

# Chukar Chatter

The Grand Valley Audubon Society's Newsletter



Fall 2011

## Thank You Letter from Greg Linza, Mesa County Parks & Landscape Manager

I would like to take this opportunity to send out this **SPECIAL THANK YOU** acknowledging the following Contractors/Businesses/Organizations and County employees that all worked together on the repairs of the Audubon Trail after flooding occurred this last spring. As many of you are aware, high water entered the Endangered Fish cut into the South Bank of the Colorado river located at the Audubon Nature Center site. As it continued to rise, it flowed over Dike Road and in the Audubon's South ponds where it continued across the Audubon Trail and drained in the Redlands tail race canal. When flowing across the trail and dropping in the canal it scoured out a section of land 100' in length, 200' wide and approximately 5' in depth. (see attached photos)

The final repair costs when adding all donations came to \$46,863.28



Before



After

As mentioned above, The following businesses/contractors/organizations and employees all copied on this e-mail deserve a special **THANK YOU** from Mesa County for the timely repairs required and Great donations to complete the damage caused to the Audubon Trail.

Mesa County Parks staff have made a request of \$15,000.00 for repairs to the Colorado Riverfront Foundation, Inc. and will hear back from them Mid September.

Colorado West Contracting, Preston Mease donated \$10,000.00 in labor and equipment charges.

Grand Valley Audubon Society, Bob Wilson, Karen Levad donated approximately \$8,000.00 worth of sand stone for the project.

Whitewater Building Materials Corp, Mark Gardner donated \$1,500.00, 60 CY, Class 6 Road base for the project.

Asphalt Specialists & Supply, Earl Elam donated \$1,000.00 in labor & equipment charges for asphalt repairs.

United Companies, Kyle Alpha donated all the asphalt to repair the trail worth \$1,700.00

Mesa County Public Works, Bill Taylor staff Engineer took the time out of his busy days to give me a construction detail/profile on how to repair the trail and prepare it for future flooding with hope it will not happen again.

After all donations and support, Mesa County tax payers will pay \$9,663.28

# It's Happening Again! GVAS Fall Birding Festival



Saturday, October 8

7:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

Grand Valley Audubon  
**Nature Center**

610 Dike Road

(Just east of Connected  
Lakes State Park)

- Free demonstrations
- Falconry Exhibit
- Prizes
- Bird Banding

And More!!!



**Able to help?**  
Call Mary Korte @ 242-3779 to  
volunteer!



## 2011 Bird Banding Station

The 2011 Bird Banding Station begins next Monday September 19 and continues through October 14. Cary Atwood is the lead for this event as part of her work with the Colorado Environmental Education Coalition. She'll be working in collaboration with Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, and of course, the volunteers who really make this event possible. The Division of Wildlife is also a valuable partner in this effort.



Cutbacks in School District #51 makes transportation funding a critical issue. If you can help support this cause with a donation we'll be most appreciative (so will the kids!)

# Program Schedule — Fall 2011

## September 19 — Preserving the Land: Mesa Land Trust

Rob Bleiberg, Executive Director of the Mesa Land Trust, will kick-off our program year with a presentation on *Mesa Land Trust*, a private, nonprofit land conservation organization based in Mesa County in Western Colorado. Their mission is to “work to maintain the unique character, agriculture and history of Mesa County through partnerships with voluntary landowners, local governments, Mesa County, The Nature Conservancy and a variety of outside funding agencies.” The Trust now holds over 130 conservation easements and has conserved over 60,000 acres of land containing important orchards, vineyards, cropland, large working ranches, and habitat for deer, elk and the Gunnison Sage Grouse in addition to a variety of other species.



Photo Credits: Mesa Land Trust



GVAS PROGRAMS ARE HELD THE  
3RD MONDAY OF THE MONTH  
7:00 P.M.  
AT THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH  
3940 27 1/2 ROAD

## October 17 — Wild Utah: Protecting Greater Canyonlands and Beyond!

Do you love Utah's red rock canyon country? Do you want to see these lands protected for the future? Then you will want to attend this presentation.

