

# May 2024 "Flyer"

## Cheyenne - High Plains Audubon Society

Chartered by the National Audubon Society since 1974

Serving southeastern Wyoming Audubon members

**Mission Statement:** *The Cheyenne-High Plains Audubon Society promotes the conservation and appreciation of birds and wildlife through education, science, advocacy, and habitat stewardship in Southeast Wyoming.*

**Vision Statement:** *The Cheyenne-High Plains Audubon Society envisions a community where birds, wildlife, and their habitats are valued, protected, and enjoyed by the general public.*

### Officers and Committee Chairs 2023-2024

Grant Frost, President

Dennis Saville, Vice president

Lorie Chesnut, Secretary

Chuck Seniawski, Treasurer

Pete Arnold, Audubon Rockies Board

Jack Palma, Audubon Rockies Board

**Conservation, Open**

Kim Parfitt, Education,

Donna Kassel, Historian

Grant Frost, Field Trips, Bird Compiler

Mark Gorges, Newsletter, Habitat Hero

Vicki Herren, Important Bird Areas

Kirk Miller, Social Media,

Barb Gorges, Programs, Publicity

Lorie Chesnut, Website

**Advocacy, open**

Wanda Manley, Past president

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**The CHPAS Flyer** is published online monthly. Submissions are welcome. The current issue is available online at [www.CheyenneAudubon.org](http://www.CheyenneAudubon.org).

**Contact Us** at [cheyenneaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:cheyenneaudubon@gmail.com)

**Join our Facebook Group**, Cheyenne-High Plains Audubon Society Group

**Please become a CHPAS member**

Send \$12 plus any optional donation and your name, email address and mailing address to Cheyenne-High Plains Audubon Society, P.O. Box 2502, Cheyenne, WY 82003.

All chapter memberships expire Sept. 1. Any membership dues sent in after May 1 will pertain to the remainder of the current membership year and the following year.

**Join the National Audubon Society**

Send \$20 to Cheyenne - High Plains Audubon Society to join the National Audubon Society and you will receive NAS membership and NAS will return the \$20 to CHPAS.

**"Wyoming Bird" chat group**

Subscribe, post and/or read about interesting sightings on this Facebook public group site:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/403337446664409/>

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## Calendar

### May 5, 10 a.m. till Noon – Greenway Cleanup

Cheyenne Audubon is hosting a Greenway cleanup event, Sunday, May 5th. The public is invited to help. The starting location is the parking lot adjacent to the intersection of Van Buren Avenue and Laramie Street (just north of East Lincolnway and east of its intersection with Pershing Blvd.). Work will proceed to the north along Dry Creek.

Trash bags and light-weight gloves will be provided. Participants should wear sturdy footwear (preferably waterproof) and heavy gloves and bring rakes and hoes, if available, for fishing trash out of the creek.

## **May 11, Cheyenne-High Plains Audubon Society 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

**Two Field Trips** – The field trips are free and open to the public.

**8:00 a.m. Thick-billed & Chestnut-collared Longspurs trip** - We will meet at the Pilot Truck Stop in the front parking lot (off I-80 Exit 367, also known as the WHR exit, 8020 Campstool Road) for departure at 8:00 a.m. sharp. It will be about a 20-minute drive to a site north of Hillsdale. Carpooling may be available.

We will see dozens of Thick-billed Longspur aerial displays up close, and we should see some beautiful Chestnut-collared Longspurs as well as some other prairie birds. We should be back in town by 11 a.m.

If you are interested in going, contact Grant Frost, 307-343-2024, so that he has a list of those expected, and can let you know if the plans change for any reason.

### **12:00 noon Wyoming Hereford Ranch – Spring Migrants**

1114 Hereford Ranch Rd, Cheyenne, WY 82007. We will meet in the driveway by the office and walk and bird from there. A variety of spring migrants have already been arriving since late April. There is no telling what surprise species we may see.

