Upcoming DFO Field Trips

Prospect Park (Wheat Ridge Greenbelt) (Developing Birder Trip)
Sunday, November 22
7:30 AM - 10:30 AM
Shay Lyons (Email: saratone@gmail.com Phone: 3034085182)
Trail Difficulty: Easy
Maximum Participants: 12
Directions: From I-70 exit 267, take Kipling south about 3/4 mile and turn right (west) on 44th Avenue. Go 1 mile and look for the entrance to Prospect Park (small sign) on left (south side). Follow park road south past and around Prospect Lake on right to parking lot (by restrooms and picnic shelter).

We'll walk 2ish miles on mostly paved, some dirt, some boardwalk surfaces, exploring 3 or 4 lakes and some woodlands depending on time. Expect to see some year round and migratory ducks, winter songbirds, and raptors. Bring water, snacks, layers, a hat, and binoculars. You're welcome to bring a scope if you have one, and the trip leader will be bringing theirs. This is a great trip for developing and experienced birders alike!

Greenwood Gulch and Marjorie Perry Nature Preserve (Developing Birder Trip)
Tuesday, November 24
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Sue Summers & Denise Reznicek (Email: summerssue@hotmail.com Phone: 253-678-3721)
Trail Difficulty: Moderate
Maximum Participants: 12
Directions: Meet at Castlewood Park, 5601 East Orchard Drive, Greenwood Village CO 80111. It is at the intersection of south Holly Street and East Orchard Drive (not east Orchard Road).

We will follow a paved trail along Greenwood Gulch waterway northwest for .75 mile, then join the dirt High Line Canal Trail that surrounds the Marjorie Perry Nature Preserve. We'll walk a 1.5 mile loop along the High Line and through the Preserve back to Greenwood Gulch trail then return to our starting point. Total distance is about 3 miles. The trails border cattail marshes, wet meadows and the typical High Line riparian strip. There are a couple of small ponds in the Marjorie Perry Nature Preserve at the northwest part of the loop. With the variety of habitats we should have a nice variety of ducks, songbirds and other winter residents, and with luck possibly spot a Virginia Rail working the ponds.

Staunton State Park (Jefferson County)
Wednesday, November 25
6:30 AM - 11:00 AM
David Suddjian (Email: dsuddjian@gmail.com Phone: 831-713-8659)
Trail Difficulty: Moderate
Maximum Participants: 8
Directions: Meet at the Aspen Park RTD Park-N-Ride on Hwy 285. The address is 26137 Conifer Rd, Aspen Park, CO.

Let's enjoy a short birding hike on one or two trails in this popular park, and we will see what we can find. Woodpeckers, crossbills, Evening Grosbeak, and solitaires are among the birds here, plus a chance for a pygmy-owl. We can also identify and appreciate the trees we see along the way. Bring snack and drink. Wear sturdy shoes. We will hike about 3 miles. Restroom at trail head

Wild Turkey Search at South Platte Park

Thursday, November 26

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Cynthia Breidenbach & Julia Gwinn (Email: thebreidenbachs1@comcast.net Phone: 3038756516)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 16

Directions: Meet at Carson Nature Center, north of Mineral Ave, 1 block west of S Santa Fe Drive. 3000 W Carson Dr, Littleton, CO 80120

Mission: Find a rafter of Wild Turkeys on Thanksgiving Day. Are you up for the challenge? This adventure will begin at the parking lot of Carson Nature Center in South Platte Park. From there, our posse will slowly trot along the east side of South Platte River looking for our target bird. We hope to see other birds, too, such as woodpeckers, hawks, sparrows, kingfishers and waterfowl. The trip is designated as moderate difficulty because the trail is dirt and could be muddy or slushy or strewn with turkeys depending on the weather. We will be walking about 3 miles with no elevation gain. Restrooms (nice indoor ones) are available at the Carson Nature Center. This will be the only restroom available. The trip will have 3 leaders: Cindy Breidenbach, Julia Gwinn, and Nadiyah Watts

