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**aikorns**  
AIKEN AUDUBON SOCIETY

# THE ISLANDS OF ALOHA— KAUAI

Story & photos by Mel Goff

Kauai (the Garden Isle) is the true gem of Hawaii. It lives up to its name with a tropical feel, botanical gardens, stunning scenery, and great birding. Kayaking, zip lines, golf, diving/snorkeling, gorgeous beaches and great restaurants add up to a top vacation destination. Add over 150 species of birds to the mix and you get a real bucket list entry.

I have saved our favorite island for the last stop on this four-part tour of our fiftieth state. Here, then, are my top picks for birding the Garden Isle.

## THE SOUTHWEST COAST FROM HANAPEPE TO MANA

The coastal highway offers several stops that are sure to provide you with a great variety of species. Hanapepe Salt Ponds is an under-birded spot to look for Ruddy Turnstones, Sanderlings, Pacific Golden-Plovers, Hawaiian Stilts, Pectoral Sandpipers and wintering ducks, including Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal and Lesser Scaup.

Further west is Kekaha Beach Park which can surprise you with birds like Common Tern, Brown Booby, Hawaiian Petrel, Wedge-tailed Shearwater, as well as Brown and Black Noddy, and Great Frigatebird.

A short drive takes you to Kawaiie Bird Sanctuary and the Pacific Missile Range Facility at Barking Sands (PMRF). We have had so much success at these two locations that a list of all the birds there would fill this article. Wandering Tattler, Japanese Bush-Warbler, Hawaiian Coot, Black-footed Albatross, Nene, Hawaiian Duck and Black-crowned Night-Heron are just a few. Jeanne and I were among the first to document Saffron Finch on Kauai at the PMRF. Guest passes for PMRF are available at the main gate.



Red-footed Booby



Pacific Golden Plover

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

### "THE FINAL MESSAGE"

As I sat down to write my final President's message, I thought about my many earlier compositions. I thank Leslie for her patience and understanding; I knew each deadline date and I imagine I missed almost all of them.

Aiken Audubon is an active group of birders. Through our programs we have birded the Arctic, Colorado, Papua New Guinea, Brazil, Australia, Costa Rica, Namibia, Botswana and Hawaii—to name just a few. We have cruised the Caribbean, learned quite a bit about the diminutive Flammulated Owl and how to identify raptors, sparrows and gulls. We have hiked and birded all over El Paso County looking for that "First of Year" bird, an unusual spring migrant, or a new "lifer." If you want to see the next first-of-Colorado bird, just

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### Coming programs

#### MAY 16

**One Finch, Two Finch: A short history of counting birds in the United States**

Clark Jones

### NO PROGRAMS OVER THE SUMMER

#### SEPTEMBER 19

Save the date. Program to be announced.

### Newsletter articles

Articles, announcements, or other items of special interest to Aiken Audubon members are welcome for consideration. We'd love to hear from you!

Note: The deadline for submissions to the September/October 2018 issue of the *Aikorns* is Wednesday, August 15.

Contact the editor, Leslie Holzmman, at aikenaudubon@gmail.com or call (719) 964-3197.

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## MAY 16/ CLARK JONES ONE FINCH, TWO FINCH: A SHORT HISTORY OF COUNTING BIRDS IN THE UNITED STATES



Counting birds is an important part of tracking bird populations, but it is more complicated than one might think. Changes in bird populations have often been the first indicators that potentially irreversible damage is being suffered by an ecosystem. This presentation will give an overview of several of the bird-census programs used in North America and what they tell us about how bird populations are changing.

While the Breeding Bird Survey and Christmas Bird Count give us an overview of how some populations of birds may be fluctuating, several other lesser-known monitoring programs provide valuable information on the state of bird populations. We'll explore what some of the data reveal about bird population trends in Colorado

and other regions of United States, and what some of the limitations of our knowledge are.

Bird census techniques and data analysis have undergone dramatic improvements thanks to new analytical methods and better data. Sometimes they lead to controversy. The implications of a population estimate for an endangered species may have large policy consequences. Counting birds is important and having a better understanding of what the numbers mean can help you make important decisions regarding where you align your support for conservation policy.

