

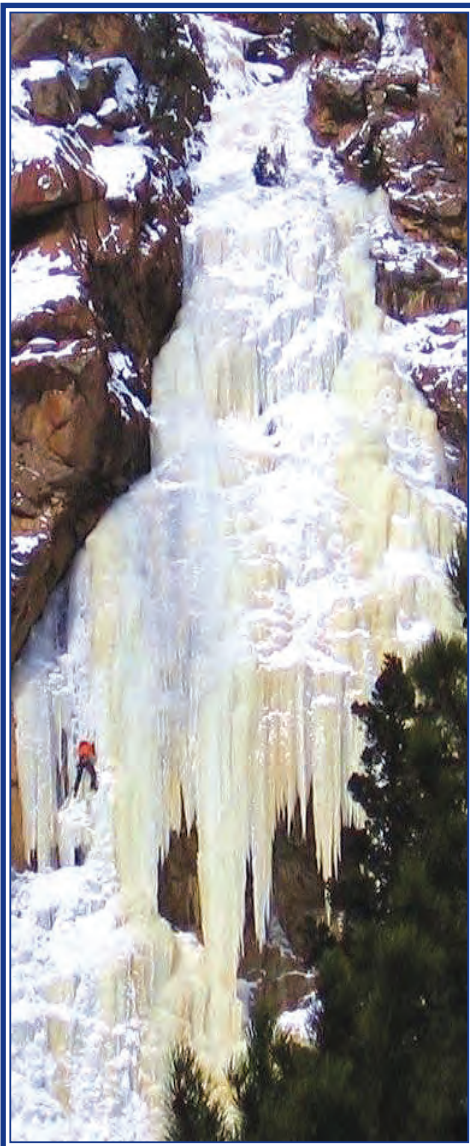


ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATURE ASSOCIATION

Winter 2010

\$2.00

QUARTERLY



WINTER PATROL

by C.W. Buchholtz

For years I envied my fellow rangers who patrolled the backcountry year-round, especially in the winter. Thinking back on the stories they told, I was entertained as they bragged about exploits in subzero blizzards. They showed photos of themselves standing next to remote patrol cabins mostly buried by snowdrifts, miles from nowhere. In the background you could see the tunnels they'd shoveled toward hidden doorways.

They recalled close encounters with avalanches or cracking ice or freezing rivers. Over time, their feats were retold as legends among mountaineers; their ski trips were the stuff of daring-do. They ventured where others feared to tread.

I've seen their photos: men almost frozen, clearly uncomfortable, yet grinning with snow-cave bluster. I've never forgotten one special story about these fellows skidding on skis at high speeds across a frozen lake, arms and jackets held wide open with the wind at their backs, almost sailing, hurling themselves toward a distant shore.

At the time it was hard to believe that government workers could be paid for such frolic. Envy made me

want to join them.

For more than two decades I served as a summer ranger. That meant that I became skilled at forest fire fighting, rescues and other summertime specialties. Only in my last seasons as a ranger did I participate in winter patrols.

But why, you might ask, do park or forest rangers even bother patrolling backcountry trails in the dead of winter when few people even visit? Why would anyone voluntarily suffer the rigors of bad weather, willingly trade office work for chilblains?

It's essential that rangers be properly trained to work (and survive) in rigorous conditions when they tackle wintertime emergencies. Imagine the toil and stamina needed when saving a fallen climber from the likes of Longs Peak in January.

Recently I reread Dorr Yeager's classic 1930s novel, *Bob Flame: Rocky Mountain Ranger* (currently being reprinted by RMNA). It's a work of fiction, but it's based on fact. It reminded me of those glory days of early rangers, when the National Park Service, as a new federal agency, began promoting the image of rangers as master mountaineers, guardians of

(Winter Patrol, continued on page 2)



Photo: Larry Van Sickle

(Winter Patrol, continued)

wildlife, larger than life heroes, the personification of the preservation ethic.

What an adventure it must have been to track some miscreant on snowshoes across the Continental Divide during winter. What a task to rescue errant mountain climbers caught in the grips of blizzards. What a challenge to blaze winter trails without today's electronic guidance systems, radios or phones, lighter weight and high-tech equipment.

I remember my relief some years ago when I completed my very last winter patrol as a ranger. My mission was to conduct a "snow survey" at an isolated site, located a couple of miles from Marias Pass in northwest Montana. Such monthly surveys were done throughout the mountains to gauge the snow layers and help predict avalanche danger. I also was on the lookout for wildlife poachers.

The snow that day (so typical in Montana) was six feet deep but too sloppy for skis, so I chose snowshoes. Strapped to my feet were the government-issued variety (probably vintage World War II) which were terrible at shedding wet snow from their webbing. With each step I took, snow built up beneath. After only a few strides, I was lifting twenty or thirty pounds of heavy, packed snow on each foot. A miserable three or four hours followed. Completing this trek, I recall tossing those snowshoes in my

truck one last time, figuring that this was my last winter patrol. I swore I would never use snowshoes again.

Fast forward twenty-five years. Fast forward lots of changes. Fast forward me, now twenty-five years older. Today our winter clothing is much lighter and stays dryer as we exercise. Cleverly designed snowshoes are lighter, easier to wear, and much more comfortable. Like lots of people over the last two decades, I cautiously became reacquainted with snowshoes. Modern snowshoeing now resembles hiking. It feels a lot less like drudgery.