El Paso County

Friday, November 27

6:30 AM - 3:00 PM

David Suddjian & Jessica Miller (Email: dsuddjian@gmail.com Phone: 831-713-8659)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at Lowe's in Castle Rock near the outlet stores. I-25 south, exit at Founders/Meadows Pkwy (exit 184), turn right (west), then right on Santa Fe Dr (Hwy 85), then right on New Beale St. Exact address 1360 New Beale St, Castle Rock, CO 80108

Let's get out and about to explore El Paso County hotspots, looking for bird variety from the forests to the prairie. We'll visit some good birding spots from Colorado Springs area to Fountain and maybe seek a rarity, too, if something good is around. Stops may include North Cheyenne Mountain, Fountain Creek Regional Park and Big Johnson Reservoir. Our timing is good for loons, scoters, and such and many migrant water birds. We can hope for a variety of forest birds, too, maybe nutcrackers, crossbills and "hoo knows" what else? We will carpool from the Castle Rock meeting spot. A Colorado Springs rendezvous spot will be announced for 7:15 am. Bring lunch, snacks and drink. We will walk short distances at several spots. Scopes will be helpful, and the leaders will share. Restrooms at intervals.

Washington Park (Developing Birder Trip)

Friday, November 27

6:45 AM - 8:00 AM

Ryan Corda (Email: ryan.corda@colorado.edu Phone: 3038547514)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 8

Directions: Meet SE side of Grasmere Lake in Denver's Washington Park. Enter the Park on the southeast side, near where S. Franklin Street and E. Arizona Avenue meet. This intersection is close to the nesting island in the southern lake -

- Grasmere Lake. Meet at the island area.

Join us for a weekly walk around Grasmere Lake in Washington Park in search of ducks and other birds! Our focus will be on duck identification, but we'll be on the lookout for sparrows, gulls, geese, and whatever else may show up; we'll also keep an eye on how the park's bird population evolves throughout the season. We'll be using a lot of the duck identification tips found in the "Better Duck" BIRD BOMBS episode: https://youtu.be/8wg_AX28bKk?si=szuB9ZbiByWVvvqL

Join us for a weekly walk around Grasmere Lake in Washington Park in search of ducks and other birds! Our focus will be on duck identification, but we'll be on the lookout for sparrows, gulls, geese, and whatever else may show up; we'll also keep an eye on how the park's bird population evolves throughout the season. We'll be using a lot of the duck identification tips found in the "Better Duck" BIRD BOMBS episode: https://youtu.be/8wg_AX28bKk?si=szuB9ZbiByWVvvqL
Plan for up to 2 miles of walking, mostly on paved paths. As always, birders of all experience levels are welcome. Bring binoculars, water, layers, and a scope if available (we'll have mine to share, too). There are a variety of porta-potties around the park.

Centennial Park and Nearby Hotspots (Developing Birder Trip)
Saturday, November 28
8:30 AM - 11:30 AM
Linda Purcell (Email: purcellzz@hotmail.com Phone: 13035037989)
Trail Difficulty: Easy
Maximum Participants: 6
Directions: Meet at Centennial Park in Englewood, 80110. The address is technically 4630 South Decatur Street, but the easier direction is to access the park by Union Avenue between South Santa Fe and South Federal Blvds, and meet in the parking lot on the south side of the lake, just off of Union.

A Denver area favorite Hotspot, with 204 reported species, Centennial Park is 'metro-central' bordered by residential, commerical and industrial areas, and yet it can feel quite peaceful. A diverse habitat - the park lake, the dry hillside to the north, the oxbow, and the adjacent South Platte that supports a variety of species. Let's look for some ducks, raptors, and winter passerines! Bathroom porta john is available, there is plenty of parking. NEARBY HOTSPOT - We will take some time to explore the Big Dry Creek Trail area, it doesn't get much attention but there is good habitat for winter passerines. This trip is rated EASY There will be minimal bushwacking, the terrain and ground conditions are a seasonal consideration. Bring your kit - water, layers, sun protection, long pants, good shoes, a snack. Leader will bring a scope, a second one will be helpful. Bring your binoculars, and your camera if you are so inclined. Birders of all levels are welcome. Duck ID have you anxious??? Check out this Bird Bombs from December 2022!
https://dfobirds.org/Programs/BirdBombs.aspx