**Aiken Audubon programs are free and open to the public. They are held at Bear Creek Nature Center, located at 245 Bear Creek Road in Colorado Springs, 80906. Coffee and socializing begins at 6:30 pm and programs begin at 7 pm.**

### President's Message, continued from front page

hang out with David Tønnessen; he's sure to find it.

We hosted a number of national and state authors. We participated in many bird counts and had displays in the public library, the Pikes Peak Center, Mueller State Park, and Florissant National Monument. We supported Colorado Springs Open Space BioBlitzes and the ever-expanding Pikes Peak Birding and Nature Festival.

Since it "takes a village" to accomplish these things, I would like to thank the many members who have given their time and financial support to the chapter. Without your efforts and continued interest, we would not be. So, thank you.

I relinquish my duties to the newly elected President and I wish her as much fun as I had.

**Risë Foster-Bruder**  
President, Aiken Audubon Society

## GLOBAL BIG DAY

### JOIN THE QUEST ON MAY 5 TO TALLY BIRDS FOR SCIENCE AND CONSERVATION

ITHACA, NY—Dedicated bird watchers worldwide have May 5 circled on their calendars, ready to do their part for Global Big Day in parks, forests, backyards, desert scrub, and every habitat imaginable. On that day, participants report their observations to the eBird website (ebird.org) run by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. A "Big Day" is an attempt to see or hear as many bird species as possible in 24 hours.

"You don't need to do a full day of birding—ten minutes, an hour, whatever time you can devote to bird watching on May 5 is great," says says Chris Wood at the Cornell Lab. "Every bird counts!"



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## Aiken Audubon Field Trips & Events

Everyone is welcome on Aiken field trips, regardless of experience level or membership in Audubon. Contact trip leader for details and to let them know you are coming. Remember to pack your binoculars, scope (if you have one), field guide, water, snack or lunch, hat, rain gear, sun screen, bug spray, camera(?), and some gas money for the drivers. No dogs are allowed.

Note: In cases of extreme weather, trips may be cancelled. If this might be a possibility, please contact the trip leader an hour before the scheduled meeting time. To receive e-mailed reminders of upcoming field trips and notices of last-minute cancellations, send your name and e-mail address to [AikenAudubon@gmail.com](mailto:AikenAudubon@gmail.com).

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### **SATURDAY, MAY 5, 7/7:30 (SEE BELOW) – 11:30 AM AIKEN CANYON PRESERVE**

Aiken Canyon Preserve is a Nature Conservancy-managed property. It is named after Charles Aiken, our chapter's namesake. Habitat consists of top quality piñon/juniper scrublands with islands of Ponderosa pine and spruce/fir in the upper canyon. Possible species include Ash-Throated Flycatcher, Juniper Titmouse, various jays, and all Colorado species of nuthatch and chickadee. It is a beautiful hike into the canyon. Expect a four mile hike over uneven hilly terrain; it will be moderately strenuous.



Meet at Broadmoor Town Center near Affordable Dentures at 7 am, or at Aiken Canyon Preserve parking lot at 7:30 am. Parking lot is 16 miles south of Lake Ave. off Hwy 115, 3350 Turkey Canon Ranch Rd, Colorado Springs, CO 80926. Turn right off Hwy 115 across from the Turkey Creek Recreation site on Ft. Carson.

Contact trip leader Gary Conover at [garylge@yahoo.com](mailto:garylge@yahoo.com) or 635-2505 with questions or to sign up. Limited to 15 participants.

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### **WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, TIMES IN BLUR CHICO BASIN RANCH (FULL)**

Join John Drummond to look for spring migrants that use Chico Basin Ranch as a stopping point on their journey north. Almost any type of warbler is possible. There will be bird banding in progress. This is a scouting trip for John's trip with the Pikes Peak Birding & Nature Festival the following weekend.

A 4WD vehicle is recommended if the roads are wet. Be sure to bring lunch, water, and sun protection.

Meet at 6:45 am at the Tejon Park & Ride, or 7:30 am at Hanover Fire Station. Limited to 15 participants. This is always a popular trip and fills up quickly. There is a \$10 fee per person for groups of 5 or more. Contact John Drummond at [jxdrummo@aol.com](mailto:jxdrummo@aol.com) with questions and/or to get on the waiting list.

