



Cheyenne-High Plains
Audubon Society

April 2026 "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 2025-2026

Lorie Chesnut, President

Grant Frost, Vice president

Kirk Miller, Secretary

Chuck Seniawski, Treasurer

Kurt Warmbier, Conservation

Sarah Grace Delgado, Education

Historian, Open

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

Pete Arnold, Audubon Rockies Board

The CHPAS Flyer is published online monthly. Submissions are welcome. The current issue is available online at www.CheyenneAudubon.org.

Contact Us at 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/>

Calendar

April 18, 6:30 a.m. - Field Trip: Sage Grouse Lek Viewing

Game and Fish headquarters, 5400 Bishop Boulevard, Cheyenne.

(Use the parking lot on the east side of the building).

We will leave the Game & Fish Headquarters at 6:30 a.m. and drive about 40 miles to the lek in Roger Canyon. Carpooling should be



Greater Sage Grouse: Photo by Pete Arnold

available but check with Grant (see below) if you will need a ride.

Our field trips are free and open to the public. Anyone interested in birds is welcome.

We expect to be back in Cheyenne by 1:00 p.m. Be sure to bring water, some snacks for yourself and dress for changing weather.

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

April 21, 4:30 p.m. - No-host dinner with the speaker

L'Osteria Mondello, 1507 Stillwater Ave, Cheyenne.

Please let Barb Gorges know if you are planning to join us for dinner so that we can reserve enough room at the restaurant. Text or email Barb at 307-287-4952 or bgorges4@msn.com.

April 21, 6:00 p.m. – Cheyenne Audubon program – Armchair birding in southern Peru with Vicki Herren

Trout Room at the Game and Fish headquarters, 5400 Bishop Boulevard, Cheyenne. Use the parking lot and door on the east side of the building and come in the door there.

Cheyenne Audubon invites the public for a free talk by Vicki Herren, “Armchair birding in Southern Peru.” The talk will be April 21, 6 p.m., in the Trout Room at the Wyoming Game and Fish Department headquarters, 5400 Bishop Boulevard.

Bird the Amazon lowlands at Manu National Park and the Andes mountains to Abra Malaga Pass at 14,100 feet without even leaving your chair. See birding lodging, birding areas and some of the 367 bird species that Vicki saw last November.

Vicki's first international birding trip in 1993 was to Costa Rica followed by trips to Mexico (Yucatan, Puerto Vallarta, Oaxaca), Galápagos Islands, northern Ecuador, Cuba, southern Peru and most recently Dominican Republic. No matter where Vicki is, she is learning about birds, planning birding trips, and going out birding!



Vicki in Peru: Selfie

April 24, 7:00 a.m. – Country Club Bird Survey

Contact Vicki Herren to be on the email notice list: 307-256-2043 or Vickiblue@hotmail.com. The count will start in the Country Club's clubhouse's main parking lot. These outings are free and open to everyone, but please let Vicki know you are coming.

April 28, 6:00 p.m. - Monthly Board Meeting

Contact us, cheyenneaudubon@gmail.com, if you would like to attend and participate in helping to plan chapter activities, or if you are interested in volunteering in some of our activities. This meeting will be held at the Laramie County Library in the Sage Room.

AARP and Audubon bring virtual birdwatching series to Wyoming

“For the Birds: From Backyard to Binoculars”, an AARP Wyoming-sponsored virtual series in partnership with the Audubon of the Rockies, helps you spot, identify and track birds of the West by using simple observation skills, digital birding tools and migration insights.

Each session builds confidence without jargon or pressure — perfect for beginners and curious watchers alike.

The series is free, and there is no need to be an AARP member or over age 50 to participate. To register for the event, use your aarp.org account, or visit events.aarp.org/event/forthebirds/. You will receive an email with the Zoom link before the session.

The sessions are led by Zach Hutchinson, community science coordinator for Audubon Rockies, who brings deep knowledge of bird identification, migration behavior and modern birding tools — especially digital resources that make bird watching easier and more accurate than ever.

The sessions all run from 10-11:30 a.m. MDT and include:

April 3 — An introduction to birdwatching

April 10 — Identification session

April 17 — Tools of the trade and digital birding

April 24 — Where to look for birds in Wyoming and the West

Explore other Wyoming events and visit AARP Wyoming on Demand to view recordings of any classes.

Chapter News

Chapter President’s message

Dear Members and Friends,

This letter will focus on chapter volunteer activities. As our chapter grows and becomes more active in community science and conservation projects, we need you, our members and friends, more than ever.

In the next few months, we will have a multitude of activities that require volunteer support. We will have our annual Dry Creek Cleanup event (Sunday morning, May 17th) for those with limited time to give. We also have periodic bird survey activities and data collection opportunities (training provided). Note that most of our outdoor activities require the ability to walk 1-2 miles on uneven ground and to work independently at times.

