball courts.

Registration Packet & Merch Pick Up

Those attending the Welcome Picnic can pick up their convention packet with name tag, any purchased merchandise, and other information from 5:30 to 8:00pm during the Welcome Picnic.

If you are not able to attend the Welcome Picnic, the convention packets will be available at the Info Table in the Ballroom Foyer during the hours that it is open.

The 2025 convention art featured on the shirts is the work of [TJ Smith \(Stray Wild\)](#) and portrays the Colorado landscape around Grand Junction and a Scott's Oriole, a species that can be found around Grand Junction. All shirts and hats needed to be ordered with your registration. There may be a few extra shirts for sale at the convention but availability and sizing is not guaranteed.

Need Logistics Help?

If you have questions or need help during the convention, please come to the Info Table in the Ballroom Foyer during scheduled hours. CFO board members will also have a ribbon that says "Board Member" on their name badges during the convention. You can also try writing info@cobirds.org with your questions – however, those of us who receive this email are also leading or going on trips and doing other convention related activities so we might not be as prompt in our replies as we'd like.

Silent Auction

Support student research and youth development while snagging yourself some new artwork! Items include framed and unframed prints, lithographs, photos, and original art by noted artists. Preview some of the pieces on the convention webpage.

The silent auction is in the Ballroom on Friday (4:30–8:00 pm) and Saturday (12:00–4:00 pm).

Learn more about CFO's [research grants and travel scholarships program](#).

Student Activities

On Friday evening there will be a separate student and youth social from 5:30 - 7:00 pm held in the Ballroom.

On Saturday, several students will be presenting the Science Session and all students are encouraged to attend.

Sponsors

Thank you to the CFO Convention sponsors for their support.

Black Swift Sponsors



Pinyon Jay Sponsors



Lucy's Warbler Sponsors



Denver Field Ornithologists

Little Wing Photo

Rocky Mountain Birding

Please stop by all the sponsors' booths in the Monument Room to see their wares and learn about their adventures.

90th Anniversary of the Colorado Birding Club

2025 marks the 90th anniversary of the Colorado Birding Club. Colorado Field Ornithologists' roots go back to 1935 when students of the Denver Museum of Natural History ornithologist, Robert Niedrach, formed the Colorado Bird Club. The growing membership of the club considered their ventures into the field to study birds as contributions to ornithology.

As other bird clubs emerged around the state, members of the Denver-centric Colorado Bird Club saw a need for a truly statewide ornithological organization and invited birders from around the state for a weekend of field trips, scientific papers, a banquet, and

keynote speaker. The statewide convention in 1963 became the pattern for future annual get-togethers. As their communication with other clubs and birders matured, the Colorado Bird Club renamed itself Denver Field Ornithologists, leaving the newly emerging statewide organization to claim the "Colorado" name and become Colorado Field Ornithologists.

Sharon Tinianow will give a presentation on the history of the Colorado Birding Club, Denver Field Ornithologists, and Colorado Field Ornithologists during the Science Session on Saturday. Please attend and learn more about our organization.

Keynote Address

CFO is excited to host Amy Seglund, CPW Species Conservation Coordinator, as she gives the Keynote address during the CFO Convention Banquet.



An Unplanned Journey with Birds

As a young graduate student, Amy Seglund had her mind set on studying mammalian carnivores. Then, a birding moment changed Amy's life and led her down an unexpected path in avian conservation. Amy will share some highlights and accomplishments of her path and why birds are wonderful to study.

Amy Seglund has worked for Colorado Parks and Wildlife for the past 19 years as a Species Conservation Program Manager. Much of her work has focused on two alpine bird species, the Southern White-tailed Ptarmigan and Brown-capped Rosy-finch. Amy's newest endeavor is to understand pinyon jay breeding biology. Before coming to CO, Amy worked with Utah Division of Wildlife

Resources for 4 years as a conservation biologist with her efforts focused on Peregrine Falcons, Yellow-billed Cuckoos, Southwestern Willow Flycatchers, and Lewis's Woodpeckers. Amy received her MS in wildlife biology Humboldt State University where her graduate research focused on the Pacific fisher. She spent 2 years in Guatemala in the Peace Corps assessing the avifauna in the cloud, subtropical, and spine forests.

Amy was the 2023 recipient of the Richard G. Levad Award which honors individuals who have made outstanding contributions to bird conservation.

Food

Welcome Picnic

The Welcome Picnic is included in your registration and is held at Lincoln Park, Oak Pavillion, Grand Junction.

The Welcome Picnic is catered by Hillbilly Catering and features their Hillbilly Buddha Bowls. A bowl full of flavor and vibrant goodness! Hillbilly Buddha Bowls start with a hearty base of quinoa, packed with fresh, seasonal veggies, and topped with a delicious homemade sauce. Naturally gluten-free and vegan to start, these bowls are a feel-good, customizable option that's sure to satisfy every guest!

Grab and Go Breakfasts & Lunches

If you ordered Grab and Go breakfasts or lunches with your registration, these can be picked from 5:00 am - 6:45 am each morning in the Ballroom Foyer. Check your schedule in your conference packet for the food you ordered. Please take the food you selected and not someone else's because it looks good. If you can't remember what you ordered, there will be a sheet for you to double check with your name on it.

All participants on field trips should bring their own lunches (on full day trips), snacks, and water.

Banquet

The CFO Banquet and Annual Meeting is a ticketed event. If you registered for the banquet, you made a food selection at the same time. In your nametag there will be a colored slip of paper. Take this to the banquet and place it on your table setting so the servers know which meal to serve you.

Science Session

All convention registrants are welcome to attend the Science Session held in the Ballroom.