So now there's a new found freedom in the mountains. And I can feel like I'm back on winter patrol, not as a ranger, of course, but as a citizen. With the proper gear, winter can be the best of times. Like the rangers, I'm out inspecting my park, ready to face a blizzard without much worry. Let the wind blow, I say, let the snow fly. My lightweight emergency gear allows me to believe that I'm pretty well prepared.

But twenty-five years' time has also changed the nature of the backcountry. Today, more people are venturing out. As a result, some of the romance and mystery, most of that old fashioned bravado, is long gone. No longer are rangers the only ones trekking around the Rockies. People of all ages have learned that snowshoeing and cross-country skiing are great ways to explore national parks in the winter. A frolic in these

snow covered mountains isn't just for those crusty rangers of yesteryear. It's available to anyone.

In December or January when I drive down to Denver for a meeting, many times people will ask, "Is the park open in the winter?" I respond with a little kidding, "Nope," I say. "It's waaay too cold. It's pretty much closed until May."

Then I laugh and tell them all about snowshoeing, how it's such a well kept secret. I tell how I hated that dismal, trapper-like trudging way back when I was a ranger. And then I explain how I learned to appreciate winter all over again. I describe how magnificent the park appears in wintertime.

You don't need to be a ranger to explore the park year around. Here is a quick glimpse from my most recent winter patrol. In the distance I spotted a coyote on the hunt, appearing to glide through the forest like some phantom. In a flash, it disappeared into the surrounding forest. At the same moment, closer by, I spotted a snowshoe hare, sitting silent, white-as-snow, tucked safely in a rocky nook. It, too, had watched the coyote vanish.

Yes, the park is open. Yes, there is a lot to see. Just get a pair of those newfangled snowshoes. Pretend you're a ranger. Tramp a trail into the woods. Enjoy your patrol.

Curt Buchholtz is the Executive Director of the Rocky Mountain Nature Association.



NEW RMNA BOOK TAKES CHILDREN ON RAINDROPS RUNOFF ADVENTURES

One summer afternoon, a rumbling rainstorm swept across Rocky Mountain National Park. Two tiny raindrops, Rainy and Splash, floated down through the dark sky and came to a landing just a few feet apart, on two different sides of a high mountain ridge. In an instant, gravity tugged Rainy toward the east. Splash was pulled westward. The two raindrops would not be running off together to the same ocean. Why? Their adventures started out on a magical place, the Continental Divide.

Rainy and Splash are the sodden protagonists in the Rocky Mountain Nature Association's new children's book, *The Adventures of Two Raindrops Running Wild*, scheduled for publication early in 2010. Beautifully illustrated by Allenspark, Colo., artist Ben Brown, the 36-page softcover book follows Rainy and Splash on cross-country runoff adventures down some of America's great rivers toward the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

"*Running Wild* shows kids how the Great Divide separates the country's two principal watersheds. The two raindrops also visit some wonderful places on their riverborne odysseys," said John Gunn, RMNA's publications manager and author of the book's text. "Along the way, Rainy and Splash introduce youngsters to important natural and human history themes, in addition to telling the story of the water cycle. This book is fun, exciting and educational."

Running Wild was designed by Allenspark book designer Ann Green. RMNA's Nancy Wilson provided editorial assistance. The book was funded by the association's Next Generation Fund and will be available at RMNA bookstores and online at www.rmna.org.



Cover photo credits

Cover photos (clockwise from lower left to upper right): "Jaws," by RMNA Member Marcia Tavel, Estes Park - see the little climber in the corner? <whew!>; "Aw, Winter, Already?" by RMNA Member Gene Putney, Longmont, CO; "Winter Trails," by Vicki Beauth, Aurora, CO. Please send photos or high resolution scans to nancy.wilson@rmna.org by March 1 for publication in the Spring 2010 *Quarterly*.

Photos are always appreciated! Scenery, wildlife and wildflowers greatly enhance this publication, so take a hike and carry your camera with you! Think simple and high contrast for best reproduction results. Thank You!

Ask Nancy

[RMNA Quarterly Editor Nancy Wilson will attempt to unearth answers to any questions asked by RMNA members and park visitors. If you are curious about something in or about the park, write: Nancy Wilson, RMNA, PO Box 3100, Estes Park, CO 80517. Or email her at nancy.wilson@rmna.org]

What is the chemical in Ponderosa tree bark that smells like vanilla, or butterscotch, depending on the person? This smell that is discernable to some and not others, is due to the presence of terpenes in the tree's resin, also the source of turpentine. Genetics can affect the strength of the terpenes in a tree but, significantly, so do insects. Insects feeding on the tree stimulate it to produce additional resins (terpenes) as a means of defense. In turn, birds that feed on these insects can alter this chemistry by reducing this effect. Aberts squirrels have the ability to select the trees strongest in terpenes as do porcupines and pine beetles.—*Former RMNP Ranger, Jeff Maugans.*