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## **May 11, Cheyenne-High Plains Audubon Society 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner**

**5:00 to 8:30 p.m. – Dinner, Laramie County Community College,** CCI Rooms 129/130. Doors open at 5:00 p.m. with dinner at 6.

Land and Sea dinner with vegetarian option, guest speaker Chris Madson, silent auction, and two donated door prizes (a pair of Maven binoculars and a guided day tour of Rocky Mountain National Park). Everyone attending will get two door prize tickets.

**Tickets – Deadline to register is May 5. Dinner tickets on sale at TicketLeap for \$38 each (includes all fees, etc.) Go to:**

**<https://www.ticketleap.events/tickets/cheyenne50th/cheyenne-high-plains-audubon-society-50th-anniversary-dinner>**

**Limited seating. Tickets must be purchased by midnight May 5<sup>th</sup> to allow for adequate food preparation. No tickets sold at the door.**

**Dinner** - Pan Seared Top Sirloin with Herb Butter Sauce, Honey Lime Salmon with a Mango Pineapple Salsa, and Couscous Primavera Stuffed Acorn Squash with Parmesan Cheese (Vegetarian). Comes with a Spring Mix Salad with Ranch and Italian Dressing, Grilled Caribbean Vegetable Kabobs, Roasted Rooted Vegetables, Freshly Baked Dinner Rolls and Butter, Coffee, Hot and Iced Teas. Key lime Pie and Coconut Cream Pie Shooters for Dessert.

**Speaker - Chris Madson** is the retired, long-time, award-winning editor of Wyoming Wildlife magazine. His talk, "**From the Grass Up**," will take a look at several of the folks who were important in the early Audubon Society, maybe George Bird Grinnell, T. Gilbert Pearson, and Frank Bond, folks that got Audubon started by sheer force of will.

**Silent Auction** – Cash or check only.

At the dinner we will have a running tableau of photos of birds, chapter events and outings.

### Our Door Prizes

One of the two major door prizes at the chapter's 50th anniversary banquet is a pair of binoculars donated by Maven, Model C.1, 8x42. See [Mavenbuilt.com](http://Mavenbuilt.com) for all the particulars.

Maven, a Lander-based company, uses Japanese optics assembled in the U.S. and inspected by the Lander staff.

Because their binoculars and scopes are not for sale via retail outlets, there is no retailer markup, so you get more for your money. They have a generous mail order trial period.

Read about their early days in Barb Gorges's column from 2015, "Maven builds binoculars" at [www.CheyenneBirdBanter.wordpress.com](http://www.CheyenneBirdBanter.wordpress.com).



The other major door prize is donated by Birding Man Adventures. Contact them at (860) 456-3224 or [ryan@gobirdingman.com](mailto:ryan@gobirdingman.com)

Enjoy a naturalist-guided hike and experience the ecology and natural history of Rocky Mountain National Park. We'll look for mountain specialty birds like Brown-capped Rosy Finch, White-tailed Ptarmigan, Clark's Nutcracker, American three-toed Woodpecker, Dusky Grouse, Mountain Chickadee, Pygmy Nuthatch, Red Crossbill, Cassin's Finch, Steller's Jay, and Canada Jay. We'll also adequately explore montane habitats where we'll look for Williamson's and Red-naped Sapsucker, Mountain Bluebird, Green-tailed Towhee, Virginia's and MacGillivray's Warbler, and Western Tanager, among others. And of course, we can't forget about the charismatic mammals we could see along the way. Opportunities for spotting mule deer, elk, moose, bighorn sheep, yellow-bellied marmot, and American Pika abound. Get out of the city for the day and revel in the pristine montane beauty of Rocky Mountain National Park.

### **May 18, 6:30 a.m. – Annual Cheyenne Big Day Bird Count**

Starting at Lions Park, we will cover birding hot spots throughout the Cheyenne area. **If you want to join us later than 6:30 a.m., please call Grant, 307-343-2024, to get a location update throughout the morning.** We also encourage people to report all bird sightings during the 24-hour period beginning at midnight on the free app at [eBird.org](http://eBird.org). The middle of May is the high point of the spring migration of birds to their nesting areas from their winter homes.