Leyden Lake in Arvada (Developing Birder Trip)
Sunday, November 29
8:30 AM - 11:00 AM
Shay Lyons (Email: saratone@gmail.com Phone: 3034085182)

Trail Difficulty: Easy
Maximum Participants: 9
Directions: Meet at the parking area for Pattridge Open Space on the south side of West 82nd, about 0.9 mile east of Highway 93 in Arvada. From there we will we will carpool in two cars a short way down 82nd to the trailhead for our birding spot.

Join us on a trip to one of DFO's new birding locations: Leyden Lake! This hidden gem attracts ducks, geese, shorebirds, songbirds, woodpeckers, and raptors. The lake is surrounded by dense riparian forest and several areas of brushy grassland. We'll walk approximately 2 miles on a dirt trail and paved walkway. Bring binoculars, warm layers, water, and snacks. Depending on weather, it may be muddy in places. It's a great place to bring a scope if you have one; I'll be bringing mine too. We'll park about a mile away from the trailhead, and carpool to the location in 2 cars.

South Platte Littleton to Denver (Developing Birder Trip)
Wednesday, December 2
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
David Suddjian & Coreen Spellman (Email: dsuddjian@gmail.com Phone: 831-713-8659)
Trail Difficulty: Moderate
Maximum Participants: 10
Directions: Meet in the parking lot for the Hudson Gardens Event Center on the west side of Santa Fe, south of Bowles.

Let's try something different! On this field trip we will try to "only" use the scientific names (aka "Latin names") of birds as we find and call out species. We will also connect with the common names to help us learn what we are talking about - but our challenge will be to stick with the scientific names. So, not "Hey, Bufflehead!" Rather, "Hey, Bucephala albeola!" An connection to the scientific nomenclature is interesting and informs our understanding of species' relationships and taxonomy. We'll present some learning materials to help you get ready for the trip. You are guaranteed to learn new things! Ducks and geese will be a focus, plus other specialties we might find along the river, such as Wilson's Snipe. We'll bird at two arreas: near Husdon Gardens in Littlton, and then downstream of Evans Avenue in Denver. Maybe the Barrow's Goldeneye will return for another winter? We will walk about two to three .miles on flat paths. Restrooms limited to the first location.

Washington Park (Developing Birder Trip)
Friday, December 4
7:00 AM - 8:00 AM
Ryan Corda (Email: ryan.corda@colorado.edu Phone: 3038547514)
Trail Difficulty: Easy
Maximum Participants: 8
Directions: Meet SE side of Grasmere Lake in Denver's Washington Park. Enter the Park on the southeast side, near where S. Franklin Street and E. Arizona Avenue meet. This intersection is close to the nesting island in the southern lake -- Grasmere Lake. Meet at the island area.

Join us for a weekly walk around Grasmere Lake in Washington Park in search of ducks and other birds! Our focus will be on duck identification, but we'll be on the lookout for sparrows, gulls, geese, and whatever else may show up; we'll also keep an eye on how the park's bird population evolves throughout the season. We'll be using a lot of the duck identification tips found in the "Better Duck" BIRD BOMBS episode: https://youtu.be/8wg_AX28bKk?si=szuB9ZbiByWVvvqL

Join us for a weekly walk around Grasmere Lake in Washington Park in search of ducks and other birds! Our focus will be on duck identification, but we'll be on the lookout for sparrows, gulls, geese, and whatever else may show up; we'll also keep an eye on how the park's bird population evolves throughout the season. We'll be using a lot of the duck identification tips found in the "Better Duck" BIRD BOMBS episode: https://youtu.be/8wg_AX28bKk?si=szuB9ZbiByWVvvqL
Plan for up to 2 miles of walking, mostly on paved paths. As always, birders of all experience levels are welcome. Bring binoculars, water, layers, and a scope if available (we'll have mine to share, too). There are a variety of porta-potties around the park.