What is predicted for the survival of pikas with the impact of climate change in Rocky Mountain National Park? At this time we can't fully evaluate whether Rocky's pikas are being impacted by climate change. Our historic records of pika locations are sketchy so there is not much information to compare across time. And pikas, like many animals, have significant year-to-year fluctuations in numbers that are influenced by annual climate variability - so it can be hard to interpret patterns across the short-term. Currently, however, there are two pika studies being conducted in the park. In the first, conducted by the Colorado Division of Wildlife, the researcher selected 18 random plots in talus-boulder habitat in the park and found pika in 5 of them (27.7%). Keep in mind, based on this work, preferred pika habitat is high, over 12,500 feet and the park has pretty limited habitat compared to other Colorado locations, like Mount Evans. The second park study is being conducted by a University of Colorado graduate student who is checking historic locations. In 2008, she was able to visit 8 sites that had a historic record of pika because a museum had a specimen collected from the location. Of these, she found active pika at 6 sites. The two sites that did not have pika were at the lowest elevations - so this may be a preliminary indication of climate change impacts. However, the study is continuing - and we will need to see results from several years to determine if there are real trends. It can be frustrating to be told that researchers are "still working on it", but science is a cautious way of knowing. For now, I am cautiously optimistic that pika will endure in Rocky for a very long time. But there is no easy answer to your question because models for climate warming in the high, rugged mountains of Colorado are not yet very good. Climate modelers do expect temperatures to warm, but how much and how fast is unknown.—*RMNP Resources Management Specialist Judy Visty.*

What is the park's policy of inholdings and grandfathering in properties? How could a new private home have been recently built within park boundaries? Inholdings are private properties within the boundary of the park. These private properties existed before the (*Ask Nancy continued on page 10*)



Where's the Tuxedo in the Park?

by Carmen Johnson



A postcard of the store at "Jack Woods Place," 1915.

From the Collection of Bobbie Heisterkamp

Today, visitors come to Rocky Mountain National Park to enjoy the beauty of nature, for respite from the hustle and bustle of busy lives and to energize bodies, minds and spirits. Earlier people were attracted to the area for these same reasons and what's known about the sites that were developed during these times tell their own story.

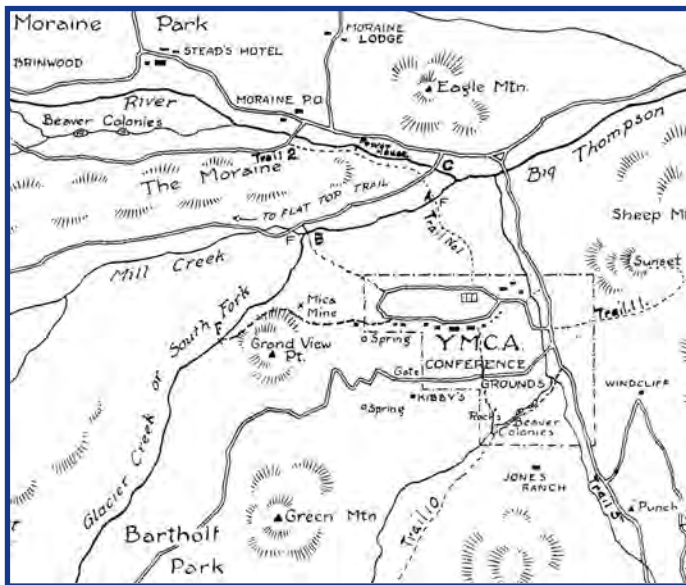
While little obvious evidence of these former occupants remains, there's much to unearth through various resources, such as local historians and RMNP staff. What structures did these earlier residents build? In what activities did they engage? What remains of their presence?

The history of the Moraine Park area is quite well known, documenting many early settlers that established homes and resorts in this scenic valley. Nearby Tuxedo Park is less known and was slower to see development and settlement.

In addition to his many other local involvements, F. O. Stanley visited and acquired land near where Glacier Creek joins the Big Thompson River. He and his friends came to this site to camp. The landscape reminded Stanley of a place in the Hudson Valley. Tuxedo Park, New York was developed in the latter 1800s as a resort for the wealthy of New York City.

The name for Tuxedo Park in New York did not come from men's formal wear as one might expect. The name

"Tuxedo" either came from the Indian P'Tauk-Seet who had lived in the Hudson Valley, or it may have originated from the Native American word "tucsedo." Centuries later, a more casual evening attire than the then customary tails was first worn at a ball in the Tuxedo Club at



Map of the area, circa 1915.

Courtesy of the YMCA of the Rockies, Dorsey Museum

Tuxedo Park, NY. The outfit, the tuxedo, was named after its place of origin.

Stanley established an overnight camping facility in Tuxedo Park, taking advantage of the new interest in auto camping that was sweeping the country. His campground accommodated as many as 50 cars a night, at 50 cents a vehicle.

Stanley's was not the only campground in the area and Rocky Mountain National Park did not appreciate their presence. In June 1922, the park superintendent was reported to say, "...such camps must be controlled."

In 1915, at the same time the national park was established, a 21-year-old young man named Charles Woods came to Estes Park. Not a great deal is known about his background, but he probably came from the Chicago area. It is known that Charles Howard "Jack" Woods bought

property near Thunder Mountain on the road past the recently established YMCA (now called Tunnel Road) and made the area his home.

Woods also acquired land in Tuxedo Park, immediately building a grocery and fishing supply store along the south bank of the Big Thompson River. What an ideal location for a business! Campers and visitors in the area must have been delighted to purchase their supplies so conveniently. Not long after, Jack Woods was also put in charge of the road and trail crews in the new national park.