We will leave from the Lions Park parking lot between the Children's Village at the Cheyenne Botanic Gardens and the picnic shelter to hike around the park for about an hour or two. We will then head to the Wyoming Hereford Ranch. At about lunch time we will head out to the Agricultural Research Station and the Arboretum west of the Air Force Base.

Bring a lunch or pick one up on the way; bring water and dress for variable weather. Everyone, no matter what your birding skills, is invited. Bring binoculars if you have them. The more eyes we have, the more birds we will see. We may finish the

planned routes by 3 p.m. However, you may join us for as long as you wish and leave when you need to.

**We will have a Tally Party at Perkins Restaurant on Del Range Blvd. on Sunday, May 19 at 5 p.m.** Come and you can add the species that you saw on Saturday to our list of birds found in Cheyenne on the Big Day Bird Count. If you plan to join us for dinner, please contact Lorie Chesnut at [cheyenneaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:cheyenneaudubon@gmail.com) by Saturday evening, May 18<sup>th</sup>, so that she can make a reservation at Perkins for the correct number of people.

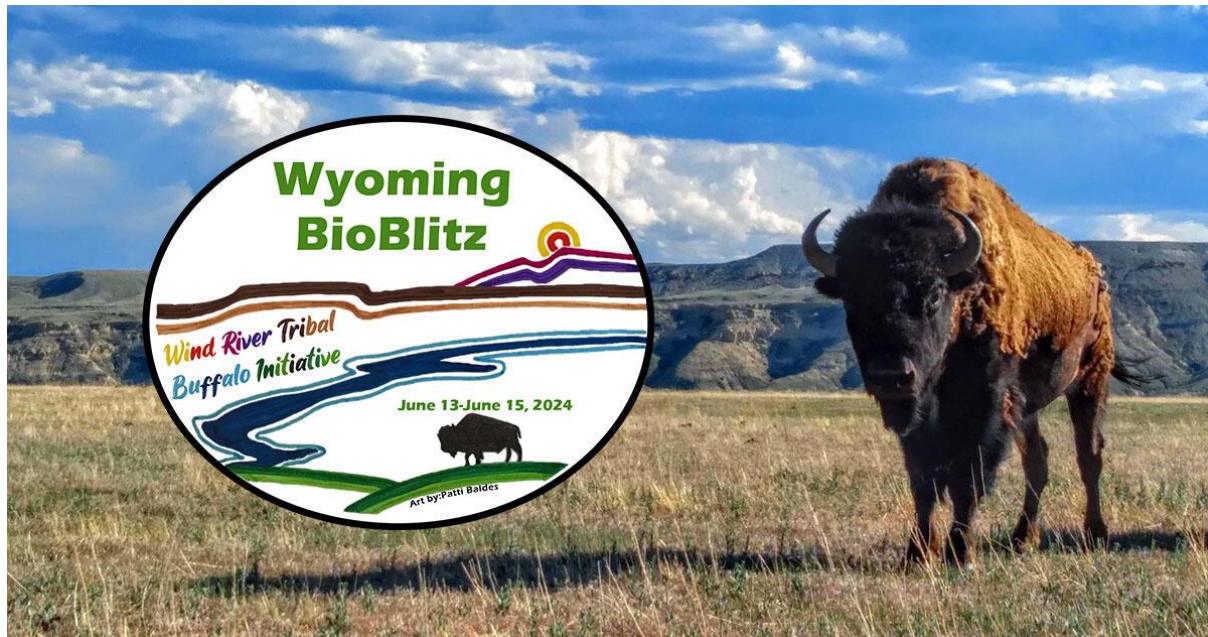
### **May 24, 7:00 a.m. – Country Club Bird Survey**

Contact Chuck Seniawski to be on his email notice list: 307-638-6519 or [chuckski@aol.com](mailto:chuckski@aol.com). The count will start in the Country Club's clubhouse's main parking lot. These counts are free and open to everyone, but please let Chuck know you are coming.