Are you a wildlife specialist, enthusiast, or teacher? We always need speakers for programs throughout our three-county (Goshen, Laramie, and Platte) area.

Love working with kids? We love to work with educators for our programs with the Wyoming State Museum and local libraries.

Do you enjoy gardening and native plants? Our projects at Lions Park and Wyoming Hereford Ranch can always use volunteer help.

Okay – so now you understand what we need, but how do you get involved? Contact me at cheyenneaudubon@gmail.com and I’ll will get back to you to chat more about our offerings and how you can help.

Help us to achieve our mission – to promote the conservation and appreciation of birds and wildlife through education, science, advocacy, and habitat stewardship in southeast Wyoming. And as always, thank you for your support!
Lorie Wayne Chesnut, President

Other Chapter Activities:



Wyoming Game and Fish Department senior wildlife biologist (and CHPAS field trip chair) Grant Frost gave a talk titled “The Lives of Sandhill Cranes” for about 40 people at the Goshen County Public Library in Torrington prior to the evening field trip March 28 to watch the cranes come in to roost for the night.

Lions Park Pollinator Patch - Cheyenne Birds and Pollinators Need Your Help!

- Are you planning to thin out the plants in your garden next May?
- Do you enjoy gardening?
- Would you volunteer to help us water these plants this summer at Lions Park?

The Cheyenne-High Plains Audubon Society (CHPAS) needs about 45 plants to create a Pollinator Patch surrounding the new “Place for Pollinators” interpretive sign. We want to create a small “meadow” where none currently exists.

We hope to expand this area in future years, bringing more color and plant diversity to the park.

CHPAS and the City of Cheyenne Parks and Recreation staff have identified 18 species for this area that will bloom throughout the growing season and provide foraging opportunities for a wide variety of pollinators and birds.



The site in the park

Next time you are in Lions Park, check out the new sign and the future Pollinator Patch semi-circle around it. We need 2 or 3 plants of each of these 18 species for the Lions Park Pollinator Patch. For a listing of plants go to: https://cheyenneaudubon.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/pollinator-patch-species_lions-park.pdf

We also need help watering these new plants until they are established. We will water at least twice weekly, depending on rainfall. We are planning a planting day on June 6; more information on that in May.

Please let us know if you would like to help us with our Pollinator Patch by contacting CHPAS by email at cheyenneaudubon@gmail.com.

The birds, bees, and bugs thank you!

Volunteer with the chapter

CHPAS welcomes anyone who cares about birds and their environments to join us in volunteer activities; we have many ongoing projects. Just email us at cheyenneaudubon@gmail.com and let us know of your interest.

Calling All Volunteers!

As our Audubon chapter grows, we are dependent on volunteer support more than ever. We have a project to fit your schedule, whether your time is limited or whether you have a skill to share with us for a longer term.

This is YOUR Audubon chapter. We need teachers, board members, bird surveyors, speakers, and conservation advocates. Help us as we bring the joy of birding to people of all ages and backgrounds. Contact us at cheyenneaudubon@gmail.com and let us know about your interests! Thank you.

Education and Conservation

Educational Events in April:

April 24th, Friday, 10:00 a.m. – Noon, Goshen County Library, 2001 E A St, Torrington, WY 82240: "Adventure Pack and Bird Craft Time".

April 25th, Saturday, 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m., Guernsey Public Library, 108 S Wyoming Ave, Guernsey, WY 82214, "Adventure Pack and Bird Craft Time".

Chapter Grants

For information on our chapter education and conservation grants, see our chapter website at: www.cheyenneaudubon.org.

Habitat Hero



Join Audubon Rockies on Wednesday, April 8th, from 12 – 1 pm (MST) to learn how to [Attract The Birds You Want with Native Plants!](#)

Registration: <https://www.mobilize.us/audubon-rockies/event/926586/>.

Bird and Conservation News

News from Audubon Rockies

Check out the Audubon Rockies News for up-to-date information on conservation issues in our part of the West.

For the latest update go to: <https://www.audubon.org/rockies/news>

Wyoming BioBlitz, June 26-28 in beautiful Bridger-Teton National Forest. For information on what is a BioBlitz, go to: <https://www.audubon.org/rockies/get-involved/wyoming-bioblitz>. And if

you've never joined us, please make time this summer – a great opportunity to explore nature and biodiversity! **Do you know a WY teacher?** ... pass this along to them as they can earn 2 Professional Standards Teaching Board (PTSB) credits! Registration will open on May 10.

Regionwide Virtual BioBlitz, July 17-20. More info coming soon for the outdoorsy and curious around CO, UT, and WY!

Detailed information next month.

Save Sibley Prairie, the last largest tallgrass prairie remnant in Michigan.