Schedule

1:00–1:30 Sharon Tinianow; Heading Afield Together: 90 years of Colorado birding

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| 1:30–1:50 | William C. Anderson; Cryptic Speciation in the Northern Pygmy Owl (<i>Glaucidium gnoma</i>) |
| 1:50–2:10 | Kelsey Crona; Evaluating Body Condition and Apparent Survival in Migratory Songbirds |
| 2:10–2:30 | Ted Floyd; Lies, Damned Lies, and Spectrograms: Interpreting and Overinterpreting Computer Printouts of Birdsong |
| 2:30–2:50 | Edward Landi; Local Birds in Far Away Places: Population Status of Colorado's Grassland Birds Overwintering in the Chihuahuan Desert |
| 2:50–3:00 | Break |
| 3:00–3:05 | Comments from Bird Conservancy of the Rockies |
| 3:05–3:25 | Megan Miller; Investigating the Role of Wildfire Smoke on Oxidative Status in Different Diet Guilds of Migratory Birds in Southern Colorado |
| 3:25–3:45 | Sara Padula; Mapping Memory: How Chickadees Remember Their Caches—And What Their Genes Can Tell Us |
| 3:45–4:05 | Kurt L. Riggan; Ecomorphology and Phylogenetic Signal of Hindlimbs in North American Sparrows and Blackbirds (Passerellidae & Icteridae) |
| 4:05–4:30 | Chuck Hundertmark; The Evolution of Birding Tools: Birding Hotspots.org and eBird Checklist Media |

Abstracts

Sharon Tinianow; Denver Field Ornithologists

Heading Afield Together: 90 Years of Colorado Birding

In January 1935, two Denver women invited students from an ornithology class at the University of Denver extension to a meeting about forming a birding club. As a result, two organizations came into being: Denver Field Ornithologists and Colorado Field Ornithologists. This presentation will touch on significant moments in the 90 year history of both groups and some of the individuals whose time and energy made it all possible. Sources include photos, interviews, and other materials from the archives at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science and the Denver Public Library, as well as articles published in area newsletters and journals.

William C. Anderson, University of Colorado Boulder

Cryptic Speciation in the Northern Pygmy Owl (*Glaucidium gnoma*)

The taxonomic status of the Northern Pygmy Owl (*Glaucidium gnoma*) has long been debated. Ranging from Guatemala north to southern Canada, this diminutive owl exhibits minor plumage variation and vocal variation across 5 different subpopulations. Some taxonomic organizations recognize each of the 5 subspecies as their own species-level group, but others recognize only one species. Prior genetic work using a reduced representation approach was unable to clarify the taxonomic placement of each subpopulation. To address this uncertainty, we sampled at least one individual from each of the five Northern Pygmy Owl populations: *G. g. californicum* on the west coast of the United States N = 15, *G. g. pinicola* in the southern rocky mountains from Wyoming to northern Arizona N = 8, *G. g. gnoma* in the Sierra Madre from southern Arizona to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec N = 5, *G. g. cobanense* on the Guatemalan Plateau N = 4, and *G. g. hoskinsii* in southern Baja California N = 1. We used whole genome sequencing to untangle the phylogenetic relationships between the different populations of Northern Pygmy Owl and definitively determine the taxonomic status of each population. Additionally, we conducted vocal analyses to explore the relationship between vocal and genomic divergence. We find that one population currently lumped in the Northern Pygmy Owl, the Guatemalan Pygmy Owl, *G. g. cobanense*, displays sufficient genomic divergence for species-level consideration, while the other populations show relatively low levels of genomic differentiation.

Kelsey Crona and Claire Varian-Ramos; Colorado State University-Pueblo

Evaluating Body Condition and Apparent Survival in Migratory Songbirds

Little research has been done on the direct impacts of climate change on the fitness of birds during migration periods. While body condition measurements are a common tool used by ornithologists to assess the individual fitness of birds, these health indicators have yet to be correlated with survival during migration. We predict birds in poor condition will have lower apparent survival during migration. We also predict that migrating birds will have lower apparent survival during extreme drought and air pollution from wildfire driven by climate change. Using Cellular Tracking Technologies Hybrid Tags, we tagged six migratory songbirds in the fall of 2024, four of which have been detected by the Motus network. A total of 100 tags will be deployed by spring migration of 2026. Findings from this research will help understand the accuracy of using body condition measurements to predict survival as well as the impacts of climate change on songbirds during migration.

Ted Floyd; American Birding Association

Lies, Damned Lies, and Spectrograms: Interpreting and Overinterpreting Computer Printouts of Birdsong

With the advent of websites like Xeno-Canto and the Macaulay Library, and especially the Merlin Bird ID app, birders and field ornithologists today have ready access to high quality scrolling spectrograms of bird vocalizations. With a bit of study and experience, birders and field ornithologists can learn how to interpret the squiggles and scratches online—and confidently identify many birds. A reasonably good spectrogram, easily obtained by simply pressing a red button on one's phone, is like "DNA for birdsong." But in the same way that DNA is best analyzed with some amount of care, so it is advisable to apply a modicum of prudence to the interpretation of sound spectrograms.

Microphones and human ears are transducers—they detect sound energy, convert it to an electrical signal, and transmit it to a receiver. But what happens in our motherboards and auditory cortexes, respectively, is not entirely congruent. In particular, it is important to understand the dynamical properties of frequency sensitivity, age-related hearing loss, and the subjective impressions of amplitude, intonation, and modulation as they relate to the interpretation of natural sounds. Some Colorado birds that serve as nice case studies for these interesting challenges are the Great Horned Owl, Red-eyed Vireo, House Sparrow, Red Crossbill, and Spotted Towhee.