### **May 28, 6:30 p.m. Board Meeting:**

Contact us, [cheyenneaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:cheyenneaudubon@gmail.com), if you would like to attend and participate in helping to plan chapter activities. This meeting will be held at the Laramie County Conservation District office, 1923 Whitney Rd., Cheyenne.

### **June 13–June 15 – Wind River BioBlitz 2024**



Take part in the annual community science weekend extravaganza on Thursday, June 13, 2024 - Saturday, June 15, 2024, 1:00pm - 1:00pm Kinnear, Wyoming. Join Audubon Rockies at the Wind River Reservation!

The Wind River BioBlitz is a one-of-a-kind opportunity for families and friends, students, and all nature lovers to learn about plants and wildlife and help scientists survey them.



During this weekend-long event, participants will team up with biologists to search for and document as many plants and animals as possible on Wind River Tribal Buffalo Initiative Land on the Wind River Reservation near Kinnear, Wyoming. See the full event details at: [Wind River BioBlitz | Audubon Rockies](#)

For questions, please contact [jacelyn.downey@audubon.org](mailto:jacelyn.downey@audubon.org).

**Cost: Free**

**May 24 is the final day to register. Go to:** <https://rockies.audubon.org/events/wind-river-bioblitz-2024> for all the information about this adventure.

## July 19-July22 – Wyoming Statewide BioBlitz 2024

Contribute to conservation science from anywhere in Wyoming! Friday, July 19, 2024 - Monday, July 22, 2024, 12:00am - 12:00am **Online Event**. Or go to: <https://rockies.audubon.org/events/wyoming-statewide-bioblitz-2024> for all the information about this event.

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## Chapter News

### Chapter President's message



*Mountain Plover,  
drawn by Michelle  
LaGory*

If you're like me, this is an exciting time of year. Wyoming is waking up from another winter, green is everywhere with the bulbs already blossoming, golfers are coming out of hibernation, and sunburns alternate with frostbite on alternate days.

And, of course, all those wonderful birds are showing up from further south.

Last Tuesday we held a board meeting. After we were done, Kim was almost giddy to announce that she had seen a Hooded Warbler at the Hereford Ranch. It was also on eBird, but it was fun to see her excitement. A bird that would be more at home in the south or east coast, for whatever reason a beautiful male is here. It set off a flurry of visits by a number of people to see it. As of April 26th it was still there.

I told a friend of mine at work about it. He is a really good photographer, but just getting into bird ID. He went and got pictures, and also took pictures of other birds that were around. Afterwards he asked me what they were, and I couldn't believe he had pictures of two more rarities for here, a Summer Tanager and a Cassin's Vireo.



*Hooded Warbler by Grant Frost*

And so it will be, the birds come and go, and we will go looking for them. The surprises are great, but even the usual ones are well worth getting out for.

One last thing, although the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration is still two weeks away, you need to buy your tickets by May 5. This chapter has a wonderful history, we're doing great things now, and planning the future. It's well worth celebrating, and it would be great to see you there.

Grant  
CHPAS President

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# Education and Conservation

## Education Chair Activities

Our education Committee and volunteers will again be at the Wyoming State Museum, 2301 Central Ave, Cheyenne, on Saturday, May 4th, at 10 a.m. for their "Family Day: Home on the Range" celebration.

They will have a hopscotch cloth created by Nan Gile, a burrowing owl habitat corn hole game created by Kim Stevens and Becky O'Leary and a 14-foot-long bird wingspan display recently purchased by the chapter. Kids will be able to participate in those three activities.