Even a few dollars would make a difference in our effort to showcase this prairie grassroots effort with 50 states of support. Over the past 50 years, grassland bird populations - like those found in Sibley Prairie - have declined by 43%, more than any other group of birds in North America.

Philanthropic investments will preserve this imperiled property with nearly 200 species of native plants that birds and the insects they eat depend on at the confluence of two of the four main migratory bird routes in North America. Go to: <https://savesibleyprairie.org/>

The Great Backyard Bird Count, February 13-16 - Report

People were out in every corner of the world watching, listening, photographing, recording, and enjoying birds.

Here is a quick snapshot of results:

- **8,257** species of birds identified
- **216** countries or eBird subregions
- **467,696** eBird checklists
- **1,239,329** Saved Merlin Bird IDs (step-by-step, sound, or photo)
- **246,225** photos, videos, and sounds added to Macaulay Library
- **1,146,284** estimated global participants
- **435** reported community events

The United States had the most checklists with **253,053**, identifying **696** species which is **26 more** than in 2025. Merlin submissions soared to **over a million**

To see all the results, including graphs, maps and tons of photos, go to: <https://www.birdcount.org/2026-final-results/>.

March 27 – Cheyenne Country Club Survey Results

7:47 AM - 9:46 AM

Protocol: Traveling

2.981 kilometer(s)

Checklist Comments: Overcast. 33 degrees. Light breeze

22 species (+1 other taxa)

Canada Goose 47

Gadwall 1

American Wigeon 4

Mallard 3

Common Goldeneye 2

Eurasian Collared-Dove 8

Killdeer 2

gull sp. 8
Turkey Vulture 1
Red-tailed Hawk 1
Downy Woodpecker 3 Two Female and 1 male
Northern Flicker 14
Black-billed Magpie 13
American Crow 14
Mountain Chickadee 2
White-breasted Nuthatch 2
Red-breasted Nuthatch 3
European Starling 7
American Robin 12
House Finch 6
Dark-eyed Junco 17
Song Sparrow 3
Red-winged Blackbird 69

28 March – Field Trip: Table Mountain WHMA, Sandhill Cranes

5:25 PM - 7:57 PM

Protocol: Traveling

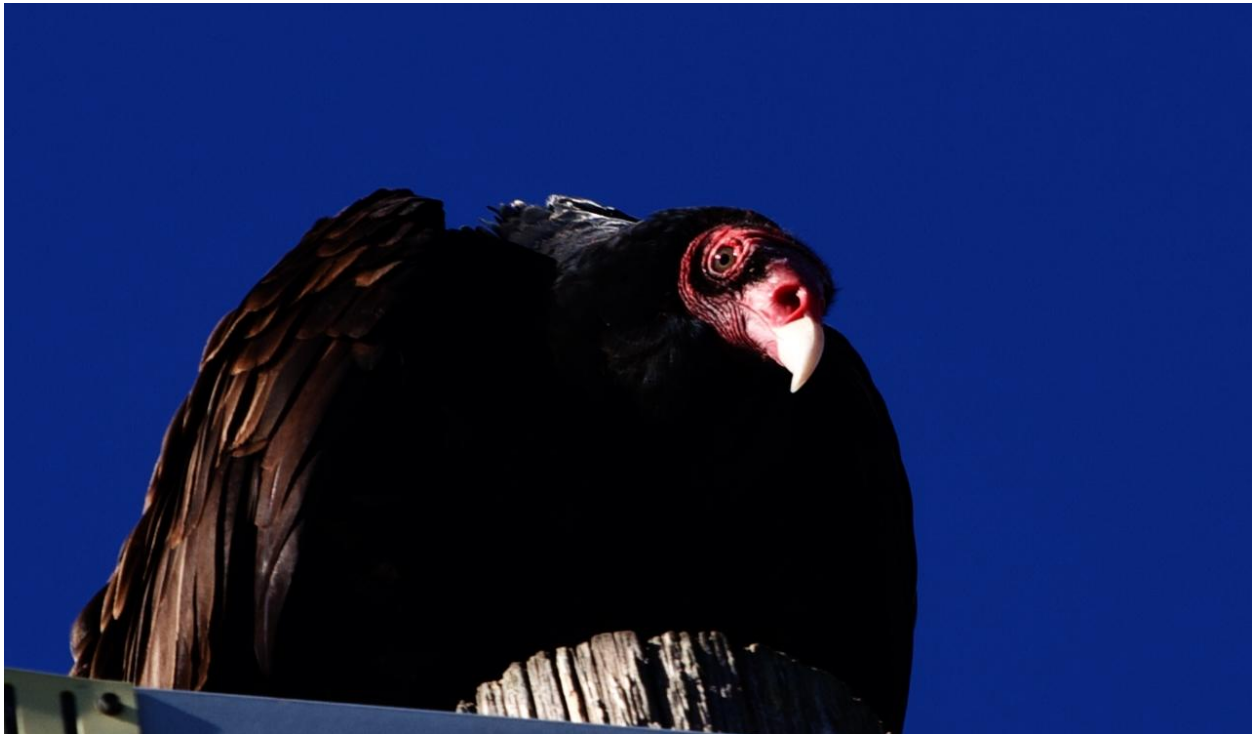
12 species



Cranes on the field trip; they waited till the last few minutes before dark to come to roost. Photo by Grant Frost

