



# The Lark Bunting

DENVER FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS/FEBRUARY 2014/VOL 50 NO 2

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## Field Trips

**Saturday, February 1**

**Castlewood Canyon State Park**

**Leader: Laurie Duke,  
303-646-4699**

Meet leader at 8 a.m. at the north entrance to the park in the Homestead Parking Lot.

This will be a half-day trip, lunch optional but do bring snacks and drinking water.

The trip will involve hiking over trails but leader will try to avoid icy areas so wear good hiking shoes.

**Sunday, February 2**

**88th and the Platte**

**Leader: Chris Owens,  
hm 303-772-6048 (leave  
message and number) or email  
christiel@q.com**

Meet leader at 7:45 a.m. at E. 88th and the South Platte River (parking lot just south of the intersection of 88th and Colorado).

We will check the duck population of this winter river habitat, any overhead raptors, and any other bird that flaps our way while we walk along paved flat trails (2-4 miles).

This will be a half-day trip, birding until noon or shortly thereafter. Dress for predicted weather. Bring water, snacks, binocs, and scopes.

**Please register** with leader in case of weather cancellation.

**Saturday, February 8**

**Northeastern Raptor Tour**

**Leader: Joey Kellner,  
303-978-1748**

Meet leaders at 6:30 a.m. at the Division of Wildlife, 6060 North Broadway. Exit I-25 at 58th Ave., go west 2 blocks to Broadway,

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## The Passion and the Payoff: Why We Band Birds and What We Are Learning

Meredith McBurney, RMBO Biologist, will be the featured speaker at the Monday, January 27 meeting of DFO.

The sheer joy of sharing a moment, up close and personal, with a bird before releasing it back into the wild is at the heart of what drives every bird bander to rise each morning before dawn, spend long hours at the banding station, and deal with occasional bad weather and boring days with no birds.

But the really big deal, and the more difficult work, is figuring out how to use the data obtained from capturing, marking, assessing, and releasing birds to better protect these birds that we love.

Meredith will take us through the evolving world of bird “banding”—from Audubon’s work in the early 1800s, through the traditional process of marking with numbered bands, to the cutting edge technology of geolocators, radio telemetry, and genetic and stable-isotope markers.

She will share information about what RMBO and other research organiza-

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## Future birders inspired, thanks to grant

*by Chris Blakeslee*

During the 2012 and 2013 grant years, the DFO board awarded \$9000 divided between nine worthy grants. When taken all together these grants have included all aspects of our mission statement: education, research, and conservation.

One grant that was particularly fun and rewarding was made to Kunsmiller Creative Arts Academy (Denver Public Schools) for \$1000 to purchase binoculars and bird field guides to be used in their science program. Kunsmiller is located near Harvey Park in southwest Denver.

Dozens and dozens of middle school students have benefited from this grant as you can see from some of the children’s own words



and artwork below. Each letter was addressed to “Dear Denver Field Ornithologists.”

Thank you for the binoculars and the field guides. Without the sup-

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## Field Trips

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then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right.

Bring lunch, water, and snacks for a full day of driving and watching raptors in the northeastern corner of Colorado. **Call leader if going.**

**Sunday, February 9**  
**Bear Creek Lake Park**  
**Leader: Paul Slingsby,**  
**720-347-5169,**  
**<paslingsby@comcast.net>**

Half-day trip. Meet at the dirt parking lot north-east of C-470 and Morrison Rd, 7:30 a.m.

Unless drivers have annual permits, we will bird along the creek on our way to Bear Creek Lake Park.

Leader will email a condition report if ice or snow will make for difficult walking. Bear Creek Lake Park will offer open water, cottonwood forest, and grasslands. **Please RSVP.**

**Saturday, February 15**  
**Red Rocks Park**  
**Leader: Tom Bush,**  
**303-904-4576**

Meet at 9 a.m. at the Red Rocks Trading Post and bird until 12 noon. We'll spend some time checking out all the activity at the feeders—possible rosy-finches, jays, chickadees, and maybe some surprises.

We'll do some walking, 2 miles or less, looking for raptors. Be prepared for the weather. Trails could be slick and challenging. Bring water, snack, and lunch.

To reach Red Rocks Trading Post go west out of Morrison on Hwy 74. Less than 0.5 mile out of Morrison, turn right on Red Rocks Park Road (Entrance 2 to Red Rocks Park). Stay right at the first fork. Continue on Red Rocks Road approximately a mile to the Trading Post.