You will enjoy stunning images in a multimedia slide show narrated by Robert Redford, and hear an inside update about new opportunities to protect Utah's wild lands – including a new citizens' campaign to protect the Greater Canyonlands, the utterly magnificent landscapes surrounding Canyonlands National Park.

Come learn some simple things you can do to help protect Utah's red rock. Terri Martin of the Southern Utah Wilderness will be our host.



## November 21 — Birding Brazil

Brenda Wright and Coen Dexter will be back in town and ready to share their Brazil Adventure with us. While they probably didn't see ALL the Birds of Brazil, they will have good stories to share about this rich and varied country to the south.

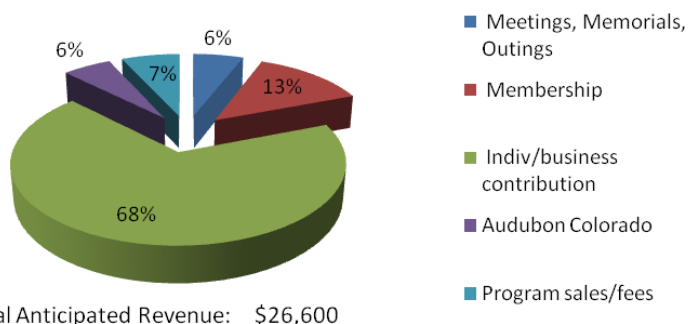
### Bird Talk

1st Thursday of each Month at noon  
Brought to you by KAFM Radio 88.1

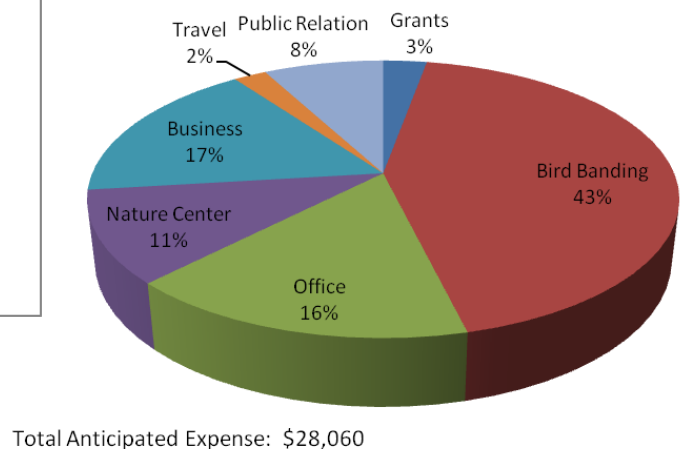
# GVAS Fall Field Trips:

PLEASE NOTE: ALL FIELD TRIPS REQUIRE REGISTRATION - CALL THE TRIP LEADER PARTICIPATION IN GVAS FIELD TRIPS COSTS \$5 PER FAMILY OR \$5 PER INDIVIDUAL							
GVAS WEBSITE: WWW.AUDUBONGV.ORG							
Date	Location	Leader (s)	Dif f Sca le	Meeting Place	Meet Time	End Time	Bring
<b>2 0 1 1</b>							
10-11 Sept. Sat -Sun	Ouray County Bird Count Team Competi- tion On Sunday Extend to higher eleva- tion's of Ouray County	Black Canyon Audubon Coen Dexter 864-7195	2	Get rules/forms at visitor center lobby, of Ridgway State Park. No meeting place. Call or e-mail Coen Dexter to have rules e- mailed to you. coenbrenda@yahoo.com			Lunch, Snacks & Water
8- Oct Saturday	Ridgway Area in- cluding Uncompahgre River Trail and higher eleva- tions	Geoff Tischbein 626-9721	2	Ridgway State Park-Dallas entrance. Go left after ticket office to end of road.	8:30 a.m.	Mid Af- ternoon	Warm Cloth- ing Lunch, Snacks, Wa- ter & State Parks Pass
22-23 October Fri-Sun	Moab Area includ- ing Westwater, Dead Horse Point St. Park & Warner Lake (at 9000 ft) in La Sal Mountains	Fran & Paul Didier 242-8643 & Ronda Woodward 256-0725	2	Call Didiers to register and for Hotel infor- mation	7:30 a.m. Saturday	Mid after- noon Sun- day	Warm Cloth- ing; Lunch makings for 2 days, Snacks & Water
22-Oct Saturday	Vega Lake	Jim Liewer 243-7020	2	Palisade H.S. Parking lot	8:00 a.m.	All Day	Lunch, Snacks, Wa- ter, Jacket
5-Nov Saturday	Grand Jct. Wildlife Area & Connected Lakes	Paul & Fran Didier 242-8643	2	SW Corner Hwy 340 & Monument Rd S of Dos Hombres	8:00 a.m.	Noon	Lunch, Snacks & Water
19-Nov Saturday	Grand Valley Water- fowl trip	Bob Bradley 263-4613	1	Corn Lake State Park	8:00 a.m.	Mid to late after- noon	Lunch, Snacks & Water
18-Dec Sunday	Grand Junction Christmas Bird Count	Contact Party Leaders or the Didiers 242-8643	2- 3	Various	Various	6 p.m. dinner	Lunch, Snacks & Water

## 2011 - 2012 Anticipated Revenue



## 2011-2012 Anticipated Expense



## Board Developments

GVAS Board is blending the old with the new as we continue efforts to bring new faces and new voices to leadership roles.

Veterans to GVAS board participation are Nic Korte and Bob Wilson. Nic has served GVAS in a number of capacities. He will serve as Vice-president for a 1 year term and then move into a 1 year term as GVAS president.

Bob Wilson is back in the role of President for a 1 year term. The arrangement allows time for new board members to learn the ropes. It also will give the board time to continue to recruit new members and fill other leadership positions.

New to the board are Jessie Wilbert, Leon Thurmon, John Heideman and Doug Shoffner. "I'm delighted with the result of this Spring's recruiting effort," Karen Levad, former GVAS president, commented recently. "People have responded to our appeal for volunteer help in a number of areas."

The new board members join Larry Collins, Rob Magill and Cary Atwood along with Nic and Bob. The board will be presented for approval at the Annual Membership meeting scheduled for September 19 at the 1st Presbyterian Church at 7:00 p.m. The short meeting will precede the September Program.

## GVAS Budget Status

One of the roles of a Board is to ensure that an organization is fiscally responsible. Larry Collins, GVAS treasurer, prepared a proposed budget for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. Highlights of that budget are presented below. In addition the charts on Page 4 provide a quick overview of our Revenue/Expense percentages.

### ANTICIPATED INCOME

**Individual Contributions:** There are individuals and businesses recognize and value the work of GVAS and we depend on them. Their support represents 61% of our revenue. Throughout the year we receive memorial donations, Birdathon support, and program contributions along with random donations that allow us to do our work.

**Membership:** We actually receive only 13% (or \$3,500) of our Revenue from Membership. The percentage could be far higher. We have approximately 450 members, and our individual membership fee is \$35. If everyone were up to date with their membership renewals we could realize a \$10,000 increase in revenue. It's an area that we need to be paying closer attention to.

**National Audubon:** We receive 6% of our revenue from National Audubon for those who become members of National Audubon. Jim Liewer, our Membership chair, does a great job of tracking that so that we receive the membership credit we depend on.

**Outings, Meetings, Sales/Fees:** Dollars collected at our monthly program meetings or on field trips become another source of revenue for us. We also receive a

## Annual GVAS Membership Meeting

September 17, 2011

7:00 p.m.