### *More trips online!*

For the latest information on field trips and events:

**[www.AikenAudubon.com](http://www.AikenAudubon.com)**

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### **SATURDAY, MAY 12, 7 – 11 AM FOUNTAIN CREEK NATURE CENTER SPRING BIRD COUNT**

Beginning to advanced birders are needed to count and record the numbers of bird species and populations found in Fountain Creek Regional Park during the height of spring migration. Please RSVP to the Nature Center: (719) 520-6745, or register online. There is a \$5/participant fee that goes to keep the feeders filled. This event is sponsored by Fountain Creek Nature Center and is listed here for your convenience.

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### **WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13 SECOND ANNUAL "NEW MOON MOTH NIGHT"**

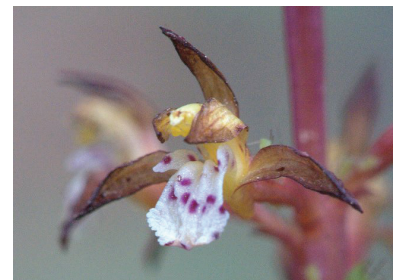
This event is sponsored by the Mile High Bug Club and will be held at Cheyenne Mountain State Park. There are a series of subsequent moth nights scheduled as well. For information, visit the club's Facebook page, or contact Eric Eaton at [bugeric247@gmail.com](mailto:bugeric247@gmail.com).



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### **FRIDAY, JUNE 15, 8 AM – 1 PM LOVELL GULCH NATURE WALK**

We will share our knowledge as we discover butterflies (usually 30+ species) and flowers (with three species of orchid possible), and the local breeding bird species (usually about 30 species). Possibilities include: Red-naped and Williamson's Sapsuckers, Hairy Woodpecker; MacGillivray's and Audubon's Warblers; Olive-sided, Hammond's and Cordilleran Flycatchers; Western Wood-Pewee; Steller's Jay; Clark's Nutcracker; Warbling and Plumbeous Vireos; Ruby-crowned Kinglet; Black-headed and Evening Grosbeaks; three species of Nuthatch; Townsend's Solitaire; Hermit Thrush; Western Tanager; Grey-headed Junco; and maybe some surprises). Last year, we found a Black Bear in a tree who cooperated with photographers. (I will try to arrange a reprise of his appearance this year, but this likely was a once in a lifetime appearance for him!)



We will walk mostly on trails into Lovell Gulch, a 3 mile round trip with 800' elevation gain, including a few short steep sections. We may need to bushwhack a short distance to find the orchids (which are not along the trails).

Carpool to the Lovell Gulch trailhead departs from the northwest corner of the Woodland Park Walmart parking lot (about a 3 mile drive). Bring drinking water, a snack, rain gear, sweater for early morning chill, and wear sturdy walking shoes.

Limited to 8 participants. Register with Dave Elwonger at [davidelwonger@msn.com](mailto:davidelwonger@msn.com).

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## HITCH RACK RANCH QUARRY PERMIT DENIED!

Stunningly, on Thursday, April 26, the state Mined Land Reclamation Board voted 3-2 to deny Transit Mix Concrete's (TMC) quarry permit request. As you may recall, the quarry would have been adjacent to the Aiken Canyon Preserve. This was the second application TMC had submitted—the first being denied in 2016 for hydrology and wildlife concerns. Hydrology proved to be the sticking point on this go-round as well. At the eleventh hour, the board felt the application didn't meet the standard for groundwater.

## VENETUCCI SELF-GUIDED BIRDING TRAIL CLOSED

You may recall that this trail was opened to the public just a year ago. Unfortunately, since the Pikes Peak Community Foundation is working to dispose of the property and has shut down farm operations, the trail's future is unknown. What we do know is that the trail will not be open to the public in 2018. David Rudin will be leading birding hikes there for a fee this summer, however, including one for Aiken Audubon. Please contact David to learn more: [dbrudin@yahoo.com](mailto:dbrudin@yahoo.com)

## CENTENNIAL EXTENSION THROUGH SONDERMANN PARK

It appears that Sondermann Park will remain intact for another year.

Work continues on the section of road between Centennial and Van Buren. Once that's completed, the Voluntary Clean-up of an undocumented trash site will begin, and should be wrapped up by summer of 2019. At that point, the phase that will impact the northeast corner of Sondermann—building the road from Van Buren to Fontanero—is expected to start. You might want to bird the property now, while the habitat remains undisturbed.