Prospect Park (Wheat Ridge Greenbelt)
Friday, December 4
9:00 AM - 11:30 AM
Angela Grun (Email: angelajgrun@gmail.com Phone: 303-762-0684)
Trail Difficulty: Easy
Maximum Participants: 10
Directions: From I-70 exit 267, take Kipling south about 3/4 mile and turn right (west) on 44th Avenue. Go 1 mile and look for the entrance to Prospect Park (small sign) on left (south side). Follow park road south past and around Prospect Lake on right to parking lot (by restrooms and picnic shelter).

This is a trip with easy walking and accessible for mobility impaired individuals. We expect to see a variety of winter ducks including Buffelheads, Hooded Mergansers and Northern Shovelers. Winter residents including Red-tailed Hawks, Coopers Hawks and a nice variety of sparrows including American Tree sparrows and Song sparrows are likely. Dress in layers and bring snacks and water. Bring scopes if you have them.

Rosy-Finch Ramble
Saturday, December 5
6:30 AM - 3:00 PM
David Suddjian & Anne Craig (Email: dsuddjian@gmail.com Phone: 831-713-8659)
Trail Difficulty: Easy
Maximum Participants: 8
Directions: Meet at the Aspen Park RTD Park-N-Ride on Hwy 285. The address is 26137 Conifer Rd, Aspen Park, CO.

Explore lovely Park County (and some Jefferson, too), visiting homes with feeders and natural spots to search for rosy-finches (three species, maybe), Cassin's Finch, Evening and Pine Grosbeak, Red Crossbill, Clark's Nutcrackers and more. Rough-legged Hawk is possible, and we might see elk and pronghorn, too. And we can learn about the trees in the mountain region we will be visiting. Plan for cold conditions and maybe windy. We will be indoors at times and outdoors for short periods if it is cold, with minimal walking. Bring lunch, snack and drinks. Restrooms available at intervals.

Washington Park (Developing Birder Trip)
Friday, December 11
7:00 AM - 8:00 AM
Ryan Corda (Email: ryan.corda@colorado.edu Phone: 3038547514)

Trail Difficulty: Easy
Maximum Participants: 8
Directions: Meet SE side of Grasmere Lake in Denver's Washington Park. Enter the Park on the southeast side, near where S. Franklin Street and E. Arizona Avenue meet. This intersection is close to the nesting island in the southern lake -- Grasmere Lake. Meet at the island area.

Join us for a weekly walk around Grasmere Lake in Washington Park in search of ducks and other birds! Our focus will be on duck identification, but we'll be on the lookout for sparrows, gulls, geese, and whatever else may show up; we'll also keep an eye on how the park's bird population evolves throughout the season. We'll be using a lot of the duck identification tips found in the "Better Duck" BIRD BOMBS episode: https://youtu.be/8wg_AX28bKk?si=szuB9ZbiByWVvvqL

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Plan for up to 2 miles of walking, mostly on paved paths. As always, birders of all experience levels are welcome. Bring binoculars, water, layers, and a scope if available (we'll have mine to share, too). There are a variety of porta-potties around the park.

Washington Park (Developing Birder Trip)
Friday, December 18
7:00 AM - 8:00 AM
Ryan Corda (Email: ryan.corda@colorado.edu Phone: 3038547514)
Trail Difficulty: Easy
Maximum Participants: 8
Directions: Meet SE side of Grasmere Lake in Denver's Washington Park. Enter the Park on the southeast side, near where S. Franklin Street and E. Arizona Avenue meet. This intersection is close to the nesting island in the southern lake -- Grasmere Lake. Meet at the island area.

Join us for a weekly walk around Grasmere Lake in Washington Park in search of ducks and other birds! Our focus will be on duck identification, but we'll be on the lookout for sparrows, gulls, geese, and whatever else may show up; we'll also keep an eye on how the park's bird population evolves throughout the season. We'll be using a lot of the duck identification tips found in the "Better Duck" BIRD BOMBS episode: https://youtu.be/8wg_AX28bKk?si=szuB9ZbiByWVvvqL

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Plan for up to 2 miles of walking, mostly on paved paths. As always, birders of all experience levels are welcome. Bring binoculars, water, layers, and a scope if available (we'll have mine to share, too). There are a

variety of porta-potties around the park.