### Agenda:

- Introduction of 2011-2012 Board of Directors
- Election of 2011-2012 GVAS Officers
- Approval of 2011-2012 GVAS Budget

The short business meeting will be followed by the September Program: Rob Bleiberg of Mesa Land Trust (details page 3).

Meeting is held at the First Presbyterian Church, 3940 27 1/2 Road.

portion of the fees charged by Grand Junction Parks and Rec for the Science Sleuth camps that we offer each summer.

**Nature Center:** Small Nature Center donations are funneled directly into our annual budget for the maintenance and small projects needed to maintain the Nature Center. Larger Nature Center donations are kept in a Capital Improvement fund (containing \$53,275.)

### ANTICIPATED EXPENSES

**Bird Banding:** Most of our expenses are centered on our educational outreach specifically the Bird Banding Station conducted each Fall targeting area 5th graders. We contract with Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory to hire a certified bird bander. We also budget to assist in transportation costs, for Port-A-Potties, and to pay for an environmental educator/coordinator.

**Business:** This category is primarily for the insurance we're required to have on our property and to pay for preparation of our annual 990 report to the IRS. We also help support an environmental lobbyist who helps Colorado Audubon groups stay informed on legislative topics that could impact our mission.

**Office:** This is related to various supplies, signs, postage, mailing that are needed in the course of our business as an organization.

**Public Relation:** Pays for the Annual Fall Birding Festival, Volunteer Appreciation, the Web site, and Chukar Chatter.

**Nature Center:** As mentioned earlier this is for small maintenance projects and weed control on the Nature Center property.

**Grants:** Used as contributions to other environmental organizations or projects like the Black Swift geo-locator efforts.

## Nic's Chatter by Nic Korte

Barn Owl Project Update: Hoping to expand the successful Western Screech Owl Project begun by Rich Levad approximately 20 years ago, GVAS has embarked on a barn owl project. We do not know how common barn owls are or can be in the Grand Valley—so we hope to find out. Typically, we have found barn owls nesting in holes in ditch or canal banks but most those have been lost to development, recreational vehicle damage, or shooting. A project north of Salt Lake City had dramatic success some years ago by installing artificial nest boxes. We hope to install ten or more this fall and observe what occurs over the next few years. (Thanks to Charlie Maurer who has built the first group of boxes.) Installation will occur during October and November. If you believe you know of a good location for a barn owl (we are especially looking for abandoned/empty silos), please contact me at 242 3779 or [nkorte1@hotmail.com](mailto:nkorte1@hotmail.com). If you wish to contribute to purchase of construction materials, please send to P.O. Box 1211, GJ, 81502.

Save Our State Parks: Several states (Arizona, California) have had closings and curtailed hours at State Parks. Serious budget cuts are a reality and closings have been proposed in Colorado. Recently, an evaluation of 32 years of State Park usage in the US was released. Approximately 1/3 of the time that US citizens spend on nature recreation is at State Parks. Nature recreation was valued at \$14 billion nationwide compared to annual operating costs of \$2.3 billion. Cutting funding for state parks should not be on the agenda for Colorado.

Big Number Politics-Anyone who died by 1930 never saw a doubling of the human population. A person born in 1930 has lived with a tripling of the human population. Is there any doubt that these facts are the root of our environmental (and many other) problems? The most significant failure of our political leadership has been the failure to grapple with population change. As the world population approaches 7 billion, on its way to a projected 9-12 billion (depending on whose projection) this century, what are we going to do about it? We are embarking on another political season. Do any of the candidates discuss whether a 9 billion world is better than a 12 billion world? No matter which scenario is going to occur, renewable energy and increased efficiency with energy and water are essential and population progressions have to be part of the discussion. We must continue to argue for and vote for policies most likely to provide a decent world for future generations. And, we must demand our political leaders honestly address these issues.