Edward Landi; Bird Conservancy of the Rockies

Local Birds in Far Away Places: Population Status of Colorado's Grassland Birds Overwintering in the Chihuahuan Desert

Traditionally, grassland bird conservation efforts have focused on monitoring populations during the breeding season using standardized point count protocols. However, many grassland birds spend the majority of the year on their non-breeding grounds. The non-breeding season of a grassland bird's annual life cycle is understudied yet crucial for conserving grassland birds. Many of Colorado's breeding grassland bird species like Lark Bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*), Chestnut-collared Longspur (*Calcarius ornatus*) and Thick-billed Longspur (*Rhynchophanes mccownii*) spend the winter in the Chihuahuan desert grasslands of New Mexico, Texas and Mexico. Bird Conservancy of the Rockies developed a standardized protocol to monitor grassland birds during the non-breeding season using a transect line and spatially balanced design. After 7 years of implementing this protocol, we have started to put together short-term trends and regional density estimates in Bird Conservation Region 35 across New Mexico, Texas, and Mexico of many grassland species. Also, this protocol is being implemented on private ranches to measure the impact of shrub removal treatments in West TX. We have found that grassland bird populations are slow to respond positively to shrub removal treatments. Also, many species of grassland

birds like Chestnut-collared Longspur, Sprague's Pipit (*Anthus spragueii*), Baird's Sparrow (*Centronyx bairdii*), and Grasshopper Sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*) have shown lower densities in drought years.

Megan Miller and Claire Varian-Ramos; Colorado State University-Pueblo

Investigating the Role of Wildfire Smoke on Oxidative Status in Different Diet Guilds of Migratory Birds in Southern Colorado

The association between oxidative status and measures of individual fitness such as cell damage, reduced fecundity, and shortened life span make oxidative damage a valuable tool for assessing physiological impacts of wildfire smoke on avian migration. Changes in oxidative status during annual migration are often caused by increases in metabolism and/or exposure to pollutants, such as wildfire smoke. To investigate these impacts, this research is focused on how oxidative status is influenced by wildfire smoke. Air pollution exposure is predicted to increase oxidative damage while suppressing antioxidant response. All data, including blood samples, were collected during migration-banding in the spring and fall of 2024. Blood samples were centrifuged, plasma separated, and frozen within 8 hours of capture. Hydroperoxides (oxidative stress markers) and Total Antioxidant Capacity (TAC; endogenous/exogenous antioxidants) were quantified via d-ROM and TAC assays. A 24-hour air quality station was installed at our field site, and drought index scores from the Environmental Protection Agency were used at a local and national level. If compounding climate change events like wildfire, drought, and unseasonal weather are reducing birds' ability to maintain oxidative status during migration, this could reduce overwintering survival, overall fecundity, and nest success, among other factors. This research will pinpoint species most risk to the detrimental effects of wildfire smoke and allow for more informed conservation actions.

Sara Padula; University of Colorado Boulder

Mapping Memory: How Chickadees Remember Their Caches—And What Their Genes Can Tell Us

Each winter, chickadees do something extraordinary: they hide thousands of food items across their environment and rely on memory alone to find them again. But how do they accomplish such a complex cognitive task—and do different species solve this challenge in the same way? My research explores the genetic basis of spatial memory in two closely related food-caching songbirds, Mountain Chickadees (*Poecile gambeli*) and Black-capped Chickadees (*Poecile atricapillus*), that co-occur in Colorado's Rocky Mountains. To uncover how these birds evolved such impressive memory skills, I've established two high-elevation field sites equipped with automated RFID-enabled feeder

arrays. These arrays allow me to test the memory abilities of wild chickadees by programming each feeder so that each bird only receives food from their assigned feeder. This setup allows me to quantify memory performance in a natural setting. I will then sequence the genome of each individual and use a genome-wide association study (GWAS) to identify genetic variants linked to memory performance. To date, I've captured and banded over 100 chickadees, completed cognitive testing on more than 30 individuals, and begun sequencing their genomes. One of the most exciting early findings is that Black-capped Chickadees—though less common at my sites—have been among the top performers in memory tasks this season. This research brings together field biology and genomics to uncover how cognition evolves in the wild, and sheds light on the genetic underpinnings of one of nature's most fascinating behaviors.

Kurt L. Riggin, Zoe J. Sicat, and Tyler S. Imfeld; Regis University

Ecomorphology and Phylogenetic Signal of Hindlimbs in North American Sparrows and Blackbirds (Passerellidae & Icteridae)

Links between functional morphology and ecological niches are extensively documented in birds, although the majority of this research has been focused on bills and wings. Despite being the direct connection between birds and physical substrates and despite their role in thermoregulation, ecological roles of hindlimb morphology have been relatively overlooked in birds. We explored relationships between hindlimb morphology and ecological behaviors in sparrows (Passerellidae) and blackbirds (Icteridae). We measured 9 traits from the tarsometatarsus, middle toe, and hallux from natural history specimens, and we documented habitat and degree of ground use in the foraging, vocalization, and nesting of these species from the literature. We also quantified phylogenetic signal for these traits, or the degree to which trait variation matches expectations of relatedness between species. We found that hindlimb size and shape had significant relationships to habitat type, foraging, and nesting behaviors in both families. Essentially all hindlimb measurements showed strong, significant phylogenetic signal, such that our original significant relationships disappeared in analyses accounting for phylogenetic relatedness. Altogether, we found that morphological variation in the hindlimbs of these birds appears to track diversification and to possess notable ecological signal. However, the lack of detailed ecological data for most tropical species constrained our ability to explore these relationships at broader taxonomic and geographic scales.

Chuck Hundertmark; Colorado Field Ornithologists

The Evolution of Birding Tools: birdinghotspots.org and eBird Checklist Media

In 2023, Colorado Field Ornithologists (CFO) agreed to migrate its Birding by County data to birdinghotspots.org, a crowd-sourced online bird-finding application. Birding by

County had been developed by CFO volunteers to guide birders to the best birding spots in each Colorado county, though it was not tied to eBird hotspots. There are 3,681 eBird hotspots in Colorado and all of them are covered in birdinghotspots.org: much information still needs to be added for many of those hotspots by volunteers. The birdinghotspots.org administrators have been in conversations with eBird staff about the potential for Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology to take over administration of the app. Early this year eBird launched the beta test of a new checklist function called Checklist Media. When launched, Checklist Media will allow birders to add habitat photographs, soundscape recordings, and photos of other animals as well as birds to their checklists. This presentation will provide an update on how these tools will help birders and how birders can support development of the tools.