The first entrance into RMNP was along the same route early settlers took into Moraine Park. The route followed what is now CO Hwy 66 to the "Crossroads" or "Kibby Corner" (where the Dunraven Restaurant now stands) and then turned west along the Big Thompson River into Moraine Park. The route to Tuxedo Park turned southwest (left) and crossed

the Big Thompson River shortly after Glacier Creek joins it. If you're curious, it is still possible to access these old routes into Moraine and Tuxedo Parks.

This new park road and local traffic patterns worked in Jack Woods' and Tuxedo Park's favor since people had previously been accessing Bartholf Park (now known as Glacier Basin) through

YMCA land. The original route to Bartholf Park (named after land developer and friend of Abner Sprague) brought tourists along YMCA roads, past Mountainside Lodge, through the saddle between Emerald Mountain and Bible Point and down into Bartholf Park. Needless to say, a stream of visitors began to pour through the Y property on their way to Bartholf Park, the newly built Sprague Lodge, and on to Bear Lake. In the summer of 1917, a YMCA document noted, "The travel through our grounds and in front of our buildings of people going to Bartholf Park has become ... annoying ... " The YMCA, the Estes Park Protective and Improvement Association and the National Park soon collaborated to establish the new route to the areas beyond Moraine and Tuxedo Parks.

Instead of passing through the YMCA, the new route followed the existing road into the Park past Kibby Corner, west along the Big Thompson River and crossing the Big Thompson into Tuxedo Park. It then followed Glacier Creek on through Tuxedo Park and beyond. That meant that property owners along the new route, such as Jack Woods, clearly benefited. By 1918 the YMCA reported that virtually all the traffic through YMCA grounds to Bartholf Park had been eliminated. Bear Lake Road as we know it today was constructed in the late 1920s.

Jack Woods continued to acquire property and was beginning to make a name for himself. In the early 1920s Jack and his new bride, Isabella Madden, began building cabins near Jack's store. Isabella's parents, who had homesteaded on Thunder Mountain, were Jack's neighbors. The wedding was reported in the *Estes Park Trail*. Dr. John Timothy Stone of Chicago officiated the ceremony, following which the couple took a wedding trip to New Mexico.

Isabella must have had some of Jack's energy and entrepreneurial spirit for she became actively involved in the community and her husband's business affairs. Their resort was known as Camp Woods, Jack Woods Camp, or Woods Cottages.

The Woods were eventually able to expand their holdings in Tuxedo Park.

Jack and Isabella enlarged their resort in the 30s, eventually having as many as 50 or more structures. Jack Woods Camp grew to consist of the Woods' residence, the store, a dining hall, shower, toilets, horse barn, garage and rows of cabins along both the Big Thompson River and Glacier Creek. Although impressive for the times, the property was not as elaborate as nearby Stead's Ranch or Brinwood Ranch and Hotel in Moraine Park.

An unusual business opportunity presented itself in Tuxedo Park when Yaye Kato rented a building from Woods to establish an Oriental Tea Garden. She served Chinese and Japanese food and greeted her guests wearing a beautiful Chinese dress. The Tea Garden had a gated entrance and was decorated with Japanese lanterns. Mrs. Kato and her husband already operated the Kato Art Shop in town.

An unusual business opportunity presented itself in Tuxedo Park when Yaye Kato rented a building from Woods to establish an Oriental Tea Garden...

Unfortunately, Mrs. Kato died the following year, thus bringing an end to this brief but picturesque business in Tuxedo Park. Rocky Mountain National Park began its efforts to eliminate private enterprise within its boundaries in the

early 1930s. The goal was to "preserve natural scenic beauty, especially along the new highways, and to make preserves for deer and elk." A number of resorts were purchased. Some in Moraine Park, Upper Beaver Meadows, and Horseshoe Park were torn down. Others were leased back to the owners with 20-year contracts. Jack Woods Camp was one of these now owned by the Park Service, but operated as before by Jack and Isabella Woods.

In addition to operating their camp in Tuxedo Park, the Woods were active in the community. Jack continued his interest and dealings in development, real estate and business. He was involved in the Bowen/Woods Cottages in Hollowell Park, managed property on Holy Hill and Scott's Heights, and kept his original property on Tunnel Road. Jack was a Mason and a Rotarian, for which he served as president, boasting 39 years of perfect attendance. He also held office in



Camp Woods resort cabins, 1959. NPS Historical photo

the local and state real estate organizations. Isabella was very involved in Camp Woods and Woods Real Estate and was a member of the Estes Park Woman's Club, also serving as president.

When the 20-year leases to operate resorts expired, the Park Service extended the contracts to give itself time to study the issue. As the surrounding area did not yet have enough development to meet the need for accommodations, most contracts were continued until the end of the decade.

By 1959 the new Beaver Meadow Entrance had been opened, and Jack Woods Camp closed when the Big Thompson entrance off Highway 66 was shut down. Within a very short time the park removed all evidence of Camp Woods and the other resorts, allowing the sites to return to their natural state.

Jack died in 1965. That winter some of his ashes were scattered on Trail Ridge Road. Isabella survived him by eleven years. An era of concessionaires in Rocky Mountain National Park had come to an end.

Today Tuxedo Park probably looks much as it did when F. O. Stanley and Jack Woods were first attracted to the location. The quiet forested park bordering the Big Thompson River and Glacier Creek with views of the South Lateral Moraine to the northwest is dominated by the view of Eaglecliff Mountain. People passing through this area today are usually on their way to other destinations. Few probably hear whispers of the unique and unusual stories Tuxedo Park has to tell.