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## 60th Annual Denver Christmas Bird Count

**Day, date, and time:** Saturday, December 14, 2013, 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Compiler:** Joey Kellner **Feeder coordinator:** Veronica Holt

**Weather:** Clear to mostly clear **Temperature:** 2 to 52 deg. F

**Wind:** variable, 0 to 15 mph

**Snow Cover:** 0 to 8" **Still water:** Partly open **Moving water:** Partly open

**Observers:** 163 (148 in 37 parties, 15 watchers at 15 feeders)

**Total party hours:** 221.5 (158 on foot, 63.5 by car)

**Total party miles:** 669.65 (123.65 on foot, 546 by car)

**Hours spent watching feeders:** 43

**Count totals:** 93 species; 22,870 individuals

**Participants by area** (Area leader's names in **bold**):

- 1 Red Rocks Park (RRP): **Bob Brown**, Dan Stringer
- 2 Lower Bear Creek (LBC): Chuck Aid, Jennifer Clay, Rick Creswell, Jan Emmert, Martha Eubanks, Diane Hutton, Cindy Johnson, **Michael Kiessig**, Robert Martinez, Amy Morton, Janet Shin, Steve Sieders, Kara Spitler
- 2A Bear Creek Lake Park (BCP): **Mark Amershek**, Edward Donnan, Mary Geder, AJ Gest, Judy Lane, Bruce Neumann
- 3 Bow Mar/Marston (BMM): Mary Burger, Gale Evans, Peggy Gonder, Candice Johnson, Tim Johnson, Tina Jones, Cynthia Madsen, Betsy Maslow, Richard Maslow, **Kay Niyo**, Ira Sanders, Tammy Sanders
- 4A Lower South Platte-east (LSP): Ruth Breckon, Patty Echelmeyer, Nelson Ford, **Ed Holub**
- 4B Lower South Platte-west (LSP): Dan Brooke, Deb Nazzaro, Susan Perry, **Dick Schottler**, Tim Smart, Cheryl Teuton, Christopher Warneke (+2)
- 5 Highline Ditch (HLD): **Nancy Crews**, Duke Deegan, Susan Dann, Leslie Newell, Pan Schmidt
- 6 Plum Creek (PCK): Burke Angstman, Joey Angstman, **Norm Erthal**
- 7A Middle South Platte (MSP): **Randy Lentz**
- 7B Middle South Platte (MSP): Sue Barnhart, **Hugh Kingery**, **Urling Kingery**, Deb Ostergard, Darrin Seex, Mike Serruto, Cathy Sheeter
- 8 Chatfield Reservoir (CHA): Brenda Beatty, Caroline Holden, **Joey Kellner**, Charlie Lawrence, Gwen Moore, Bob Spencer, Sandra Spencer
- 9 Upper South Platte (USP): Betty Glass, **Jill Holden**, Mary Keithler, Meredith McBurney, Harriet Stratton
- 10 Lower Deer Creek (LDC): Julia Auckland, Scott Dieni, John Esperance, Kristin Gruebmeier, Stephanie Jones, Lara Juliusson, PJ Ross, Betsy Shaw, **Lynn Willcockson**
- 11 Upper Deer Creek (UDC): Meredith Anderson, John Harrington, Norm Lewis, Toni Rautus, Nina Routh, **Paul Slingsby**
- 12 Yegge Peak (YPK): Audrey Boag, **Ann Bonnell**, Phil Gerkin, Celia Greenman, Linda Knudsen, Walt Knudsen, Else Van Erp
- 13 Doublehead Mountain (DHM): **Amy Davis**, Nancy Davis, Tim Davis, Adam Green, Steve Smith
- 14 North Turkey Creek (NTC): Ed Furlong, **Larry Modesitt**

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- 15 Indian Hills (IHL): Bill Eden, Caroline Gilbert, Michael Gilbert, Susan Harper, Bob Holmes, Jeanette Holmes, Elane Lockey, Megan Miller, Sharon Powers, Dick Prickett, Rob Raker, Marilyn Rhodes, Warren Roske, Jordon Spalding, Sue Summers, Karen von Saltza, **Sherman Wing**
- 16 Upper Bear Creek (UBC): **Tom Parchman**, Chris Rurik, Laura Steadman
- 17 Ken Caryl Ranch (KCR): Sue Barnhart, Maggie Brahm, **Tom Bush**, Nathan Farquhar, Tim Farquhar, Ruth Gabraski, Patti Galli, Fran Haas, Rhonda Ingle, Randy Look, Clint Shoemaker, Bea Weaver
- 18 Garrison Gate (GGT): **Steve Stachowiak**
- 19 Morrison/Willow Brook (MWB): **Mark Chavez**, Steve Miller
- 20 Willow Creek (WCK): Amber Carver, **Doris Cruze**, Donna Emmons, Tom Emmons, Doug Hodous, Barbara Shissler, Peggy Wait, Natalie Vande Vuss, Dennis Wojcicki
- 21 Mt. Lindo/Willow Springs (MLW): Laura Wathen, **Wayne Wathen** “Roving Expert and Photographer” – **Glenn Walbek**

## 2013 Denver CBC Highlights

*Joey Kellner, Compiler*

The 2013 Denver Christmas Bird Count (CBC) took place on December 14th, the 60th consecutive year that the Denver Field Ornithologists has conducted a Christmas count within the same 15-mile diameter count circle established in 1954 and centered just north of the old Ken Caryl Ranch entrance.