South Platte Park--South End
Friday, December 18
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Cynthia Breidenbach & Julia Gwinn (Email: thebreidenbachs1@comcast.net Phone: 3038756516)
Trail Difficulty: Moderate
Maximum Participants: 10
Directions: Meet at parking lot adjoining the South Platte Reservoir. The reservoir is just north of Chatfield off of C-470. Take C-470 to the Wadsworth Blvd exit and turn north onto Wadsworth. Turn right (east) on West Chatfield Avenue and follow the road for 1.5 miles. Make a sharp turn right at the sign that says South Platte Reservoir and follow the access road around to the parking lot.

Join us as we explore the lakes and river at South Platte Park in Littleton. Year-round birds include kingfishers, woodpeckers, nuthatches, raptors, finches, herons and sparrows. In December, expect to see many waterfowl returning for the winter with some stopping on their migration south. Our walk is approximately 2 miles on cement and dirt trails with no elevation gain. The bird walk is rated as moderate because we MAY cross a cement walkway with large boulders. No special equipment is required but expect some light scrambling if we choose this path. Trails can be muddy following precipitation. Bring binoculars, water, snacks, sunscreen and appropriate clothing layers. Scopes and cameras are welcome. A vault toilet restroom is available at the beginning of the walk near the parking area. This will be the only restroom and it will be our first stop once we leave the parking lot.

South Platte River Trail at 88th Avenue and vicinity
Saturday, December 19
8:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Cassandra Stroud & Kelly Hollar (Email: cassandrasadair@gmail.com Phone: 9174996841)
Trail Difficulty: Easy
Maximum Participants: 10
Directions: See Narrative

The river here provides a good opportunity for a close study of some of our beautiful winter ducks. We'll likely see some more common species such as Gadwall, Green-winged Teal, and Bufflehead, but we may also have some fun finds like the Northern Pintail or Common Goldeneye. We will meet at the trailhead parking lot at 88th and the South Platte and will likely walk north along the river from there. The trail is mostly flat and completely paved, and we'll walk around 3 miles total, out and back. For those who are interested in staying later for an optional add-on, we can walk a bit further south to check out the bigger reservoirs to see if we can catch some diving ducks. It may be cold on this late fall morning, so plan to dress for the weather and bring binoculars, water, sunscreen, and a snack. Feel free to bring a scope if you would like to use one. Beginners are encouraged to join and all levels are welcome!

Gull Therapy: A Trip Focused on Gull ID (Developing Birder Trip)
Tuesday, December 22

1:00 PM - 3:30 PM

David Suddjian (Email: dsuddjian@gmail.com Phone: 831-713-8659)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 8

Directions: Meet at the Marina parking lot; use west entrance (near Cherry Creek High School just south of Union Avenue on Dayton Street.) From the west entrance, drive 0.4 miles. Turn left onto Marina Access Road and continue 0.3 miles to end of the road.

This special Gull Therapy trip will visit Cherry Creek SP. Hopefully there will be some ice on the lake and many gulls present. Let's work together on our Gull identification skills with a chance to enjoy some of the uncommon or rare species, too. We will meet at the Pelican Bay Marina and probably will remain there. We will look in some detail at gulls we can see well and consider their species and plumage features. We probably will find Ring-billed, California, American Herring, Iceland (Thayer's) and Lesser Black-backed. A few other species are possible. We'll enjoy the other waterbirds, too, including flocks of Common Merganser and maybe uncommon geese, but our focus will be working on the gulls. We should have great lighting. Bring a scope if you have one, and we can share. Recommend homework: watch BIRD BOMBS episodes "Get Gullable (Dec 2023) and "I Wish They All Could Be California Gulls" (Jan 2024). Parks pass required for each vehicle. Porta-john at the meeting spot. Bring a layer and gloves even if it is nice out, as it can be cooler near the water. Our location for this trip could change depending on how gull observation conditions develop as the month goes on.