The author thanks Jack & Lulie Melton of the YMCA, Park Archivist Tim Burchett and Park Librarian Sybil Barnes for their generous assistance.



Meet RMNA's Steve Coles: Man of Many Hats



by Heidi Buchholtz

One of RMNA's most fortuitous days occurred in May of 2003 when Steve Coles knocked on the door, looking for something to keep him busy after his recent retirement. Steve, and his wife Barb, had bought a house in the area back in 1999 and were planning to relocate anyway so he decided to go ahead and make the move for good. Besides, even though Steve was born in Cleveland, his family had history in the Estes area. His family had a cabin they'd built in 1919 when a number of fellow University of Nebraska professors bought and developed several adjacent lots near Fish Creek.

Steve was hired that day in May and his new position involved working at the sales areas at Bear Lake and Moraine Park Museum. On the surface, it may seem like a bit of a downgrade, but for Steve, the upside was going from an office job with Cleveland Metroparks to working in one of the most scenic national parks in the world.

From 2003 to 2007, Steve worked at almost every visitor center in the park, absorbing and dispensing information about Rocky Mountain National Park and its visitors. "The direct visitor contact was something new to me - I love it," Steve remarked. Though far too numerous to tell here, Steve is an accomplished storyteller, and with material accumulated along the way, ranging from bear-encounter panic to dealing with road-kill

concerns, he can keep a group laughing until they ache. "I want to give visitors, especially young people, the experience of a lifetime when they come to Rocky," he said. This is an especially helpful attitude in the role Steve assumed in 2007: Fund Raising Projects Manager.

Back in Cleveland, Steve was Chief of Park Planning for twenty-eight years with Metroparks, the city's regional park system. Under his charge were seven golf courses, 150 miles of roads, 600 miles of trails and one world class zoo. He was in charge of new park projects, grants, real estate transactions and long-term planning. Much of the job was related to interpretive services. This was preceded by three years with the Department of Natural Resources and the Ohio State Park System, where he began as an intern to earn credit for his Natural Resources degree.

At the same time, Steve spent 15 years on the board for the Cuyahoga Valley National Park Association where he was deeply involved in fund raising. One of the organization's crowning achievements was the development of an award-winning youth camp in the park. The 25th park anniversary was a proud day for Steve as well. CVNPA enlisted composer James Horner (of *Titanic* music fame) to write a special piece just for the event.

Combine all that experience over thirty-one years and add it to RMNA's fund raising efforts and you have a winning combination. Steve's current undertaking is the Million Mile Challenge. "We're doing this to raise money for the Next Generation Fund

and we have a very generous anonymous donor to kick start the campaign." Steve will be developing a marketing plan that addresses promotion, effective use of the website and getting and keeping people motivated to participate. He noted that consultant Tony Bielat of McDonald's Corp. has been enlisted to help figure out what works, and Steve's job is to figure out how to get those things done.

Several RMNA staff members have been involved with the planning process and they have all been busy working out the behind-the-scene details that are part of any major campaign.

It should be noted that Steve's wife Barb has been a mainstay of support throughout Steve's "retirement" and their move to Colorado. Though still working, she moved her office to their house where she continues to work for a contractor to

NASA. She coordinates a group of researchers who represent several federal departments whose job it is to decide where research money should be spent in the development of alternative energy.

As for his new career, Steve loves the fact that "no two days are alike." He loves helping people whose careers are to help the park, and he enjoys nurturing the partnerships that make it possible to do so much more than any entity can do alone. And he'll be happy to show you pictures and videos of programs and projects, such as his "brag book" of the American Conservation Corps kids. You'd think he was a proud parent – and he should be.

...the upside was going from an office job with Cleveland Metroparks to working in one of the most scenic national parks in the world.



This map of Rocky Mountain National Park appears on the back of each t-shirt.



OFFICIAL 2010 RMNP T-Shirt NOW AVAILABLE!

What a Beauty!

This year's t-shirt is going to fly off the shelves! Designed by RMNA Publications guru John Gunn, this beautiful illustration by scientific illustrator Wendy Smith shows the topography of the park with iconic wildlife depicted where they are commonly seen in the park.

Short sleeve (white).....\$15.95
Long sleeve (natural).....\$20.95
Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL

**Visit rmna.org to order
Or call 800-816-7662**



Compass heart print appears on the front.

Winter Birds Need Our Help - Keep Your Feeders Full!

With falling temperatures, high winds and snowy conditions, many birds need extra help staying warm during the winter season. Birds need to maintain high body temperatures to survive - some well over 100°.

As a long-time bird enthusiast, I have learned to be selective about what

I put in my feeders. Many of the fancy seed mixes that are available will be rapidly sorted through and wasted by discerning birds that disdain the fillers that are added, such as milo, oats and wheat. I have several feeders, and in each one I put only one type of food, whether seed or vegetable matter to discourage waste. Using these feeding practices, my wife and I are very fortunate to enjoy between 15-20 species of birds during the winter months. What a treat!

It is extremely important to keep bird feeders clean. Once a month use 1 part bleach to nine parts water, immersing each feeder or scrubbing them thoroughly with the solution. Allow the bleach to remain on the feeders 3-5 minutes before rinsing to eliminate the mold that may develop and subsequently kill the birds. Be sure to rake or collect spent seed under



Mountain chickadees

Photo: Dick Coe

feeders to reduce buildup and the development of mold.