## May 14th 5:30-6 PM - Birding Backpack Spring Kick-Off!

Explore how to use Laramie County Library's latest resource to get to know our Wyoming birds! Volunteers from the Cheyenne - High Plains Audubon Society will help you learn how to use binoculars, field guides, and smartphone birding apps to discover our feathered friends and their habitats.

Other resources like birding checklists, field trips, and classes you can check out throughout the year will also be part of the kick-off. Most activities will be geared to those 10 years and up. Birding Backpacks can be checked out by adult library patrons when available.

Similar programs will also be offered at the Pine Bluffs library June 18th at 5:30 pm and the Burns library June 20th at 4 pm.

Wy Maker LLC (in the mall at Compass Rose) did the engraving on our binoculars for the birding backpacks.

### More ideas

Kim has a list of ideas for kids' programs for the coming year. What we need are volunteers to work with Kim on these projects.

**If you are interested in joining Kim on a project, or you have some ideas of your own, contact the chapter at: [cheyenneaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:cheyenneaudubon@gmail.com). Kim will get in touch with you.**

## Chapter Grants

The second year of a grant for bluebird nest boxes resulted in eight additional boxes being installed along the road at the High Plains Arboretum. All 16 boxes are ready for nesting birds.

We will have an updated nest box monitoring protocol this year. If you are interested in helping with the Nest Watch monitoring, please send an email to [cheyenneaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:cheyenneaudubon@gmail.com). We will contact you about scheduling.

For information on our chapter education and conservation grants, see our chapter website at: [www.cheyenneaudubon.org](http://www.cheyenneaudubon.org).



# Habitat Hero



## Habitat Hero Garden at the Cheyenne Botanic Gardens

### update

The Cheyenne Habitat Hero Committee recently met with Cheyenne Councilman Mark Rinne who is looking at revising city code for commercial and residential landscaping requirements. We thought the committee might help by reviewing landscaping requirements for other Front Range communities. If your community encourages waterwise, pollinator-friendly and climate adapted landscapes, please send me a summary and/or website to share with the

committee.

We'd like to thank the volunteers who helped tidy the Habitat Hero Demonstration Garden at the Cheyenne Botanic Gardens last week along with Mark and me: Marie Madison, Nancy Johnson, Lorie Chesnut and Jack Palma.



Before Clipping

After Clipping

With the rains we have had since then the garden is much greener.

