



October 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 Wayne Chesnut, President	Kurt Warmbier, Conservation	Barb Gorges, Programs & Publicity
Grant Frost, Vice President	Grant Frost, Field Trips & Bird Compiler	Kirk Miller, Social Media
Kirk Miller, Secretary	Mark Gorges, Habitat Hero Garden	Wanda Manley, Habitat Hero Conference
Chuck Seniawski, Treasurer	Vicki Herren, Important Bird Areas	Lorie Wayne Chesnut, Website, Newsletter
		Pete Arnold, At-Large Member

Note: Three (3) positions are currently open: Education, Historian & Advocacy

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

October 3, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. – Creepy Crawly Critter Family Day at the Wyoming State Museum



Sarah Delgado captivates youth at the 2025 Creepy Crawly Critters Event

CHPAS will be teaming up with the Laramie County Conservation District this coming Saturday, October 3rd, at the Wyoming State Museum for their popular "Creepy Crawly Critters" Family Day event.

This year, we will be looking closely at earthworms and also learning about the seed that birds like to eat.

These are free events for the community and very popular with children of all ages. Adults have fun too!

For more information about Family Days at the Wyoming State Museum, check out this link:

<https://wyomuseum.wyo.gov/index.php/family-programs-list/104-family-days>.

October 17, 7:30 a.m. Field trip to the Laramie Plains Lakes



Audubon at Lake Hattie, 2025. Photo by L. Chesnut

Join us for a field trip to the Laramie Plains Lakes where we are likely to see species like the Western and Eared Grebe, Franklin's Gull, and, if we are very lucky, American Avocet and Sandhill Crane.

We will leave Cheyenne from the Children's Village Parking lot (by the picnic shelter) at 7:30 a.m. to arrive in Laramie at 8:30 a.m. *If you are meeting us in Laramie, the rendezvous location is First Street Plaza at 1st Street and Grand Avenue.*

Then, as a group, we will head to the lakes in a driving tour with stops to view waterfowl, raptors, and more.

Carpooling will be available. We will return in early afternoon but if you drive yourself, you can return when you wish. Contact Grant Frost (307-343-2024) if you are interested in joining us, so that we can inform you if something changes. Questions? Email us at cheyenneaudubon@gmail.com.



Egyptian bird god.
Photo by Pete Arnold

October 20, 4:30 p.m. No-host dinner with speaker Pete Arnold

Join our October speaker, Tuesday, October 20 at 4:30 p.m. at 2 Doors Down, 118 E. 17th Street. Please reserve your seat by contacting Barb Gorges, 307-287-4952 or bgorges4@msn.com.

October 20, 6:00 p.m. Birds of the Nile River: Modern birds and ancient deities

Cheyenne Audubon invites the public to a free talk, "Birds of the Nile River: Modern birds and ancient deities," October 20 at 6 p.m. in the Sunflower Room at the Laramie County Library, 2200 Pioneer Ave.

Speaker Pete Arnold and his wife Ruth visited Egypt in March. They took a five-day trip down the Nile River by felucca, a traditional wooden sailboat, observing birds and other wildlife as well as signs of ancient Egyptian avian-related gods and goddesses.

Pete has been an avid amateur photographer for 70 years focusing the last 20 years on digital avian photography. He is a former member of Audubon Rockies Board of Trustees and a long-time member of Cheyenne High Plains Audubon Society.

For more information on this and other Audubon activities, see <https://cheyenneaudubon.org> or write CheyenneAudubon@gmail.com.

October 27, 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.

October 30, 8:00 a.m. - Country Club Bird Survey

Contact Chuck Seniawski to be on his email notice list: 307-638-6519 or 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.

Chapter News

Chapter President's message

I would like to thank all members who have written on behalf of our Important Bird Area at Wyoming Hereford Ranch. The zoning change was denied by Cheyenne City Council but we fully expect that this will be resubmitted in the future; hopefully with more details and opportunities for community input.

Wetlands and riparian areas, native prairie, and woodlands are rapidly being destroyed across the West in the name of economic development. To be clear – we aren't against economic development but we do want sensitive areas respected and protected.

This is why our Board of Directors felt it necessary to weigh in on the HR Land Company Zoning Change request before City Council. Wyoming Hereford Ranch and the Important Bird Area that the Hales family helped us to build is a treasure to our community and to our region. If you haven't read our statement to Council yet, it is posted on our website under the "Action Alert". We also want to thank the HOA neighbors who testified, wrote, and followed this issue. As Councilman Laybourn said during one of the meetings ... "who speaks for the birds"?

Thanks to everyone who renewed their membership in CHPAS and welcome to our new members! It is because of you that we are able to do so much in our community.

Lorie Wayne Chesnut, Chapter President

13th Annual Habitat Hero Conference: Mark Your Calendars!

On Saturday, February 13, 2027 CHPAS will hold our 13th Annual Habitat Hero Conference at Laramie County Community College in the Pathfinder Building. This conference is co-sponsored by the Laramie County Conservation District, a close partner of CHPAS.

Speakers include *Tom Peterson*, Ducks Unlimited; *Katelynn Martinez*, OneCanopy; and *Chrissy Land*, Western Nebraska Community Forester.

The cost will be \$ 35.00 (including lunch) for a full day of information about the prairie environment, wetlands, and how to create spaces for pollinators and other wildlife using native plants on your property. Registration will be available on our website in December.