Another feature greatly appreciated by birds of all types is bird baths with heaters. Many birds take baths in sub-zero temperatures, so keeping the water warm makes the opportunity available year round. It's also important to clean baths with the bleach solution on a regular basis as well.

Good luck!

Dick Coe's Bird Feeder Smorgasbord:

- Thistle in a tube feeder
- White safflower in a feeder
- Black oil sunflower in a feeder
- White millet on the ground
(for juncos and sparrows)
- Cobs and kernels of corn in a tray
(for Steller's jays)
- Juniper berries and raisins (for robins)
- Peanuts
(for Steller's jays and Clark's nutcrackers)



Rocky Mountain Nature Association Membership

Ten Year Honor Roll

The following members joined RMNA in 2000 and are still current members today!

Welcome to our Ten-Year Honor Roll!

Individual

Philip Bell
Ann K. Bonnell
David Dickson
Neil Forman
Nancy Gray
Noah Inbody
Jean Jackson
Harriet Jardine
William Klingensmith
George Lang
Mark Longman
Roger Lott
Hubert Ludwig
Dixie Manning
Charlene Metzler
Amy Miller
Nick Mollé
Linda Nolan
Donald Pearson
Norma Pettijohn
Patrick Purcell
Roger Quinn
Ellen Raeker
Caroline Rosno
Dave Schmaltz
Alice Sharp
George Sisler
Charles Sturgill
Catherine Taylor
Marilyn Thissen
Natalie Weber
Sharon Welton
Judy Whiteside

Green

Jane Hoel
James Maynard
Donna Rolston
Linda Van Dyke

Family

Jo Bailey
William Ballamy
Bill Berry
Tom Burt
Jeffrey Carter
Mark Cassidy
Carolyn Cody
Pamela Cramer
Marjorie Crewdson
Harry Dahl
Robert Freitag
Jim Hagihara
Thomas B. Hall
Robert Harlow
Kevin Higgins
Douglas Jennings
Debbie Kaller
Pat Kelly
Jim Kiple
Gary Kubinak
James Maloney
Janice Medlock
Clifford Noll
Margaret Patterson
Brenda Peeler
Michael Rinehart
Marilyn Rutkowski
Murray Scher
Gregory Smith
Caesar Sweitzer
Matthew Teply
Judy Van Hooser
Marcia Wiener
Suzanne Wuerthele

Supporting

Leslie Alexander
John Berry
Vicki Cooper
Stephen Freeman

Margaret Guthrie
Howard Lipke
Melissa Lynn
Kenneth Smith
Linda Williams
Rick Woods

Life

J.D. Benisek
Patrick Callahan
Stephen Coles
J. A. Dilts
Melinda Ely
John Fluke
Robert Gammon
Gary Gisle
Rob Gordon
Barbara Hamman
Robert Helmreich
Kathryn Jenulis
Dorothy Joseph
Frank Kugeler
Marjorie McLellan
Forrest McVicar
Ruth M. Nelson
Paul Newendorp
Michael Olson
Sandra Peacock
Diane Phillips
Connie Phipps
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Paul Poston
Michael Quinn
Mac Smith
Tom Stark
Ron Tuttle
Karen Waller
Marilee Williamson
John Witherspoon
Marvin Woolf

Thank you!

Your support over the years has enabled much to be accomplished for Rocky Mountain National Park!

Hummingbird Research Uncovers Rocky's Canada Connection

by Field Ornithologists Fred and Tena Engleman

Every summer, during late June through August, the park is visited by southward migrating rufous hummingbirds (*Selasphorus rufous*). These



aggressive hummers create temporary mayhem at park nectar flower patches and at hummingbird gardens and feeders in nearby communities.

Rufous hummingbirds aren't present in Colorado during their spring northward migration. Beginning in February and March of each year they fly from wintering areas in Mexico through California and Arizona to their breeding areas in the Pacific Northwest, Canada, and coastal areas of southern and south central Alaska. Their southward migration routes include both the east and west sides of the Rocky Mountains

A seven year, volunteer-led survey of Rocky's hummingbirds has revealed interesting information about these aggressive migrants. Two of the rufous hummingbirds banded at McGraw Ranch in the northeast corner of the park have been encountered in Canada by members of the Hummingbird Monitoring Network (HMN). The HMN is a nonprofit group of scientists, citizens, land managers and property owners dedicated to the conservation of hummingbird diversity and abundance. An adult male rufous banded in 2005 has been encountered three successive years in Kananaski, Alberta (near the southeast corner of Banff National Park), beginning in June 2007. The second, an adult female banded in July 2008, was encountered this August in northeast British Columbia at Dunster in the Fraser River valley, west of Jasper National Park.

The approximately 1,000 miles between the banding and encounter locations represent only a fraction of these hummingbirds' migration distance each year between wintering and

breeding areas. The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology has estimated that in terms of body length the rufous is the world's smallest long distance migrant, traveling

some 49 million body lengths each year during migration.

By the time Rocky's breeding populations of broad-tailed hummingbirds (*Selasphorus platycercus*) begin to arrive in May for courtship and nesting, many of the adult female rufous hummingbirds will be brooding and feeding their nestlings in locations farther northwest. The leading edge of the annual rufous southward migration will reach Rocky well before most of the park's nesting female broad-tailed hummingbirds have begun to fledge their young.