### JOIN THE CONSERVATION ACTION TEAM

Are you interested in learning about regional conservation issues? Might you be willing to send off an email to a legislator to protect a property or a species that you care about? Aiken Audubon is looking to put together a list of folks who could be contacted for issues of import. No commitment required. If this sparks an interest, please contact Linda Hodges at (719) 635.5551 or [hikerhodges@gmail.com](mailto:hikerhodges@gmail.com).

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON NATIONAL AUDUBON issues and actions, go to the Audubon Action Center, [audubonaction@audubon.org](mailto:audubonaction@audubon.org).

## LAWSUIT TO DESIGNATE WESTERN YELLOW- BILLED CUCKOO CRITICAL HABITAT

Back in 2014, the US Fish and Wildlife Service declared the western distinct population segment of the Yellow-billed Cuckoo a Threatened species. They neglected to designate critical habitat in the allotted time frame, however, and the Friends of Animals (a national organization) has decided to file suit on this issue. The Audubon Colorado Council (ACC), a 501(c)3 comprised of representatives from Colorado's various Audubon groups, has agreed to sign on to the lawsuit.



This has been a contentious issue on the western slope, where 10 pairs of the cuckoo reportedly remain. According to Nic Korte of the Grand Valley Audubon Society, "Part of the problem over here is what we see already as an over-reaction to potential critical habitat designation on the part of local political leaders, plus a feeling among many from the birding community that what habitat remains here, is already protected." Nic stated that this would likely strain their relationships with local USFWS and Colorado Parks and Wildlife officials, but they signed on to the lawsuit nonetheless.

## CELEBRATE THE YEAR OF THE BIRD

This year marks the centennial of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, what the National Geographic Society proclaims is "the most powerful and important bird-protection law ever passed." As we join bird lovers everywhere to celebrate this Year of the Bird, you might want to sign up for their "Calls to Action"—ways you can take part to ensure that birds are protected for another hundred years:

- May: Participate in Global Big Day on May 5
- June: Skip the Plastic (say NO to plastic straws, bags, etc.)
- July: Take a Child to Nature
- August: Discover Your Parks
- Sept: Help Birds on Their Journey (reduce window collisions)

Visit their website for more suggestions and details on how you can take part: <https://secure.everyaction.com/dS085lbtncSVsloby5h1ig2>

Hawaii... continued from front page

### **WAIMEA CANYON, KOKE'E STATE PARK, AND THE ALAKA'I SWAMP**

Waimea Canyon is a must stop on the way to Koke'e State Park. Called the Grand Canyon of the Pacific, it is a scenic wonder. Here you can see White-tailed Tropicbirds soaring past steep canyon walls and towering waterfalls. Be sure to check the parking lots for Kauai Elepaio, Kauai Amakihi, Northern Cardinal, and even Nene.



*Laysan Albatross*

Koke'e State Park takes you to the highest point on Kauai accessible by car. As you go through the park look for Red-crested Cardinal, Pacific Golden-Plover, Black and Erckel's Francolin, and Zebra Doves. Oh, did I mention chickens? Red Junglefowl are everywhere in the lower part of the park. Take a picnic lunch, but be prepared to defend it from these aggressive roosters. At the top of the park the views of the Napali Coast, over 4,000 feet below, are spectacular. At the viewing areas and parking lots you can easily see Apapane, Amakihi, I'iwi, and Francolins. Be sure to take a jacket and some patience. The clouds come and go, and a pause of a minute or two can offer changing views of the mountains, coast, and ocean. This is truly the most beautiful scenery on Kauai. Sometimes rainy, sometimes foggy, sometimes chilly, always captivating.

From Koke'e State Park you can access the trails that lead to the Alaka'i Swamp. A moderate-to-strenuous hike here can yield some of the most endangered species of endemic forest birds on Kauai. Akikiki, Akeke'e, Anianiau, and Puaiohi are possible along the swamp's boardwalk. A guide is recommended along with good hiking boots, bug spray and water.

On the drive up and down from the town of Waimea to the canyon and park, be sure to watch and listen for Hawaiian Hawk, Japanese Bush-Warbler, Scaly-breasted and Chestnut Munias.