*Photos by Mark Gorges*

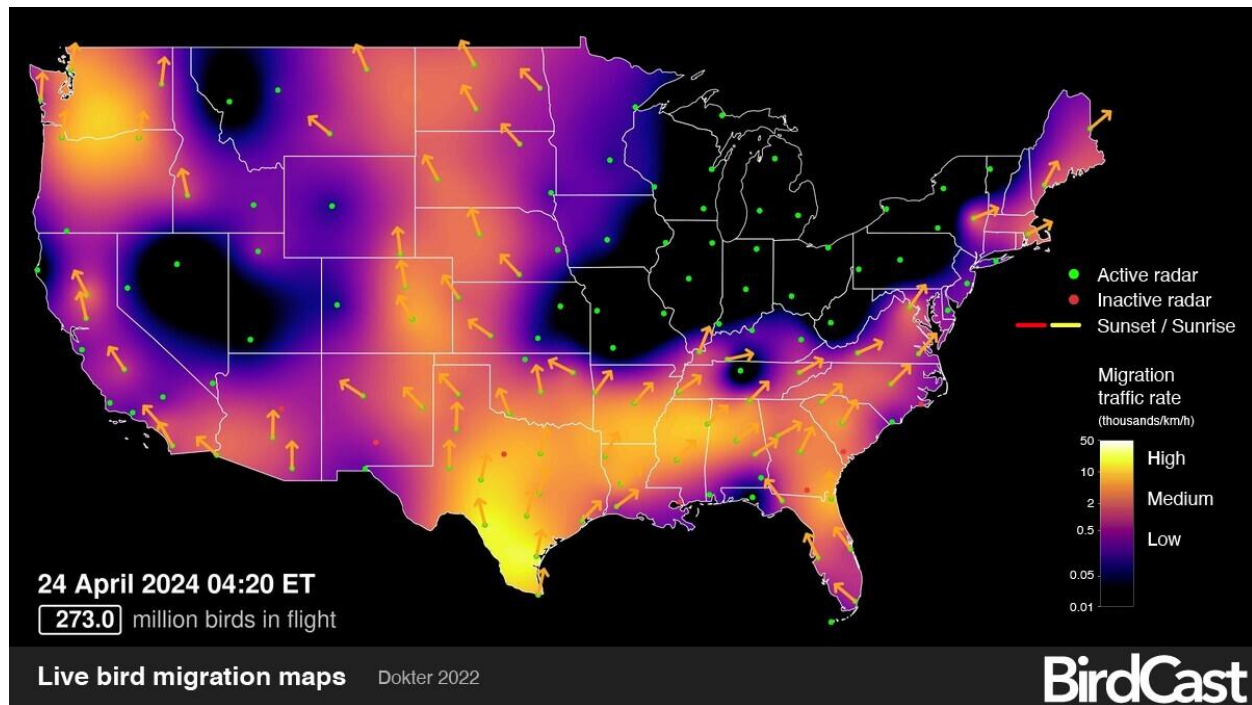


## Bird News

### Birdcast

It's that time of year again. You can follow daily bird migration patterns like this screen shot of migration on the night of April 24<sup>th</sup>. That night there was a very good migration into Southeastern Wyoming.





To see these daily, live displays, go to:  
<https://birdcast.info/migration-tools/live-migration-maps/>

### Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Bill Signed into Law

On Wednesday, April 24, 2024, [President Biden signed into law the Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Enhancements Act](#) (H.R.4389). This bill reauthorizes the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA), a successful federal grants program funding migratory bird research and habitat restoration throughout the Western Hemisphere.

The NMBCA provides a lifeline for bird conservation, encouraging habitat protection, education, research, monitoring, and other work to provide for the long-term protection of neotropical migratory birds. Advances in conservation for many declining species, such as the Cerulean, Canada, and Golden-winged Warblers, owe a great deal to the NMBCA.

### News from Audubon Rockies

Check out the Audubon Rockies blog page for up-to-date news on conservation issues in our part of the West, including updated information Audubon Rockies' activities.

Go to: <https://rockies.audubon.org/blog>.

### April 26 – Country Club Survey Results

6:52 AM - 8:53 AM

Protocol: Traveling

3.11 mile(s)

Checklist Comments: Largely overcast with wind, temp about 50 degrees. Challenging bird-watching conditions. Grant Frost, Bill Gerhart, Mark Gorges, Chuck Seniawski and Kurt Warmbier.

26 species

Cackling Goose 1 A surprise, but see photos where it contrasts with an accompanying Canada Goose. Stubbier bill, noticeably smaller size.

Canada Goose 8

Blue-winged Teal 2

Gadwall 20



Mallard 8  
 Ring-necked Duck 2  
 Pied-billed Grebe 2  
 Mourning Dove 6  
 Killdeer 1  
 California Gull 13  
 Cooper's Hawk 3  
 Red-tailed Hawk 2  
 Downy Woodpecker 2  
 Hairy Woodpecker 1  
 Northern Flicker 12  
 Black-billed Magpie 7  
 American Crow 18  
 Red-breasted Nuthatch 1  
 European Starling 4  
 American Robin 8  
 House Sparrow 2  
 House Finch 1  
 Chipping Sparrow 1  
 Red-winged Blackbird 15  
 Brown-headed Cowbird 1  
 Yellow-rumped Warbler 4

View this checklist online  
 at <https://ebird.org/checklist/S170379706>



**April27 – Field Trip: Sage Grouse Lek** – Canceled due to rain and snow.

## **Cheyenne – High Plains Audubon Society celebrates 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary May 11**

By Barb Gorges

This year, Cheyenne – High Plains Audubon Society (Cheyenne Audubon for short) celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Mark, my husband, and I have been lucky to be a part of its history for the last 35 years.