Field Trips

General Information

All trips are limited to 16 individuals, except Saturday full-day trips (12 people). All field trips will meet in the lobby of the DoubleTree by Hilton Grand Junction unless otherwise noted. Please arrive to meet your group **15 minutes prior to the departure time**. Make sure you have picked up or brought your breakfast and/or lunches as needed.

Two weeks prior to the convention, trip leaders will contact the participants in their trip and arrange for carpooling (excluding arrival/departure trips). Plan for the carpool group to reimburse the driver at the rate of 70 cents per mile. The cost is divided among the passengers and the driver is included in the calculations when figuring out the per person costs. Any trip mileage listed in this document is approximate and is intended to give participants an idea of how much driving there is likely to be. Drivers should have a full tank of gas or a fully charged vehicle prior to meeting with their group.

TH1, SA1 – All trips have an alpha-number code in their description. Please reference this code if you are asking a question about a trip.

TH – Thursday trips
FR – Friday trips
SA – Saturday trips
SU – Sunday trips
MO – Monday trip

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

Half Day – half-day trip end by 12:00 pm on Friday & Saturday, by 1:00 pm Sunday

Additional Passes/Fees

State Parks – Field trips that include a State Park visit will require each vehicle entering to have a Keep Colorado Wild Pass (pass purchased with vehicle registration) or a State Parks Pass (daily or annual, these can be obtained at most entrance stations or on the [CPW website](http://cpw.state.co.us)).

National Parks & National Monuments – Field trips that visit Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park or Colorado National Monument will require each driver (or someone in each vehicle) to have a National Park Service system pass. Daily passes can be purchased if necessary.

State Wildlife Areas – Any person 16 years or older must have a State Wildlife Area Pass -or- a current hunting or fishing license to recreate on Colorado State Wildlife Areas. During the convention trips, please comply with the license/permit requirements. You can purchase your pass online.

Thursday Trips

TH1 Arrival Trip from the Northern Front Range – Easy – Full Day

7:00 am - 4:00 pm; Greg Osland

We will be birding hotspots on the way to Grand Junction. Please bring your lunch. The trip leader will contact everyone to determine where to meet.

TH2 Arrival Trip from the Northern Front Range – Easy – Full Day

7:00 am - 4:00 pm; Carly Crow

We will be birding hotspots on the way to Grand Junction. Please bring your lunch. The trip leader will contact everyone to determine where to meet.

TH3 Self-Guided Arrival Trip from Colorado Springs – Easy – Full Day

All participants who sign up for this trip will be emailed a list of recommended birding stops between Colorado Springs and Grand Junction. Bird at your own pace on your drive to Grand Junction. (No maximum participant size for this trip.)

CANCELLED – TH4 Arrival Trip from Southern Front Range

TH5 Uncompahgre – Moderate – Evening

5:00 pm - 11:00 pm; Logan Wagner, Luke Phenegar & Brian Genge

This outing focuses on a sampling of diurnal and nocturnal ponderosa-specialist bird species on the Uncompahgre Plateau. The upper reaches of the Uncompahgre Plateau is a unique place to Colorado due to the stands of Ponderosa trees and manzanita which resemble the California Chaparral. Ponderosa specialist birds can be found here like Pygmy Nuthatch, Grace's Warbler, and Williamson's Sapsucker. The Flammulated Owl is another bird that calls this unique place home.

We will drive up to the cliffs of Unaweep Canyon where you can look down at White-throated Swifts and other pinyon/juniper birds. Then we will make our way up in elevation and habitats from pinon to scrub oak, then ponderosa, and finally, mixed aspen forests where we can find an assemblage of different birds in each habitat. At the top, the sun will go down and we will shift our focus to nocturnal species: Common Poorwill and then Flammulated Owl on the way back down.

Bring snacks, water, binoculars, a headlamp or flashlight, long pants and an extra jacket (higher elevations (8700') can be cool in the evening). Walking is minimal <1 mile. *This trip prevents you from attending the Welcome Picnic.*

Approximately 80 miles driven round trip. Carpooling is required on this trip given the locations trip

Friday Trips

FR 1 Avant Vineyard Birds & Wine Trip – Moderate – Half Day

7:00 am - 12:00 pm; Nic Korte & Linda Hodges

Beautiful wetlands along the Colorado River and with a land trust easement. Birding and a moderate hike, followed by setting up scopes and watching the ponds and area until about 11. Portions of this private, riverside wetland/cottonwood gallery forest are protected by Conservation Easement. Nesting species include Wood Duck, Virginia Rail, Marsh Wren, Black Phoebe, Yellow-breasted Chat, Bullock's Oriole and more. Expect a short, relatively steep walk on a gravel slope followed by easy, possibly muddy, walking. Mosquito repellent is advised.

Lunch and wine tasting with one of the best views in the valley will follow: \$12/person or couple, but with a 10% discount/bottle (not included with registration fee).

Approximately 28 miles round trip.

FR2 Black Canyon of the Gunnison – Moderate – Full Day

5:15 am - 4:00 pm; Peter Burke & Archer Silverman

This stunning park rivals the Grand Canyon for beauty and abounds with bird life. Gray Flycatcher, Dusky Grouse, and Chukar are possible in this combination of lowland riparian, pinyon/juniper forest, cliff face, sagebrush, grassland/prairie, scrub oak forest. Common Merganser, Belted Kingfisher, Rock and Canyon Wren, and American Dipper are all possible and Pinyon Jay, Ash-throated Flycatcher, and Black-throated Gray Warbler have been found along the river by some lucky birders. On the rim, some of the fastest species zip across the canyon: Peregrine and Prairie Falcons. Common Nighthawk, White-throated Swift, Broad-tailed Hummingbird, woodpeckers, flycatchers, bluebirds, and sparrows are also all possible. National Park passes are needed for each car in this trip.