### **KILAUEA POINT AND HANAIE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES**

Kilauea Point NWR is the perfect place to get up-close with some of the seabirds that nest on Kauai. Red-footed and Brown Boobies, Great Frigatebirds, Red-tailed and White-tailed Tropicbirds all soar by the point at eye level. In the winter months, add the nesting Laysan Albatross as must-see birds. Ungainly on the ground, they are graceful flyers that give you great looks as they waft on the ocean breeze seemingly close enough to touch. Around the lighthouse grounds you can watch for White-rumped Shama, Western Meadowlark, Nene, and Northern Cardinals.

Hanalei NWR near Princeville is a lowland area of taro fields that is an excellent site for stilts, coots, Common Gallinule, Nene, Hawaiian Duck, and wintering ducks. We have even seen a Barn Owl and Hawaiian Hawk flying nearby.

### **OTHER KAUAI LOCATIONS**

Try Poipu and Koloa for Rose-ringed Parakeets, Red Avadavat, Ring-necked Pheasant, Northern Mockingbird, munias, sparrows, and more.

Visit Wailua Reservoir for Hwamei, White-rumped Shama, wintering ducks, Common Mynas, gallinules, coots, and Black-crowned Night-Heron. We have also seen Lesser Scaup and Bufflehead on the reservoir.

I hope you have enjoyed this trip to the Islands of Aloha. A hui hou kakou (Until we meet again.) ☞

Field Trips... continued from page 3

### **SATURDAY JUNE 16, 7 - 9:30 AM VENETUCCI BIRD HIKE**

The Venetucci Farm Birding Trail is known for its diversity of song birds, which make nesting season a mellifluous experience. The farm is not open to self-guided birding hikes in 2018; however, a number of bird hikes guided by David Rudin have been scheduled. These hikes are normally \$12/adult, \$10/college student, \$7/children (children 5 and under are free). Aiken has arranged a special group rate of \$7 per person for this one morning. For more information or to register, email David at DBRudin@yahoo.com.

### **MONDAY, JUNE 25, TIMES TBA EMERALD VALLEY— BLOOMS, BUGS, & BIRDS**

Join Eric and Heidi Eaton on Aiken's annual search for the Yellow Lady Slipper Orchid, as well as numerous other wildflowers. We will see birds but they are not the top priority for this trip. Discover many insects as Eric and Heidi point them out throughout the day. Expect about three miles of hiking, half uphill, along a utility maintenance road.

The trip is limited to 12 people. Contact Eric Eaton at bugeric247@gmail.com.



### **SATURDAY, AUGUST 4 FOURTH ANNUAL GRASSHOPPER HUNT**

This trip to Chico Basin Ranch is sponsored by the Mile High Bug Club and is listed here for your convenience. For information, visit the club's Facebook page, or contact Eric Eaton at bugeric247@gmail.com.





## AIKEN AUDUBON SOCIETY

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You do not have to be a member to participate in Aiken's activities.

### AIKEN AUDUBON ELECTIONS

During the May monthly program, elections will be held for the positions of president, president elect, secretary, and treasurer. At this point, there is only one candidate for each of the open positions, and we lack a Secretary (please consider volunteering). Candidates are: President: Anna Joy Lehmicke, President-elect: Clark Jones, Secretary: no candidate, Treasurer: Linda Hodges. Please plan to attend our May meeting.

### AIKEN'S WEATHER CANCELLATION POLICY

Sometimes inclement weather may cause us to cancel an Aiken meeting. If this happens, a decision will be made by 1 PM on the meeting date. Notification will be placed on our website, on our Facebook page, and sent out through our email notification list. In addition, a message will be posted on the CoBirds Listserv, which many Aiken birders subscribe to. If there is any doubt, please do not hesitate to contact any Aiken board members via telephone. Always, your safety is first so use your own judgement when coming to a meeting.



Look for the  
**Aiken Audubon Society**  
**Facebook page!**

[facebook.com/pages/Aiken-Audubon-Society](https://facebook.com/pages/Aiken-Audubon-Society)

### Flores' Funnies



Artist Rick Flores, an El Paso County Nature Center volunteer, enjoys sharing his views of happenings at Bear Creek & Fountain Creek Nature Centers.