



Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory
Conserving birds and their habitats

PRIMARY SOURCE

SPECIAL 2011 EVENTS EDITION

April 2011 | Number 38

This special events edition is an invitation to upcoming Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory talks, field trips, festivals, banding stations, picnic, walkathon, camps — there is something for everybody! While RMBO staff members spend most of their time conserving birds and habitat, they also like to share what we are learning with our members and other people interested in conservation. So all staff contribute their time for at least three RMBO events each year. Check the events calendar on page 3 and updates at www.rmbo.org, and plan to join in and say hello. We look forward to seeing you!

Save the date: August 27

Annual BBQ for the Birds will be extra-special in 2011

It's always good, old-fashioned fun, but this year's BBQ for the Birds has some extra attractions for bird enthusiasts and anyone who values connecting people with nature.

On top of the burgers, beans and bird-related activities, the August 27 picnic will feature a popular author and the grand opening of the Environmental Learning Center (ELC) at Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory's Old Stone House headquarters at Barr Lake State Park near Brighton, Colo.

Activities for children and adults, guided walks on the new Prairie Trail, live music, an enticing silent auction, a tasty lunch, the ELC ribbon-cutting and much more are on the agenda, beginning at 7 a.m. with bird walks and bird banding.

The Big Year author Mark Obmascik will give the keynote talk following lunch. The book is being made into a much-anticipated movie due for release in October.

After years of planning, fundraising and construction, RMBO's staff and board are excited to show off the new ELC, which features a classroom, an outdoor amphitheater, trails and interpretive signage. Demonstration native gardens will be planted in the fall.

"Being able to show people what they can do in their own backyards to create healthy habitats for birds — and themselves — is an exciting part of the new Center," said Kacie Ehrenberger, RMBO's director of education. "We are excited about having kids, families and adults come here to have fun and learn."



Food and fun were plentiful at the 2010 BBQ for the Birds. The 2011 event on August 27 also marks the grand opening of RMBO's Environmental Learning Center.

Watch for more information about the picnic in your mail/email box and at www.rmbo.org. Contact Kelly to RSVP by August 22 at kelly.thompson@rmbo.org or 303-659-4348 ext. 17.

Mr. Panjabi goes to Washington to support bird conservation act

As the only organization to receive funding from the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA) grant every year since its inception, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory was asked to help kick off NMBCA's 10-year celebration.

RMBO's International Program Director Arvind Panjabi traveled to Washington, D.C., in early March to speak to the NMBCA advisory council, the director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agency and conservation leaders about RMBO and partner successes in grassland bird conservation in the U.S. and Mexico, including:

- Thousands of acres of grassland habitat conserved and managed for birds on both breeding and wintering grounds;
- Critical information gaps filled on key wintering areas and habitats for more than 30 of our most vulnerable species;
- Hundreds of Mountain Plover nests protected in agricultural fields;
- Dozens of Mexican biologists trained in grassland bird identification and modern sampling techniques.

NMBCA grants have laid the foundation for RMBO's international grassland bird conservation work and have catalyzed new initiatives: designation and protection of new conservation areas; research on over-winter survival of birds and their use of agricultural lands; a Spanish-language pocket guide to grassland birds; a best-management-practices manual for the Chihuahuan Desert grasslands; workshops with private landowners; and more. Unfortunately the NMBCA is underfunded and its future is uncertain.

RMBO's unique international work protects our investment in our U.S. efforts and is key to conserving birds and their habitats as many birds spend much of their life-cycle across borders.

Take a Walk on the Wild Side

Have fun doing something that is good for you on October 1 at Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory's first-ever walkathon: Walk on the Wild Side: Take Steps for a Healthy Community.

The event grew out of the idea that a healthy community requires healthy people and a healthy environment. The walks will reward participants with enjoyable exercise, and proceeds will benefit RMBO's environmental education program. Walks will depart at staggered times from RMBO's Old Stone House Environmental Learning Center at Barr Lake State Park near Brighton, Colo.

Participate as a team or individually in the level of your choice:

- 10K – walk to our bird banding station, enjoy observing “birds in the hand,” and return to the start.
- 5K – walk a loop, crossing the dam at Barr Lake.
- 1K – walk with your family on a trail outside the Old Stone House.

The walks will feature activities along the way, and healthy snacks will be on hand.