Approximately 155 miles driving round trip

CANCELLED – FR3 Colorado River State Park East – Easy – Half Day

The Pear Park section of Colorado River State Park is largely undisturbed, and it offers birders the chance to enjoy a variety of riparian birding on this short hike. Boating and surface contact are prohibited on the lakes to protect the ecosystem. The Pear Park Trail section features several small lakes that are vital habitats for endangered fish species. While recreation facilities remain minimal to preserve the natural environment, birders can explore the area for a chance to observe a variety of waterfowl and other wildlife in this tranquil, protected landscape.

Approximately 15 miles driving round trip

FR4 Colorado River State Park West & Northwest – Easy – Half Day

6:00 am - 12:00 pm; Linda Lee & Pam Lauman

This trip will include the west section of Colorado River State Park, Connected Lakes State Park and Grand Valley Audubon Nature Center & Audubon Trail section. The park has hosted a variety of rare sightings. Potential target species include Black Phoebe, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Gray Flycatcher, and Indigo Bunting. Gambel's Quail and Western Screech-Owl are present year-round, though the owl can be more elusive than the quail. Birding in this park is always full of surprises, no matter the season. The trails lead through diverse riparian habitats and small lakes, offering excellent birding opportunities. These sites include large cottonwood groves. Connected Lakes SP, part of the Colorado River Corridor, is a riparian habitat with plenty of tree-lined trails and several ponds. The majority of the trails are paved and accessible. Vault facilities are located at Connected Lakes only. Insect repellent and sun protection are also recommended.

Approximately 16 miles round trip

FR5 Cameo and Coal Canyon, Mogensen Ponds, Colbran Bobolink Area – Easy – Half Day

5:30 am - 12:00 pm; Luke Pheneger, Brian Genge, Christine Alexander

We will listen for the distinctive calls of the Chukar echoing off the cliff faces and scan the rocky terrain where they often perch. While they can be tricky to spot, with patience and a keen eye and attentive ears, we will hope for success. The surrounding shrubland may have Lazuli Bunting, Black-Throated Sparrow, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, Rock Wren, and perhaps some wild horses and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep.

This trip will be combined with a great spot for Bobolink in Plateau City area with Least Flycatchers, Black-Chinned Hummingbirds and Yellow-breasted Chats. In addition, a superb fruit stand lies on the opposite side of the highway from Cameo & Coal Canyon!

Approximately 84 miles round trip.

FR6 Colorado National Monument-East (GJ) – Easy – Half Day

6:00 am - 12:00 pm; Audrey Hicks & John Higgins

Only 10 minutes from downtown, the immediate back door of the Grand Junction is the Colorado National Monument. Below imposing sandstone cliffs of the Colorado Plateau, trails wend through canyons with habitats ranging from sagebrush, pinyon-juniper woodland, riparian woodland, to rimrock. Peregrine Falcon and White-throated Swifts course along the rimrock while Ash-throated Flycatcher, Gray Flycatcher, Gray Vireo, Black-throated Gray Warbler, and Black-throated Sparrow sing below. Year-round residents like Juniper Titmouse, Canyon Wrens, and Pinion Jays can also be found.

The best way to see these birds is away from roads and to the wetter drainages bordered by canyon walls. For this hiking-focused trip be sure to bring plenty of water, snacks, sunblock, binoculars, and sturdy shoes. The terrain is hilly and rocky—up to 3 miles and 500 ft of elevation gain and up to 1 hour of drive time.

Approximately 34 miles round trip.

CANCELLED – FR7 Colorado National Monument-West (Fruita) – Easy – Half Day

6:30-12:00 pm; Chuck Hundertmark & Travis Walker

Colorado National Monument, located near Grand Junction, Colorado, is a stunning National Park Service site that offers birders a unique opportunity to explore a diverse range of habitats. The park is known for its dramatic, sheer-walled canyons carved into ancient sandstone, granite, and gneiss rock formations. Situated on the Colorado Plateau, the monument features high desert landscapes, with pinyon pine and juniper forests covering the plateau. This varied terrain supports a rich array of bird species, making it an excellent destination for year-round birdwatching.

The Fruita side would include the West Side entrance, Balanced Rock area, Visitor's Center & Alcove Nature Trail, Saddlehorn CG & Liberty Cap Trailhead Area. Sage Thrashers, Sagebrush Sparrows, and Cassin's Kingbirds would be the target species. This side could be paired with areas west and north of the Glade Park Store.

Approximately 56 miles roundtrip

FR8 Gateway Cottonwoods & Rte 141 – Moderate – Full Day

5:45 - 4:00 pm; Jenyva Turner & Joanna Clark

This full-day trip starts in lowland riparian habitat along the Delores River in Gateway. We will be combing the cottonwoods and underbrush in search of Lucy's Warbler (this is probably the most likely spot for one during the convention). Black Phoebe and Black-throated Sparrow are also possibilities here. From Gateway, we will be stopping at locations along Highway 141 and along Divide Road as we work our way back to Grand Junction. This part of the trip will target lower elevation pinyon-juniper species, including vireos, woodpeckers, flycatchers, and other warblers such as Virginia's, Grace's, MacGillivray's, and Black-throated Gray.

Plan for 2-3 miles of walking, mostly on accessible paths, but a chance for some dirt trails with steeper inclines. Bring plenty of water, lunch and snacks, appropriate clothing for HOT weather and sunblock. There will be a limited need for scopes. There will be limited access to bathroom facilities.

Approximately 145 miles round trip.