The weather on count day started clear and became mostly clear with calm to low winds. It was a beautiful day to be out with the team reporting a respectable 22,870 individual birds of 93 species recorded by 148 field observers and 15 feeder watchers.

No new species were added to the cumulative Denver CBC list in 2013. The grand total of species seen since 1954 thus remains at 199.

“Rare” birds (seen on less than 10% of the previous counts) found this year included:

- Brant (2nd record) in Area 8,
- Northern Saw-whet Owl (4th record) found in Area 7a,
- Chihuahuan Raven (3rd record) in Area 3, and
- Gray Catbird (5th and 6th records) one seen in Area 7a and one in Area 7b.

“Uncommon” birds (seen 10–24% of the previous counts) found this year included:

- Cackling Goose (multiple areas—split and tracked starting in 2004),
- Long-tailed Duck (two birds seen in Area 4b),
- Eurasian Collared-Dove (multiple areas—recent explosive addition to the annual count),
- Say’s Phoebe (Area 3),
- Clark’s Nutcracker (Area 15), and
- Golden-crowned Sparrow (Area 1).

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## Field Trips

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**Sunday, February 16**  
**Roxborough State Park**  
**Leader: Doris Cruze,**  
**303-798-8072**

Meet leader at 8 a.m. at the Visitor’s Center for a 3.5-hour walking tour on an easy trail.

Participants should see Golden Eagles and species common in the foothills.

State Parks Pass required or \$5 entrance fee per car. Lunch will be optional but there is a beautiful place to sit on the patio and watch the birds as you eat lunch.

Take S. Wadsworth Blvd. past Chatfield SP to Waterton Rd on left. Take Waterton Rd. 1.6 miles east to North Rampart Range Rd., turn right and go south 2.3 miles to Roxborough Park Rd. Turn left and follow signs to the park (2.2 miles).

This is an excellent trip for novice birders and new members.

**Saturday, February 22**  
**Chatfield State Park**  
**Leader: Ed Holub,**  
**303-979-2194**

Meet leader at 8 a.m. inside west entrance of park off S. Wadsworth, 1.5 miles south of C-470. This will be a half-day trip so lunch is optional. **Call leader if going.**

**Sunday, February 23**  
**Barr Lake State Park**  
**Leader: Gregg Goodrich, 303-655-9135**

Meet leader at Barr Lake Visitors’ Center at 8 a.m. Bring scopes, binoculars, water, and dress for the predicted weather.

Walk between 3 and 4 miles looking for waterfowl, and resident birds surviving winter. Lunch is optional. State parks pass required.

Call only if you have questions.

**—Scheduled by Jackie King**

*FUTURE BIRDERS INSPIRED, continued from page 1*

plies we wouldn't be able to do the bird watch. We saw some spectacular birds at Harvey Park. We saw Mallards, Northern Shoveler, and a [Hooded] Merganser. The Mallards were in a big circle making a whirl pool by eating food....

Sincerely, Klarissa

Thank you for everything you have done for the community. I had so much fun on our trip. I saw so many geese floating in the water or waltzing around. I have two favorite birds. My favorite is the owl. My 2nd favorite bird is the flamingo. I like birds.

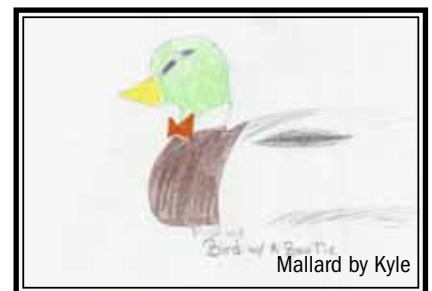
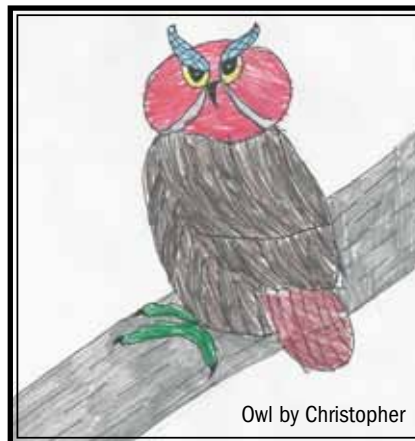
Thanks again, Sydni