There was a bird club in Cheyenne long before the National Audubon Society granted the chapter charter in 1974. May Hanesworth was compiling Christmas Bird Counts as early as the 1950s when the Audubon presence was the statewide Wyoming Audubon chapter headquartered in Casper.

May, in her late eighties, was still compiling bird count results when Mark and I joined about 1989-90. She asked me to type up her handwritten lists and submit them to the Wyoming Tribune Eagle, which I still do.

At the 1989-90 Christmas Bird Count tally party, held in May's apartment, and the following spring, we met other longtime chapter members including John Cornelison—first chapter president, George and Yoshi Cardon, Jane and Bob Dorn, Beth Easton, Bill Edwards, Jodi Gostas, Carol and Jim Hecker, Fred Lebsack, J.O. and Lou Reed, Nola Shafer, Nels Sostrum and Virginia Wheeler.

In one of those small world moments, 10 years ago Mark and I met Merrill Jensen, a founding member of Cheyenne Audubon. At the time we met him, he was the director of the Jensen-Olson (no relation) Arboretum on the beach outside Juneau, Alaska. We'd just discovered that he had graduated from Cheyenne East High School in 1974 when he identified a Harlequin duck flying by and mentioned he'd recently finished four years on the local Audubon chapter board.

I asked if he'd been active with the Cheyenne birdwatchers and yes, he had, starting as a child attending meetings at May's house up until he left Cheyenne after high school. Later, I discovered he was in a photo in an old news clipping.

For 50 years, Cheyenne Audubon has not missed a Christmas Bird Count or a Big Day spring bird count (join us this year May 18, details at <https://cheyenneaudubon.org/>).

For at least the last 35 years, we've brought in guest speakers for free lectures open to the public on a variety of bird and wildlife related topics, from science and advocacy to birdwatching travelogues.

We organized monthly field trips mostly around Cheyenne and southeastern Wyoming.

We sponsor the Audubon award for the school district science fair, partner with the state museum's Family Days and Laramie County Library's education programs.

We have a grant program that is funding bluebird nest boxes and that teachers use to get bird study in the classroom.

We've offered beginning birdwatching classes through Laramie County Community College and the Cheyenne Botanic Gardens.

We advocate for birds, such as becoming an interested party for the Roundhouse wind farm on the city's Belvoir Ranch.

We clean up trash on a portion of the Cheyenne Greenway and have plans for a bird blind memorializing our founding chapter president at Kiwanis Park.

We've put on 10 Habitat Hero workshops in partnership with Master Gardeners and other volunteers, and curate a demonstration garden at the Cheyenne Botanic Gardens.

We sponsor two Wyoming Important Bird Areas, Lions Park and Wyoming Hereford Ranch.

We work with the Laramie County Conservation District on their native plant program and habitat projects.

Sometimes, we just sit back and talk about the birds we are seeing as another spring migration gets underway.

And we think about how we can share our love and concern for birds with more people.

Barb Gorges is the author of "Cheyenne Birds by the Month," [www.YuccaRoadPress.com](http://www.YuccaRoadPress.com). Her previous columns are at <http://cheyennebirdbanter.wordpress.com>. Contact her at [bgorges4@msn.com](mailto:bgorges4@msn.com).



*Cheyenne – High Plains Audubon Society board members in 1974 included (standing, L to R) Vice President Ray Licata, Robert Larson, Bill Edwards and (seated, L to R) President John Cornelison and Treasurer Jean Cooper. Not pictured: Secretary Channing Corbin, Vernon Safford, Field Trip Chair Florence Spring and Bird Count Chair May Hanesworth.*

Cheyenne – High Plains Audubon Society P. O. Box 2502, Cheyenne, WY 82003