FR10 Grand Mesa - Land's End – Moderate – Full Day

5:45 - 4:00 pm; Crystal Reser & Natalie Vande Vuss

This trip will cover habitat from pinyon-juniper to aspen and mixed conifer to spruce fir forest. Early stops will be in pinyon juniper habitat with Black-throated Gray Warbler, Gray and Ash-throated Flycatcher among the specialties. Later stops will include riparian habitat in addition to mountain shrubs and aspen and include a good number of species. Dusky Grouse are a possibility. Higher elevation stops will include aspen and mixed conifer with good overlooks for viewing birds such as Clark's Nutcracker, Olive-sided and Hammond's Flycatcher. Grassland sparrows and Green-tailed Towhee are abundant at the Grand Mesa Visitor's Center in addition to great overlooks. This trip will consist of driving interspersed with short walking trips on dirt roads/trails.

Approximately 110 miles round trip.

FR11 Pinon Mesa & Glade Park – Moderate – Full Day

6:00 am - 4:00 pm; John Haycraft & Mike Henwood

On this trip, we will travel through a variety of habits from pinyon-juniper to spruce-fir forest. The first stop would be in pinyon juniper habitat with Black-throated Gray Warbler as the primary target species. We will visit some sparse Ponderosa Pine habitat with Grace's Warbler – the target. We will continue on to Mud Springs Campground Day Use area which has some good aspen habitat with a variety of woodpeckers. Northern Pygmy Owl is a possibility here. We will continue through aspen and sage to the Fruita Picnic Area, which has good aspen, as well as willow carrs. Lewis Woodpecker, Fox Sparrows, Dusky Grouse, and a variety of other species might be seen in this area. At Fruita Reservoir #1, which is surrounded by spruce/fir habitat, we have the possibility of Three-toed Woodpecker, Golden-crowned kinglet, Dusky Grouse, and perhaps a Northern Goshawk. Overall, the day's list will be extensive with the variety of habitats. Should be a good variety of woodpeckers, warblers, and sparrows. Moderate trip with driving interspersed with short walking trips on dirt roads/trails.

Approximately 84 miles roundtrip.

FR12 Rabbit Valley & North Utah – Moderate – Full Day

5:15 am - 4:00 pm; Edward Landi & Mary Geder

Right on the Utah border, this remote ridge of Sagebrush and pinyon juniper forest is among the best desert birding spots in the state of Colorado. Join us for a memorable birding trip through western Colorado and across the Utah border, where the rugged desert landscapes offer a wealth of birdlife. Our journey will take us to Rabbit Valley, nestled along the Colorado River, with its pinyon-juniper forests, rimrock outcrops, and unique sandstone formations—an ideal backdrop for birdwatching.

Along the way, this is the best spot for some of our most intriguing western species, including Scott's Oriole and the elusive Gray Vireo. We will try for both Sagebrush and Black-throated Sparrows in the shrubs and Juniper Titmouse calling from the trees. We'll also make a stop at a nearby location where Burrowing Owls are known to nest.

Approximately 80 miles roundtrip

FR13 Rifle Gap SP & Garfield County – Moderate – Full Day

5:45 am - 4:00 pm; Diana Beatty & Gary Witt

This trip to the Rifle area in Garfield County will explore both state and local parks. The highlight of this trip will be a visit to Rifle Falls, where we'll view the amazing waterfall where we could catch a glimpse of a Black Swift! Other destinations may include the Rifle Fish Hatchery, Harvey Gap SP, Rifle Mountain Park, and several local parks and ponds. Expect a wide variety of species including White-throated Swift, American Dipper, Wild Turkey, Black-headed Grosbeak, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Mountain Bluebird, and Black-throated Grey warbler.

Bring plenty of water, lunch and snacks, appropriate clothing for HOT weather and sunblock. Binoculars definitely, scopes will be useful for scanning reservoirs for ducks. Drivers will need a state parks pass. Plan for 2-3 miles of walking, mostly on accessible paths, but a chance for some dirt trails with steeper inclines.

Approximately 160 miles.

FR14 Rio Blanco Busting – Moderate – Full Day

4:30 am - 4:00 pm; Sue Riffe & Angela Trnka

If you want to add as many species as possible in Rio Blanco County, this is the trip for you! Different habitats are the key to success. Here is a list of locations; Rio Blanco SWA for ducks, grebes, shorebirds, and swallows; dry scrubby areas up to Calamity Pass for all the yummy Pinyon Juniper species; several wetlands near river corridors for warblers and flycatchers; and Philadelphia Road for higher elevation species. Scopes will be handy on this trip. Let's see how many species we can find!

Minimal walking near the vehicles and short jaunts down flat trails should be expected. Bring plenty of food and water. A State Wildlife Area Pass is required for this trip. *This trip leaves before To Go Breakfasts & Lunches can be picked up. You must arrange your own breakfast and lunch for this day.*

Approximately 300 miles

FR15 Uncompahgre Plateau: Pinyon-Juniper, Sage, Montane Shrub, and Ponderosa – Moderate – Full Day

5:30 - 4:00 pm; Don Marsh & Helen Butts

The journey begins at the top of a steep hill climbing out of Unaweep Canyon, where the road starts to wind through a variety of landscapes. The Uncompahgre Plateau is home to some of the best ponderosa pine forests in the state, as well as mixed coniferous forests, aspen woodlands, montane shrublands, and mountain meadows, making it an ideal place for birdwatching. Starting in the pinyon-juniper woodlands, we will look for Juniper Titmouse, Virginia's and Black-throated Gray Warblers, Pinyon Jay, and other species. As we climb higher, the landscape changes into ponderosa pine forests, where you might hear the drumming of a Williamson's Sapsucker or spot a Grace's Warbler in the trees. Green-tailed Towhees call from the underbrush, and Pygmy Nuthatches can be seen moving through the branches.

We will travel through aspen groves, where Purple Martins fly overhead and Red-naped Sapsuckers drum on the trunks. Higher still, the road reaches mixed conifer forests and meadows. Here, you might see a Mountain Bluebird perched on a fencepost or a Vesper Sparrow calling from the grass. Ruby-crowned Kinglets dart around in the trees.