Washington Park (Developing Birder Trip)

Wednesday, December 23

7:00 AM - 8:00 AM

Ryan Corda (Email: ryan.corda@colorado.edu Phone: 3038547514)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 8

Directions: Meet SE side of Grasmere Lake in Denver's Washington Park. Enter the Park on the southeast side, near where S. Franklin Street and E. Arizona Avenue meet. This intersection is close to the nesting island in the southern lake -- Grasmere Lake. Meet at the island area.

Join us for a weekly walk around Grasmere Lake in Washington Park in search of ducks and other birds! Our focus will be on duck identification, but we'll be on the lookout for sparrows, gulls, geese, and whatever else may show up; we'll also keep an eye on how the park's bird population evolves throughout the season. We'll be using a lot of the duck identification tips found in the "Better Duck" BIRD BOMBS episode: https://youtu.be/8wg_AX28bKk?si=szuB9ZbiByWVvvqL

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Plan for up to 2 miles of walking, mostly on paved paths. As always, birders of all experience levels are welcome. Bring binoculars, water, layers, and a scope if available (we'll have mine to share, too). There are a variety of porta-potties around the park.

Lowell Ponds Open Space (Adams County) (Patch Birding Trip)

Thursday, December 24

8:30 AM - 11:00 AM

Linda Purcell (Email: purcellzz@hotmail.com Phone: 13035037989)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 7

Directions: Meet in the parking lot along the west side of Lowell Blvd at West 55th Place, just south of I-76. Exit the freeway at Federal Blvd, go south to 55th and proceed west to Lowell Blvd and the parking lot on the west side of Lowell.

Lowell Ponds Open Space is a surprise to many people.... "I didn't even know this place existed!" eBird currently reports 195 species, making it one of the top birding spots in the metro area! Clear Creek winds through the middle of six Ponds, and the variable flow of the Creek, Colorado's only wild river, creates small rapids, slow moving water and plenty of mud flats. The ponds, the river and developed riparian habitat create opportunities for American Dipper and Wilson's Snipe, Cedar Waxwing and Wood Duck! It is a remarkable place, in a part of the metro area that isn't frequently visited. Check out the bar chart for this Hotspot! Bring your usual winter kit - layers, boots or suitable shoes, water, a snack, sunscreen and other sun protection. Binoculars, and a camera if you wish. Leader will have a scope. The trip is easy, but may have some bushwacking off paved trails. There is normally a portable toilet; leader will double check on this before the trip. This is NOT a SWA, it is now managed by Adams County. Pertinent Bird Bombs include: Fall Sparrows https://dfobirds.org/Programs/BirdBombs.aspx Better Duck https://dfobirds.org/Programs/BirdBombs.aspx

Broomfield CBC (Section 5)

Sunday, December 27

7:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Brian Genge (Email: bgenge2@gmail.com Phone: 7203765087)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Directions: From Hwy 85 take Henderson Road west to Park Blvd. Go north on Park, then right on Campground Road. Meet in the parking area across from Riverdale Park Playground. Coordinates 39.929807, -104.869958

This field trip is a dedicated segment of the annual Broomfield Christmas Bird Count, focusing exclusively on Section 5. Section 5 is a large, diverse area running from the South Platte River in the East to I-25 in the West, and from Highway 7 in the North to 128th Avenue in the South. Here is a full map of this section and the count circle.
https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/1/viewer?mid=1e_NlnDWgYhxNjhHaMh_ctDbqO8VCXAs&ll=39.97609059689232%2C-104.99369700000001&z=11 We will start our day at the Adams County Fairgrounds, located in the southeastern part of our count area. The day's birding will cover a variety of key habitats, including the Adams County Fairgrounds, the South Platte adjacent reservoirs and accessible river portions, Marshall Lake, Hunters Glenn, Trail Winds Park, and Big Dry Creek Open Space, and more hotspots. A significant part of our count will also involve neighborhood birding within this developed area. Participants should be prepared for a full day of activity, which may involve as much as 6-8 miles of walking throughout the day. However, since the count is within a relatively developed area, we will never be far from facilities. We will make stops as needed for restrooms, water, and food. We will be conducting the count as a single, coordinated group throughout the section. We will carpool from our meeting location to make this more efficient. The counting is expected to conclude by no later than 4:00 PM, though we will likely finish earlier. After the count, there is an optional final tally at a Broomfield city facility where all teams from the various sections will gather to report their findings.