Dam Dams and Sins of Semantics: Remember reading of China's massive Three Gorges Dam? Prior to construction, many scientists predicted environmental catastrophe. Just completed in 2003, China has already announced a nearly \$27 billion dollar project to mitigate the damage. Erosion and sediment problems are worse than expected and newly-found problems with water quality and human disease (caused by proliferation of an unexpected snail) were not even contemplated. The history of every water project reads similarly. We in the environmental community have consistently fought most of these projects but are usually quoted as saying "such and such damage 'may' occur." There are no "mays" or "maybes" about it. Any dam or diversion causes damage. The magnitude of damage can be argued, but damage always occurs. Witness the continued controversy regarding operation of Glen Canyon Dam and its deleterious effects on the Grand Canyon and whether water should be allowed to flow through to Lake Mead and Las Vegas. This "wet" year gave us a break from that controversy but all predictions are that the respite is temporary. Similarly, the proposed multi-billion dollar pipeline from Flaming Gorge to Colorado's Front Range would cause significant environmental degradation. The Grand Junction Daily Sentinel, citing the high cost of the project in a recent editorial, opposed appointing a task force to study the idea. Many Front Range newspapers and politicians, however, support the project.

Oil Quagmire(s): I have argued that the oil and gas industry is one of its own worst enemies. The industry consistently fights against environmental regulations while paying frequent fines for violations. (The September 7 Daily Sentinel noted a multi-million dollar fine being assessed in Utah.) Meanwhile, the same companies use television and print-media advertisements to extol the virtues of the "clean" energy they produce and how much concern they have for the environment. The August 12 issue of Science described massive spills in Nigeria that will require decades and billions to clean up. We suspect that clean-up probably will not happen. A year ago, I was in Ecuador and saw some of the degradation first-hand. (Read the book Savages or rent the movie Crude to learn more.) Certainly, not every detail of these spills is the fault of the major oil companies, but they deserve much of the blame. What the oil and gas industry needs is a new culture. Yes, the cost of compliance and doing their best instead of the minimum will have to be passed on to the consumer, but I believe I speak for almost everyone when I say we would rather pay more for gasoline at the pump than to "pay" indirectly for loss of American prestige because of excesses of multi-national corporations in foreign countries and loss of recreation lands and opportunities here at home. They can do a better job.

## Help Protect the Greater Canyonlands Region by Terri Martin

There is no landscape on earth like the redrock canyon country of southern Utah. To follow a winding wash down a serpentine canyon, to hear the cascading call of a canyon wren pierce the timeless silence, to lie with your back on stone and stare at soaring cliffs, is to restore a sense of sanity and rekindle hope.

But like too many places we love, the precious landscapes of southern Utah remain at risk. Bush-era resource management plans leave these lands vulnerable to exploding off-road vehicle use, oil and gas development, and the endless proliferation of roads. The pressure is relentless, and without action this extraordinary landscape will be diminished.

Conservationists have long promoted passage of America's Red Rock Wilderness Act, a visionary act that would protect 9.2 million acres of BLM land in Utah. Now red rock enthusiasts are calling on the Obama administration to protect the Greater Canyonlands – the magnificent wild region surrounding Canyonlands National Park. This is a landscape of stunning plateaus and unique geologic formations, 10,000 year old archeological sites, and unmatched natural beauty – including iconic landmarks such as Labyrinth Canyon, Indian Creek, White Canyon, Robbers Roost and the Dirty Devil.

The good news is that the Obama administration has tools available to protect Greater Canyonlands – *if they choose to act*. President Obama could protect the region through executive action. Interior Secretary Salazar could respond to conservationists' petition seeking review of existing off-road vehicle plans that open over 2,400 miles of routes in the area. BLM could grant a comprehensive public comment period inviting citizen input about the future of Greater Canyonlands.

But the Obama administration needs to act. The future of Greater Canyonlands lies in their hands.