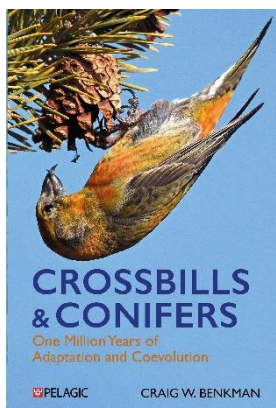
Habitat Hero Gardens

In fall, the Habitat Hero demonstration garden at the Cheyenne Botanic Gardens has a variety of flowers. In front is the aromatic aster, lavender-colored. Behind the asters are purple coneflowers and black-eyed Susans (gold-colored). Accents in front of the asters are pops of red-orange from blanket flowers. The bright yellow mound is a dwarf rabbitbrush. Off to the right in back are the very tall Maximilian sunflowers.



Photo by Barb Gorges

Cassia crossbill subject of new book by UW professor emeritus by Barb Gorges



It took a good eye, a good ear and an inquiring mind to realize that not all individual birds of the red crossbill species were the same. Those attributes belong to Craig Benkman, University of Wyoming professor emeritus, and his numerous graduate students over the years.

Craig's interest began in grad school, and then his studies in the mid-1990s. Eventually, it was agreed that one of those red-colored crossbills is actually a different species.

Nearly 20 years ago, Craig spoke at a Cheyenne – High Plains Audubon Society meeting. At the time, 10 types of the red crossbill species had been identified by call types. Apparently, birds with the same call type shared geographic locations, cutting down on the possibility that birds of two different call types would mate.

Then, with the ability to sort birds by DNA, it became obvious that one of the types was distinctly different. It eventually received species status and its own name, Cassia crossbill, Cassia being the name of one of two counties in southern Idaho where it is found.

So, if you go south of Twin Falls, to either the South Hills or the Albion Mountains, and hang out around lodgepole pine trees, the red-colored crossbills you see will probably be Cassia crossbills and not birds of the red crossbill species.

There are white-winged crossbills in North America, and other kinds of crossbills in northern climates around the world, and even in Viet Nam. They have all developed crossed bills, meaning the upper part of the beak, or mandible, does not completely line up with the lower mandible. Instead, the tips cross.

Apparently, from an engineering standpoint, this gives the mandibles added strength for pushing apart the scales of pinecones. The tongue removes the seed, places it in a groove in the lower mandible and crunch, the seed husk falls out of the mouth and the seed is swallowed.

Read the rest of this story at [Cheyenne Bird Banter](http://www.yuccaRoadPress.com)

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.



Bird and Conservation News

Get the Latest Community Science Updates

- Wednesday, Oct 21 @ 5 pm ([register here](#)) Audubon Community Science team and guest chapter leaders (from MT and IA) will share updates on Climate Watch and Christmas Bird Count.
- Whether you're a current participant in one of these programs, a chapter that supports one, or you are interested in getting involved, you'll gain insights into how these programs are helping to meet the needs of birds and the volunteers who watch out for them.

[State of the Worlds Birds](#) report was recently released by BirdLife International. This is a great resource that complements the work of Audubon's [Bird Migration Explorer](#) produced by the [Migratory Bird Initiative](#).

Field Trip: September 19, 2026 Wyoming Hereford Ranch (31 species)

Protocol: Traveling. 2 hours, 25 minutes; 0.84 miles

Mallard	Barn Swallow	American Goldfinch
Swainson's Hawk	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Chipping Sparrow
Red-tailed Hawk	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Lark Sparrow
Belted Kingfisher	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Dark-eyed Junco
Downy Woodpecker	Northern House Wren	White-crowned Sparrow
Northern Flicker	European Starling	Lincoln's Sparrow
American Kestrel	Townsend's Solitaire	Western Meadowlark
Western Wood-Pewee	American Robin	Red-winged Blackbird
Blue Jay	House Sparrow	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Black-billed Magpie	House Finch	Townsend's Warbler
		Wilson's Warbler

September 25, 2026 Cheyenne Country Club (32 species)

*Protocol: Traveling. 3.0 miles. 7:58 AM – 10:34 AM 50 degrees, overcast with a light mist.
Grant Frost, Bill Gerhart, Mark Gorges, Vicki Herren, Jerry Johnson, and Chuck Seniawski.*

Canada Goose 6	Broad-winged Hawk 1	European Starling 6
Gadwall 19	Swainson's Hawk 1	Townsend's Solitaire 1
Mallard 12	Northern Flicker 13	American Robin 3
Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon) 1	woodpecker sp. 1	House Finch 1
Eurasian Collared-Dove 4	Merlin 1	Cassin's Finch 1
Mourning Dove 5	Prairie Falcon 1	Red-winged Blackbird 57
Pied-billed Grebe 1	Black-billed Magpie 5	Common Grackle 2
Western/Clark's Grebe 2	American Crow 43	Common Yellowthroat 2
Double-crested Cormorant 2	Mountain Chickadee 3	Yellow-rumped Warbler 1
Osprey 1	Ruby-crowned Kinglet 1	Wilson's Warbler 4
Sharp-shinned Hawk 1	Red-breasted Nuthatch 10	
Northern Harrier 1	Brown Creeper 1	



Merlin. Photo by Chuck Seniawski.