Individual rufous hummingbirds may follow a different southward route each summer, as none of the more than 900 rufous hummingbirds banded in this survey have been captured again inside Rocky in later years, even though different types of capture techniques have been used on both sides of the Continental Divide.



Some ornithologists theorize that annual variations in floral bloom and weather influence individual southward migration routes, and these factors may, in part, account for fluctuations in relative numbers of rufous observed each year.

Although it may appear that the same rufous hummingbird stays around for weeks to dominate nectar resources, park research has shown that an individual usually does not linger more than a few days and is quickly replaced by another of its kind. These hummingbirds are driven by instinct to reach their wintering areas in central and southern Mexico with little delay, and by late August they are rarely seen in Rocky.

RMNA Offers Trip to the Canadian Boreal Forest: The Bird Nursery of North America

June 20 — July 1, 2010

Join professional naturalist Jeff Maugans on an exciting birding adventure in the boreal forest of Wood Buffalo National Park, a United Nations World Heritage Site.

Encompassing 11,000,000 acres, Wood Buffalo is the second largest national park in the world. Located on the border of Alberta and Northwest Territories, Canada, the park is a wonderland of boreal forests, bogs, upland tundra, plains, grass and sedge

Tentative trip schedule:

Days 1-2: Yellowknife/Great Slave Lake
Days 3-4: Mackenzie Bison Sanctuary
Days 5-9: Wood Buffalo National Park-Hay River/Fort Smith/Fort Resolution

Other activities:

Optional Evening Lectures/Discussions
Optional Evening Birding

Tentative trip cost: \$3,500

Go to rmna.org for more detailed information.

meadows, rivers and lakes.

Wood Buffalo National Park is located within the boreal forest, also known as the “bird nursery” of North America, with 325 species of birds recorded that nest in the billions during the months of May, June and July.

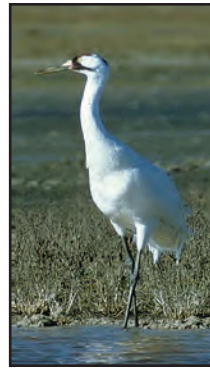
Each fall, after the nesting season, an estimated six billion birds make a mass exodus out of the boreal to wintering grounds as far south as the Andes, Amazonia, and Argentina — some stopping at RMNP along the way.

Participants will be able to observe resident birds and hear them sing during this “peak of nesting season” adventure. (Many species passing through



RMNP do not sing until they reach their nesting grounds.) Expect to see lots of nesting birds, including many types of ducks, loons, sandpipers, gulls, terns, hawks, falcons, owls, and dozens of warbler species — 150 to 200 species are possible.

Topics of discussion will include: the area’s rich cultural history; the Boreal’s important role in bird conservation; the possible effects of climate change; and the area’s role in ecotourism. Along the way, explore the natural history of plants, mammals and other wildlife, and what you, as citizens, can do to promote conservation.



Park Puzzler by RMNA Member Joel Kaplow

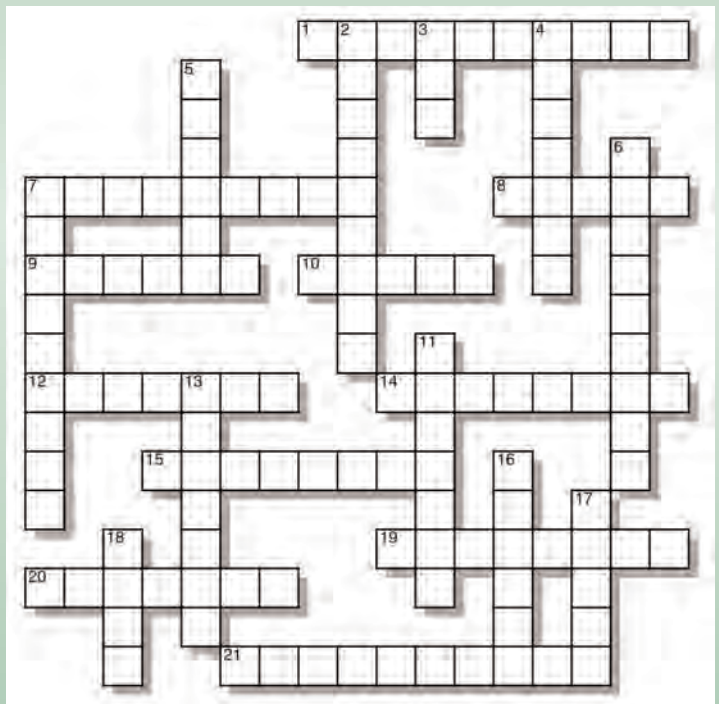
Across

1. This type of sharp turn encountered on many Park trails enables the gradient to be less steep
7. The common poorwill, a bird spotted in RMNP, has the UNcommon ability to ___
8. On September weekends, folks on foot can catch the free ___ Shuttle - a bus that takes them from Estes Park to the Park & Ride on Bear Lake Road
9. RMNP’s ___ community is comprised of about 200 different species of plants
10. A mature elk’s antlers can weigh up to ___ pounds a pair!
12. Going by head count, there are more mammals in the Park belonging to this order than any other
14. The number one visitor activity in RMNP is ___ viewing
15. Targeting the first Friday before ___ Day for its opening, road crews use giant snow blowers and plows on Trail Ridge Road
19. Regarding Longs Peak, Isabella Bird wrote “in one’s imagination it grows to be much more than a ___.”
20. You will find a creek, tarn, glacier and pass west of The Loch named after Edwin B. ___
21. “Only by going alone in silence, without baggage, can one truly get into the heart of the ___.” - John Muir