How you can help:

Urge President Obama to protect the Greater Canyonlands region: [feedback@ios.doi.gov](mailto:feedback@ios.doi.gov)

Help us collect 10,000 signed postcards to Obama: contact [terri@suwa.org](mailto:terri@suwa.org)

For more info: [www.suwa.org](http://www.suwa.org)

Terri Martin is the Southwest Regional Organizer for the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance .

## Become a Member! Invite a Friend!!

### The Grand Valley Audubon Society Local Membership Application

Please enroll me/us in the Grand Valley Audubon Society.

Benefits:

- Satisfaction that membership dues stay local
- The quarterly **Chukar Chatter** to keep you informed on GVAS projects and activities
- Easy way to support habitat recovery and environmental issues in the Grand Valley
- Support our "No Child Left Inside" efforts to help students learn about and enjoy the great outdoors

Name/s: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual \$35    \_\_\_\_\_ Family \$40    \_\_\_\_\_ Student \$20

\_\_\_\_\_ I want to donate more to support the mission of Grand Valley Audubon Society! Please accept my tax-deductible donation.

Make checks payable to GVAS, PO Box 1211, Grand Junction, CO. 81502 or apply on-line at [www.audubongv.org](http://www.audubongv.org)

Join or donate to National Audubon Society directly and receive the AUDUBON Magazine! Call 1-800-274-4201 or go to [www.joinaudubon.org](http://www.joinaudubon.org). Use chapter code D04/7XCH

## Chukar Chatter

This newsletter is published four times a year: September-November, December –February, March-May, and June-August by the Grand Valley Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society.

Readers are encouraged to submit original articles or art to the Chatter. Please state if the article or art has been published elsewhere requiring publisher's permission. The editor reserves the right to edit and to select suitable articles for publication. Please feel free to reproduce and distribute all or any part of this publication.



## Fall 2011

*The Grand Valley Audubon Society strives to foster an appreciation for birds and other wildlife, preserve a diversity of habitats, and provide a sustainable healthy environment through education, research and individual action.*

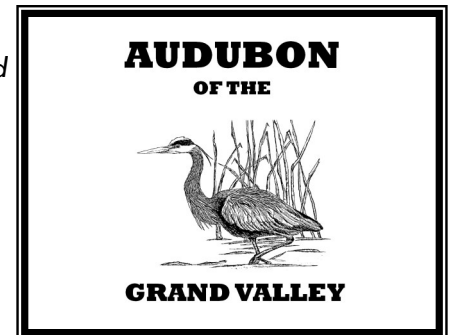
### Who's Whooo at Audubon

#### GVAS Board:

Bob Wilson, President 2011-2012	250-0711	bluebirdbob@gmail.com
Cary Atwood, Secretary	201-9651	catwood814@gmail.com
Larry Collins, Treasurer	242-2843	lcollins1@bresnan.net
Nic Korte, Vice-President	242-3779	nkorte1@hotmail.com
John Heideman		jheideman@qwest.net
Rob Magill	623-9369	rmagill@swildlife.com
Doug Shoffner		eishky@hotmail.com
Leon Thurmon, Program Chair		lmthurmon@yahoo.com
Jessie Wilbert		Jessie.Wilbert@d51schools.org

#### GVAS Committees:

Fran & Paul Didier, Field Trips	242-8643	didier@cheerful.com
Nic Korte, Conservation	242-3779	nkorte1@hotmail.com
Karen Levad, Newsletter Editor	314-9071	levadgj@bresnan.net
Jim Liewer, Membership	243-7020	jcrlie@bresnan.net
Bob Moston, Audubon Colorado Rep	242-9443	bandjmost@bresnan.net



PO Box 1211  
Grand Junction, CO 81502-1211  
Phone: 970-241-4670

Nature Center & Lucy Ferril Ela  
Wildlife Sanctuary  
at Connected Lake State Park

**We're on the Web!**  
[www.audubongv.org](http://www.audubongv.org)