Along the way, you may also spot a Dusky Grouse or see an Olive-sided Flycatcher perched, scanning the area for insects.

Approximately 100 miles round trip

FR16 Uncompahgre Plateau 2: Aspen, Willows, and Riparian – Moderate – Full Day

5:15 - 4:00 pm; Travis Walker, Tykee James, & Chuck Hundertmark

This trip takes us through diverse habitats, from lush spruce-fir forests to aspen groves and expansive meadows. We'll search for species like Canada Jay, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and American Three-toed Woodpecker in the higher elevations, and keep an eye out for the striking Purple Martin in the aspen and meadow areas. As you descend, the landscape transitions to mixed conifer forests and ponderosa woodlands, where we might spot Grace's Warbler and Williamson's Sapsucker. In the pinyon-juniper zone, we will look for Juniper Titmouse, Pinyon Jay, and Gray Flycatcher. Moderate trip with driving interspersed with short walking trips on dirt roads/trails.

Approximately 100 miles round trip

FR17 Utah Bonderman Field Station - Easy - Full Day

5:30 am - 3:00 pm; Megan Miller & Carly Crow

Join us on a birding excursion to the Bonderman Field Station at Rio Mesa, a stunning location that offers both exceptional birdwatching opportunities and a rich environmental setting across the border in Utah. Situated on the Colorado Plateau, this 400-acre property, owned by the University of Utah, is an outdoor laboratory where the natural world intersects with research on ecology, environmental studies, and human-environment interactions.

During this trip, you'll have the chance to observe a range of fascinating species, including Lucy's Warbler, Black-Throated Sparrow, Sagebrush Sparrow, White-throated Swift, Golden Eagle, Canyon Wren, etc. More uncommon species in the area include Scott's Oriole, Gray Vireo, and Juniper Titmouse. The station's diverse habitats—from desert scrublands to riparian zones—provide ideal conditions for spotting these desert and riparian birds.

A highlight of this excursion will be the opportunity to observe some of these birds up close through bird banding activities. This hands-on experience offers a unique chance to learn about bird migration, ecology, and conservation efforts, all while contributing to ongoing scientific research. Whether you're an experienced birder or just beginning, this trip promises a memorable adventure in a beautiful and ecologically rich area of the Colorado Plateau.

Approximately 185 miles. Drivers: The last 8 miles of the road can have lots of big ruts, rocks, big cobblestones, washes, soft sand, mud, and steep drops. 4WD or AWD with clearance is needed.

FR18 Vega State Park - Moderate - Full Day

6:15 am - 4:00 pm; Laura Steadman & Debbie Tubridy

Vega Reservoir is a large mountain reservoir at approximately 8000+ feet. In addition to the lake, shoreline, and marshy areas, there are a variety of habitats surrounding the lake which include mountain shrubland (Gambel's Oak), large aspen woodlands, stream side riparian areas with extensive willows, plus hummingbird feeders at the lodge. The trip will drive around the reservoir stopping to bird in various habitats. Birds seen around the reservoir itself will include nesting Bald Eagle, Osprey, Sandhill Cranes, and Spotted Sandpipers. Some specialties will include Willow Flycatchers, Lewis's Woodpeckers, Gray Catbird, and Fox Sparrows. Overall, there will be a large number of birds seen on this trip because of the variety of habitats. The list will include a good number of woodpeckers, plus a good variety of warblers and sparrows.

Approximately 120 miles roundtrip

Saturday Trips

SA1 Avant Vineyard Trip – Easy – Half Day

7:00 am - 12:00 pm; Nic Korte & Mary Geder

See description for FR1.

SA2 Black Canyon of the Gunnison – Moderate – Full Day

5:45 am - 4:00 pm; Don Marsh & Jeremy Stringfied

See description for FR2.

SA3 Colorado River State Park East – Easy – Half Day

6:45 am- 12:00 pm; Peter Burke & Angela Trnka

See description for FR3.

SA4 Colorado River State Park West & Northwest – Easy – Half Day

6:30 am - 12:00 pm; Ted Floyd & Chuck Hundertmark

See description for FR4.

SA5 Cameo and Coal Canyon, Mogensen Ponds, Colbran Bobolink Area – Easy – Half Day

6:00 - 12:00 pm; Helen Butts, John Higgins, Christine Alexander

See description for FR5.

SA6 Colorado National Monument East – Easy – Half Day

6:00 am - 12:00 pm; Sue Riffe & Edward Landi

See description for FR6.

SA7 Colorado National Monument West – Easy – Half Day

6:30 am - 12:00 pm; Logan Wagner & Megan Jones Patterson

See description for FR7.

SA8 Gateway Cottonwoods & Rte 141 – Moderate – Full Day

5:30 - 4:00 pm; Diana Beatty & John Haycraft

See description for FR8.

SA9 Grand Mesa - Powderhorn – Moderate – Full Day

5:45 - 4:00 pm; Tyler Stewart, Gary Witt & Joanna Clark

The trip includes the Powderhorn, Mesa Lakes, Lake of the Woods, Skyway, and Mesa Top areas, which are rich in both mountain and lake-dwelling species. Notable birds that can be spotted here include the American Three-toed Woodpecker, Williamson's and Red-naped Sapsuckers, Red Crossbill, Brown Creeper, Evening Grosbeak, MacGillivray's and Virginia's Warblers, and Band-Tailed Pigeon. The trail along Mesa Lake's shoreline offers stunning views of its crystal-clear waters, and during the warmer months, the trail is adorned with vibrant wildflowers, creating a peaceful and scenic mountain walk.

Approximately 80 miles roundtrip

SA10 Grand Mesa - Land's End – Moderate – Half Day

5:30 - 12:00 pm; Nick Komar

See description for FR10.