Aurora Reservoir (Developing Birder Trip)

Tuesday, December 29

1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Cynthia Cestkowski & David Suddjian (Email: cestkowc@comcast.net Phone: 303-550-0905)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 10

Directions: Meet at S Powhaton Road at E Quincy Ave, the entrance road to Aurora Reservoir, about 1.5 miles east of E470.

Aurora Reservoir can be a great winter hub for gulls of several species and geese including uncommon species. We'll see what we can find as we scan the beaches, coves and wide open area of the reservoir. We can discuss the basics of gull ID and look for fun species like Iceland, Lesser Black-backed and Glaucous Gulls. Geese may be in the 10s to 100s of thousands, with flocks harboring Snow, Ross's and Great White-fronted. Sometimes there is a scoter, loon or Red-necked Grebe. We'll meet at Powhonton near Quincy and carpool in. There is a park entry fee. Bring a scope if you have one, and we can share. We'll mostly be standing and scanning, with only short walks. Being winter, conditions may be cold. Sometimes the afternoon is lovely, but plan to stay warm near the water. Restroom available.

Pueblo area

Friday, January 1

6:00 AM - 5:00 PM

David Suddjian (Email: dsuddjian@gmail.com Phone: 831-713-8659)

Trail Difficulty: Moderate

Maximum Participants: 12

Directions: Meet at Lowe's in Castle Rock near the outlet stores. I-25 south, exit at Founders/Meadows Pkwy (exit 184), turn right (west), then right on Santa Fe Dr (Hwy 85), then right on New Beale St. Exact address 1360 New Beale St, Castle Rock, CO 80108

Let's kick start our year lists and enjoy New Year's birds! We'll start the 2027 birding year with a visit to one of Colorado's best winter birding areas! Lake Pueblo and the Arkansas corridor downstream can be counted on for a fun variety of water birds and land birds, and a good chance for rare wintering species, like loons, ducks, grebes, warblers and sparrows. We will look for regional specialties like Scaled Quail, Curve-billed Thrasher, Canyon Towhee, Bewick's Wren, and White-winged Dove. This will be a full day with several stops, including viewing around Pueblo Reservoir, along the Arkansas River, and at Pueblo City Park. Bring a scope if you have one, and we can share. Wear sturdy footwear, and bring plenty of clothing ranging from cold to pleasant. Plan for up to 1.5 miles of walking. Bring snacks, lunch and drinks. We will carpool from the Castle Rock meeting spot, and we will have a southern rendezvous point for those living south of Denver area.

Clear Creek Valley Park

Sunday, January 10

8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Linda Purcell (Email: purcellzz@hotmail.com Phone: 13035037989)

Trail Difficulty: Easy

Maximum Participants: 8

Directions: Meet at the west parking lot at 3700 W 58th Place, Arvada, CO 80002. Access to the lot is from Tennyson St.

Clear Creek Valley Park - Hyland Hills Park &Recreation is an 80 acre park. In addition to people park amenities, there is open space, wildlife viewing and fishing lakes, a central pond, trails, a community garden, and more. Lake habitat includes former gravel pits with riparian borders which provide opportunities for numerous species of waterfowl and shorebirds in season, as well as winter passerines and raptors. Our second stop will be just up the road at Jim Baker Reservoir. Almost 200 species have been recorded at these two locations! They are underbirded except by knowledgable locals, and they deserve more attention, especially in the winter. Watch the weather report, and prepare for this trip with your winter birding kit - warm layers, good boots, sunscreen; water, a snack. We will walk on paths, with minimal bushwacking, for less than a mile, total. Bring binoculars, leader will have a scope. Restrooms may or may not be available and open, so come prepared. You cannot easily enter the park from Lowell on the east. Follow directions to enter from Tennyson on the west side.