Thank you for the binoculars. I got so excited because we were testing in almost every class, but in science class we got to look at birds. And thanks to the binoculars, we got to see the birds closer than they are. We saw lots of Canada Geese. We saw more than 100! Anyway, this is a picture of a Canada Goose I drew. (No Tracing)

Sincerely, Evani

Thank you for giving us \$1000. We bought the binoculars and the field guides. We saw magnificent birds like the Hooded Merganser. We also saw the Northern Shoveler

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*As you renew your DFO membership (which expired Dec. 31) for 2014, please consider making a generous donation to the DFO Research, Education, and Conservation Grants Fund.*

*We depend solely on donations to operate the grants program.*



*FUTURE BIRDERS INSPIRED, continued from page 4*

and the Mallard. Plus we saw some crows. I had a lot of fun using the equipment. Thank very much for the money.

Sincerely, Anthony

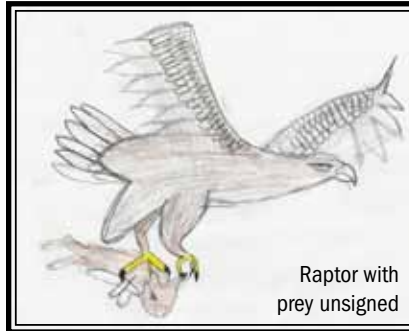
My name is Aracely. I am in sixth grade at KCAA. I want to thank you for the 1,000 dollar grant for binoculars and field guides. The bird that we saw the most of was the Canada Goose. There were over 400 of them. The other kind of bird we saw was a Common Goldeneye. There were only 3 of them.

Thank you sincerely, Aracely

I really appreciate you giving us \$1000 for the binoculars. The field guides helped us a lot when we were looking at the birds and geese. That's a lot of money, so thank you very much for that. One bird I saw with the binoculars is a Northern Shoveler and a Ring-billed Gull. Thank you Denver Field Ornithologists again for the money for the binoculars.

Sincerely, Daphanie

Thank you for donating to 6th grade Science at KCAA! We appreciate the experience that we got to have. We saw many birds such as Canada Geese, Mallards, Northern Shoveler, California Gulls, and an



Raptor with prey unsigned

eagle. With the \$1000 we got brochures about birds and binoculars. Thank you again.

Sincerely, Karina

Thank you...out at Harvey Park Lake, we saw lots of Canada Geese, about ten or so Ring-billed Gulls, a flock of Northern Shovelers, and one lonely guy called a Hooded Merganser. They were so cute! Why are Hooded Mergansers always lonely? I just barely saw a Bald Eagle. Why are Bald Eagles called bald when they're not? Thank you so much.

Sincerely, Krystal

First of all I would like to say thank you for the one thousand dollars you donated to Kunsmiller Creative Arts Academy. Yesterday my class went out to go bird watching for the 12 days of Christmas bird watch.

We saw many different birds, such as the Canada Goose, the



Wood Duck unsigned

American Crow, the House Finch, the Northern Shoveler, and many more.

With your donation we bought binoculars and field guides. Going bird watching with those tools really helped us figure out the type of bird it was. Thank you.

Sincerely, Ciara

Thank you for the thousand dollar grant so we could carry out our experiment...While we were looking at the geese and ducks we saw something that could have been a California Gull or the White-tailed Ptarmigan.

Sincerely, Mikayla

Thank you for the \$1,000 grant for the binoculars and the field guides. Yesterday I saw a Northern Shoveler. They go in circles. We appreciate the binoculars and the field guides. Thank you so much.

Sincerely, Ivana

**Thank you for your donation to the Research, Education and Conservation Grants Fund:**

Nina Routh, Polly Reetz, Rex McGehee, Carol Cook, Judy Lane, Robert Beck, Von Fransen, Roy Hohn, Rick Creswell, Francis Commerron, Joan and Jack Whiting, Jan Justice-Waddington, Laura and Wayne Wathen, Mary Ann Tavery, Peggy Roberts, Sally Plummer, Hugh and Urling Kingery, Pearl Jordan, Carol Cochran, Chris Blakeslee, Kitsi Atkinson and Tom Pool, Debbie Seiden, Cynthia Madsen, Joyce Takamine, Mary Zick, Newell Grant, Mackenzie Goldthwait and Doug Kibbe, Kevin Corwin, Laurie Chotena, Jannette Wesley, William and Nancy Urquhart, Susan Clasen, George Mayfield, Jane Axtell, Bobbi Vollmer, Doris Cruze, Patti Galli, Charles Thornton-Kolbe, Mark Amershek, Edward Furlong, Martha McCauley, Kate Brannan and Paul Welschinger, Doug and Jan Hodous, Cris Cook, and Tina Jones.