SA11 Pinon Mesa – Moderate – Half Day

6:00 - 12:00 pm; Natalie Vande Vuss & Audrey Hicks

See description for FR11.

SA12 Horsethief Canyon SWA – Moderate – Half Day

6:15 am - 12:00 pm; Kieran Schnitzspahn, Pam Lauman, and Debbie Tubridy

Horsethief Canyon State Wildlife Area follows the Colorado River and includes over 2000 acres of wildlife habitat surrounded by cottonwood trees, wetlands, and alfalfa fields. Likely species are Gambel's Quail, Northern Harrier, Spotted Towhee, Western Tanagers, and Yellow-breasted Chat.

The trail is mostly flat on solid surfaces. Distance traveled will probably be 2-3 miles depending on what we stop to observe. This area follows the river and its primary function is for wildlife habitat, insects can be a nuisance and repellent, hats, long-sleeves and pants are recommended.

Approximately 30 miles round trip

SA13 The Best of Delta County – Easy – Full Day

6:15 am – 4:00 pm; Luke Pheneger & Brian Genge

This trip will be a driving tour with multiple stops. Escalante Canyon, Colorado is one of the best spots to try for Chukars and Black Phoebe with canyon walls, agricultural fields, riparian corridors, and scrubby hillsides. Fruitgrowers Reservoir has grebes, swallows, shorebirds, and lots of ducks as it provides water for the farmers in the area. If you have a scope, this is a good spot to use it.

Sweitzer Lake State Park has a good marshy area and almost always has something good around. Our lunch spot is Confluence Park which is right along the Colorado River to round out our bird list for the day. Expect short easy walks, spectacular scenery, and great birds without driving too far as we explore the best of Delta County.

Approximately 50 miles round trip

SA14 Uncompahgre Plateau 2: Aspen, Willows, and Riparian – Moderate – Full Day

5:30 - 4:00 pm; Laura Steadman & Mike Henwood

See description for FR16.

SA16 Vega State Park – Moderate – Full Day

5:15 - 4:00 p; Crystal Reser & Steve Williams

See description for FR18.

Sunday Trips

SU1 Rifle Gap State Park & Garfield – Moderate – Full Day

5:45 am - 4:00 pm; Luke Phenegar & Brian Genge

See description for FR13.

SU2 Black Canyon of the Gunnison – Moderate – Full Day

5:00 am - 4:00 pm; Tyler Stewart & Debbie Tubridy

See description for FR2.

SU3 Colorado River State Park East – Easy – Half-Day

6:15 am - 12:00 pm; Chuck Hundertmark & John Higgins

See description for FR3.

SU4 Colorado River State Park West & Northwest – Easy – Half Day

5:45 am - 12:00 pm; Megan Miller & Carly Crow

See description for FR4.

SU5 Cameo and Coal Canyon, Mogensen Ponds, Colbran Bobolink Area – Easy – Half-Day

6:00 am - 12:00 pm; Logan Wagner

See description for FR5.

SU6 Colorado National Monument-East (GJ) – Easy – Half Day

6:00 am - 12:00 pm; Linda Lee & Audrey Hicks

See description for FR6.

SU7 Colorado National Monument-West (Fruita) – Easy – Half Day

6:15 am - 12:00 pm; Ted Floyd & Cary Atwood

See description for FR7.

SU8 Gateway Cottonwoods & Rte 141 – Moderate – Full Day

5:15 - 4:00 pm; Kieran Schnitzspahn, Archer Silverman, & Megan Jones Patterson

See description for FR8.

SU9 Grand Mesa - Powderhorn – Moderate – Full Day

5:30 - 4:00 pm; Jenyva Turner & Peter Gent

See description for FR11.

SU10 Grand Mesa–Land’s End – Moderate – Full Day

5:30 - 4:00 pm; Laura Steadman & Mike Henwood

See description for FR10.

SU11 The Best of Delta County – Easy – Full Day

6:00 am – 4:00 pm; Sue Riffe & Travis Walker

See description for SA13.

SU12 Rabbit Valley & Utah Valley – Moderate – Half Day

5:45 am -1:00 pm; Peter Burke, Gary Witt & Joanna Clark

See description for FR12.

SU13 Rio Blanco Busting – Moderate – Full Day

6:15 am - 4:00 pm
Diana Beatty & John Haycraft

See description for FR14.

SU14 Uncompahgre Plateau: Pinyon Juniper, Sage, Montane Shrub, and Ponderosa – Moderate – Full Day

5:15 am - 4:00 pm; Angela Trnka & Christine Alexander & Janet Gallenstein

See description for FR15.

SU15 Uncompahgre Plateau 2: Aspen, Willows, and Riparian – Moderate – Full Day

5:30 am - 4:00 pm; Don Marsh

See description for FR16.

SU16 Vega State Park – Moderate – Full Day

5:45 am - 4:00 pm; Kathy Kay & Nic Korte

See description for FR18.

Monday Departure Trip

MO1 Browns Park Trail Extension – Moderate – Full Day

10:00 am - 4:00ish pm - Starts in Maybell, CO; does not return to Grand Junction; Diana Beatty

We will meet Monday morning in Maybell at 10 am (Maybell is about 2 hrs 30 mins north of Grand Junction). There is a Sinclair station in Maybell that we will hope is open for gas, bathrooms, and snacks. We will then spend the day exploring the Browns Park Birding Trail. Our ambitious goal is to visit 1. Browns Park NWR auto loop, 2. Dinosaur National Monument Gates of Lodore and 3. Irish Canyon petroglyph area as our top three priorities. Gates of Lodore is a National Park fee area.

We will end the trip wherever we are at 4 or 5 p.m. so that participants can reach lodging in Craig, CO or wherever they choose to make arrangements. Participants are free to break off earlier or later. This is a remote area and will not be pre-scouted so participants should plan to bring their own food, have unpredictable bathroom access, etc. Further, since this is a departure trip there will be no trip-specific carpooling.