It's not too early to start putting together a team – and issuing a challenge to another team. Visit www.rmbo.org this summer for more information.

Summer camps: outdoor fun & learning for ages 4-15

Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory is offering several entertaining, educational summer camps for youths ages 4 to 15.

The day camps are at RMBO's Old Stone House at Barr Lake State Park near Brighton, Colo. Information on costs, registration and **scholarships** is available by contacting Cassy Bohnet at cassy.bohnet@rmbo.org or 303-659-4348 ext. 15.

- **On the Wing**, for ages 13 to 15 will be July 11-16 at Camp Chief Ouray at Snow Mountain Ranch near Granby, Colo. Campers will design an outdoor research project and present their findings to U.S. Forest Service and RMBO staff. Outdoor recreation such as rafting, hiking, horseback riding and a ropes course will add to their appreciation of nature.
- **Young Ecologists** is a day camp for ages 11 to 13 from June 27 through July 1 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Campers will use investigation techniques to discover the secrets of Colorado habitats.
- **Young Naturalists**, ages 4 and 5, will gather every Tuesday in July from 9 to 11 a.m. to learn about nature through hands-on discovery, crafts, games and hikes.



Scholarships are available so more youths can enjoy outdoor exploration at Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory summer camps.

- **Nature Investigators**, ages 6 and 7, will enjoy hikes, scavenger hunts and games each Wednesday in July from 9 a.m. to noon, while they learn how habitats provide for animals' needs.
- **Habitat Explorers** meet Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. in July. These 8 to 10 year olds will explore habitats that make wonderful homes for Colorado wildlife.

Jump on the banding wagon!



RMBO bird bander Meredith McBurney shows intrigued visitors the care taken with temporarily captured birds at the fall banding station at Barr Lake State Park.

A visit to a bird-banding station is a great idea for people of all ages. Spend a morning watching research in action as a Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory wildlife biologist places bands on resident and migrating birds captured harmlessly in mist nets. Teachers can arrange a visit for groups of students, and other groups and individual visitors are welcome.

Chatfield Banding Station

April 25-May 30, 8 a.m. - noon (station closed May 20-21) near the Audubon Center on the southwest side of Chatfield State Park in Littleton, Colo. Registration is not required for individuals. Schedule classroom visits and field trips at education@denveraudubon.org or 303-973-9530. See www.denveraudubon.org.

Chico Banding Station

Monday – Saturday, April 25-May 21 at the research station on the Chico Basin Ranch, 35 mi. southeast of Colorado Springs. Reservations required. Contact Caroline Ferguson or Lee Derr at learning@chicobasinranch.com or 719-634-2305 or 719-338-8651. See www.chicobasinranch.com.

Fall Banding Stations

Banding stations operate at four locations in Colorado and two in Nebraska on various dates from late August to mid-October. Watch for information at www.rmbo.org.

Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory 2011 Events & Activities

Family programs, BBQ for the Birds and some of the other activities are at RMBO's Old Stone House & Environmental Learning Center, 14500 Lark Bunting Ln., Brighton, Colo. (northeast of Denver on I-76; east on Bromley Lane; first right after train tracks)



April

- 23: Family Program. Create a kite & enjoy watching birds while flying it, 3 – 5 p.m. \$15 per family includes materials. Register: cassy.bohnet@rmbo.org or 303-659-4348 ext 15 by April 20.
- 23: Earth Day, Civic Center Park, Fort Collins, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. Visit RMBO's booth.
- 26: 6 p.m., JAX Mercantile, Lafayette, Colo. Get Your Family Outdoors presented by Education Director Kacie Ehrenberger.
- 25– May 31: Bird Banding stations, see story page 2.
- 29– May 1: 5th Annual Karval Mountain Plover Festival, Karval, Colo. See www.karval.org.