Canada Goose 4

Blue-winged Teal 4
Mallard 4
Green-winged Teal 6
Wild Turkey 2
Ring-necked Pheasant 5
Mourning Dove 1
Sandhill Crane 22600 estimate
Killdeer 3
Common Raven 1 heard and observed in flight with fanned rail.
Western Meadowlark 5
Red-winged Blackbird 22



Vulture Watch Wyoming is a community science project coordinated by the University of Wyoming Biodiversity Institute to learn more about the state's turkey vultures. A simple, online training video allows anyone interested to contribute vulture sightings to the study. Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Womack.

There's more to find out about Wyoming vultures

By Barb Gorges

Turkey vultures creep out some people, however others who have worked closely with them say they are personable, intelligent and good parents. Sounds like a bird species we need to get to know better.

Here in Cheyenne, we have a turkey vulture fan club, as illustrated by the packed room for the lecture last month given by Dr. Elizabeth Wommack for the Cheyenne-High Plains Audubon Society. She went into detail on vulture biology before training us to contribute to a community science project, Vulture Watch Wyoming.

Wommack, staff curator for the University of Wyoming's Vertebrate Museum, explained turkey vultures, hereafter referred to as TVs, are in the same New World vulture genus as black

vultures (more of a southeastern U.S. species) and California condors. But, she said, they are not closely related to vultures in the rest of the world.

While TVs are considered raptors, along with hawks, eagles and falcons, they are not birds of prey—they wait for their food to die first. And even then, they let it ripen a bit if there are no other predators around to “open the package.”

Surprisingly, a story in the March 2026 issue of Smithsonian magazine, “Paw Patrol,” about guardian dogs guarding sheep and goats stated, “Black vultures carry away kid goats.” I asked Wommack about that. She said TVs are unlikely to kill even newborn lambs and kids since they lack a ripping kind of bill and their feet are too weak to carry animals of that size. Perhaps Texans need to fund a study to see if their vultures are unusually strong.

What probably grosses people out most about turkey vultures is that they eat dead animals—animals that have begun to be consumed by all sorts of pathogens. But they have a gut microbiome that kills all that—not that I’d want to handle vulture feces bare-handed, but basically, vultures are cleaning up our environment. Plus, their featherless heads and legs are easy for them to keep clean.

TVs have an incredible sense of smell for dead animals—much better than other vultures, including the black vultures who seem to follow them around where their ranges cross. TVs are very good at riding thermals. You can watch a flock spiral up with the warm air before leaving at the top in search of another thermal or food. It’s called kettling.

TVs are a migratory species in Wyoming, showing up as early as March this year. They may roost together, as they like to in large trees in Cheyenne’s Avenues neighborhood. But their nests are hidden away in cavities and crevices, whether natural or manmade. While there are well-known Wyoming roosts like the one on the University of Wyoming campus, nesting spots are not well known.

Wommack’s hope is that Vulture Watch Wyoming, starting its second year of data collection this spring, will figure out where the youngsters are and thus the nests. Her training session for volunteers, like the one she held in Cheyenne, is also available online.

First, volunteers need to be able to identify a soaring raptor as turkey vulture—or not turkey vulture. It’s easy once you know that the undersides of TV wings are silver and black, the silver being along the trailing edge of the wing.

Then, to distinguish adults from juveniles for the few months that they look different, observers need to know that adult TVs have red, featherless heads and the young have black heads. The young also have black beaks while the adults have shiny white beaks.

Out of 5,000 TVs observed around Wyoming last year, only 58 were young. There have to be more young somewhere, Wommack thinks, just to keep the population steady.

Besides TV identification, training also explains how to report data. If this sounds like fun to you—especially if you live near a TV roost, go to the University of Wyoming Biodiversity Institute website, <https://www.wyomingbiodiversity.org/>. Look for the Community Science tab. You’ll see there are other community surveys for moose, salamanders and bumblebees. Watch the Vulture Watch Wyoming video to learn how to participate.

My first TV sighting this year was four of them flying March 25, 9 a.m., at the corner of Carey and 8th avenues. Guess I better enter that data.

Barb Gorges is the author of “Cheyenne Birds by the Month” and “The Best of Cheyenne Bird Banter,” www.YuccaRoadPress.com. Her previous columns are at <http://cheyennebirdbanter.wordpress.com>. Contact her at bgorges4@msn.com.