May

- 1–30: Bird Banding, see story page 2.
- 7: Get your hands dirty! Join RMBO's Stewardship team at Chico Basin Ranch to help enhance habitat by planting native shrubs along a critical riparian area. Free food. Free birding. FUN! Information at 970-482-1707 ext. 21 or laura.quattrini@rmbo.org.
- 7: Front Range Birding Co. Open House, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., NE corner, Kipling & C470, Littleton, Colo. Visit RMBO's booth.
- 14: Chico Days, Chico Basin Ranch near Colo. Springs. Information at www.chicobasinranch.com.
- 12 & 14: Denver Museum of Nature & Science and RMBO offer a two-part experience: May 12, 6:30–8:30 p.m., behind-the-scenes at DMNS. May 14, 7 a.m., field trip to Chatfield Bird Banding Station. \$40 for RMBO or DMNS members; \$50 non-members. Register at www.dmns.org or 303-370-6000.
- 21: Field trip to Briggsdale led by RMBO Stewardship Director Seth Gallagher with Legacy Land Trust and Wild Birds Unlimited of Fort Collins. Info/register at www.fortcollins.wbu.com or 970-225-2557. \$25 members; \$30 non-members.
- 20–23: Colorado Field Ornithologists Convention, Grand Junction. See www.cfo-link.org.

June

- 4: Family program. Bald Eagle Fledge Festival, 10 a.m. – noon, Barr Lake State Park, Brighton, Colo. Walk to nest observation area, learn about eagles, and build an eagle's nest. \$5 per family. Contact Cassy Bohnet at 303-659-4348 ext. 15 or cassy.bohnet@rmbo.org.
- 11–12: South Dakota Outdoor Expo, state fairgrounds, Huron, S.D. Visit RMBO's booth.
- 9: National Get Outdoors Day, City Park, Denver. Join RMBO at the Junior Ranger Camp.
- 27 – July 28: RMBO summer camps for kids, ages 4–15. See story page 2.

July

- 11–16: On the Wing camp for ages 13–15 at Camp Chief Ouray, Granby, Colo. See story page 2.
- 16: Barr Lake Appreciation Day, Barr Lake State Park, Brighton, Colo.

August

- Late August to mid-October: Bird banding stations, various locations. See story page 2.
- 20–22: New West Fest, downtown Fort Collins, Colo. Visit RMBO's booth.
- 27: 7 a.m. – 2 p.m. RMBO Annual BBQ for the Birds and ribbon-cutting for the Environmental Learning Center. See story page 1.

September

- 10: Fall Bird Festival at Barr Lake State Park, Brighton, Colo.
- 17–18: Sustainable Living Fair, Fort Collins, Colo. Say hello at RMBO's booth.
- 24: Northern Colorado Birding Fair, Fossil Creek Park, Fort Collins, Colo.
- 24: EcoFair, Brighton, Colo. Stop by our booth to say hello.

October

- 1: Walkathon for Conservation at RMBO's Old Stone House, Barr Lake State Park. See story page 2.
- 2: Family Program: Migration at the Barr Lake Banding Station, 10 a.m. – noon. Watch biologists band birds and learn why, tackle a migration obstacle course, and make a bird feeder. \$5 per family. Register at cassy.bohnet@rmbo.org or 303-659-4348 ext 15.



Visitors and staff scope out the prairie surrounding RMBO's Old Stone House at Barr Lake State Park.

Lark Bunting art, top right, courtesy of Sherrie York.



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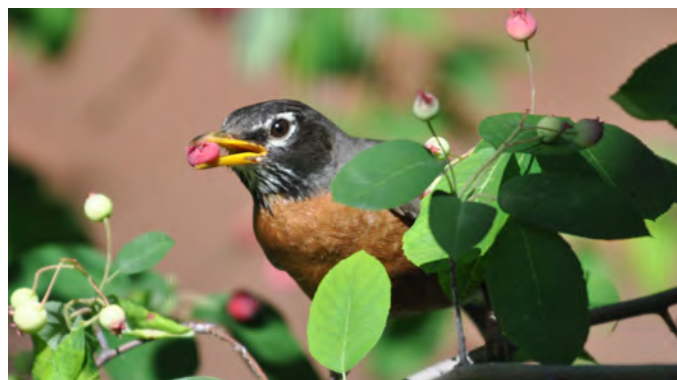
Please make check payable to Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory
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MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONS?

Visit www.rmbo.org, call 303-659-4348 ext. 17, or e-mail kelly.thompson@rmbo.org

THANK YOU for supporting Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory
and bird and habitat conservation!



Nothing says spring like a robin dining in a tree!

Photo by Chuck Hundertmark



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The Primary Source logo with a baby Killdeer and a pelican's primary feather was designed by Granby, Colo., artist David Utterback. Primary feathers give power to a bird's flight. Our members, friends, volunteers and partners are the primary source of RMBO's power to accomplish its mission to conserve birds and their habitats.

Editing and design: Victoria Collier