Down

2. Rarely seen in RMNP, this ferocious creature, nicknamed “devil beast,” had its picture taken in the Park’s high country last June
3. More than ___ miles of Trail Ridge Road lies above tree line
4. During the fall rut, bull elk can be heard ___ to attract cows and intimidate rivals
5. Due to changes along the northern border of RMNP over the years, ___ Lake has been located inside, then outside, and back inside the Park
6. Permanently disabled folks are entitled to the free America the ___ Access Pass, which has replaced the Golden Access Passport, and is good at any US national park or monument

7. This structure is used to tie up horses near many of the Park’s attractions
11. In recent times, RMNP has been receiving about three ___ visitors a year
13. Ponderosa pines do well in drier areas due to their ability to absorb water through their ___ and send it down to the roots
16. To lessen the impact of foot traffic on the Park’s tundra, hikers are encouraged to avoid walking in ___ file when off trail
17. About 150 ___ are found scattered throughout RMNP
18. Last September, PBS aired Ken Burns’ six-part special “The National Parks: America’s Best ___”





by Ryan Carpenter

I had visited Sprague Lake hundreds of times as a visitor, admiring the reflection of the snowcapped peaks on the north side of the lake, or trying unsuccessfully to catch one of the wily Brook trout that feed below the beaver dam. On this summer afternoon, Sprague Lake took on another meaning; this was the day I was scheduled to give my first interpretive program as an intern at Rocky Mountain National Park.

During the next hour, visitors from Boise, Albuquerque, Munich and many other distant locales would dedicate their precious time in the park to learn about the significance of the “Amazing Beaver” and its niche in Rocky’s ecosystem. The wonderment, excitement and awe of these visitors for Rocky Mountain National Park helped to shape my understanding and appreciation for the role of the park ranger in preserving and protecting these magical places.

After concluding my first interpretive walk, I reflected on my journey to this moment. It began as a child in Jacksonville, Florida, forever entranced by the mystique and beauty of the West. After moving to Boulder, Colorado for graduate school, I recall

The Next Generation Fund in Action: Creating Internship Opportunities in Rocky Mountain National Park

gazing out the window in class, dreaming of working for the park service. During summer breaks in grad school I volunteered to obtain the experiences I needed to secure an internship.

Two weeks earlier I had arrived for my first day of work as an intern at Rocky Mountain National Park. Along with five other interns who had traveled here from all over the country, I would spend the next ten weeks experiencing what it was like to be a National Park Ranger. Given this opportunity through the Next Generation Fund, I was hoping to hone my naturalist skills and boost my confidence in an arena that I’d been dreaming about for years – becoming a National Park Ranger.

During the ensuing summer when I led groups on nature walks in the park, I often felt both proud and humble to walk in the footsteps of such visionaries as Enos Mills and John Muir. On occasion, when discussing the value and importance of the resources that the national parks protect, I had the opportunity to see how deeply invested, both emotionally and intellectually, the visitors were about preserving these wild areas.

Another highlight of my internship was reciting the Junior Ranger pledge

with wide-eyed, spankin’ new Junior Rangers who had worked diligently on their Junior Ranger activity books to earn their badges. I will never forget these special kids, so proud of their accomplishment and their shiny new Junior Ranger badges. To see the spark of excitement in their eyes was a daily reminder of the importance of impassioning “the next generation” about the value of wilderness through education.

Throughout the summer I was able to interact with thousands of visitors through interpretive talks, walks and evening programs, sharing what I knew about various aspects of the natural and cultural history of the park. I talked with inquisitive visitors on the trails and answered questions at the visitor centers, helping to enrich their experiences and suggest activities for them

in the park. RMNP staff was very supportive of me, and without the funding of the Rocky Mountain Nature Association and the Next Generation Fund, this opportunity to fulfill my dream wouldn’t have happened.

And through each of these experiences I learned first-hand what it means to wear the arrowhead badge on my left shoulder, giving me more confidence that one day I would be able to don the iconic symbol of a National Park Ranger, the Stetson hat.

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(Ask Nancy, continued from pg. 3)

park was established or they existed before subsequent expansion of the park. The National Park Service has acquired about 350 inholding properties containing almost 17,000 acres over the course of the past 95 years since Rocky Mountain National Park was established. The RMNA has assisted the park with a number of these acquisitions. Today, approximately 60 private inholdings remain within the park, and most of the properties are small and contain seasonal cabins.

The park’s Land Protection Plan provides guidance on matters related to private inholdings. Owners are not required to

sell their property to the NPS, and the NPS does not have any “right of first refusal” to acquire private property. Owners can sell their property to other private individuals or they can transfer them to their heirs. The NPS seeks opportunities to acquire inholdings from willing sellers and pays fair market value based on an mutually acceptable appraisal.

The Land Protection Plan defines the existing cabins in the park as a compatible use, and they can be razed and rebuilt on the same footprint and at the same scale. That’s how a new private home was built in the park a few years ago - the old home was razed and a new home was built in the same location.—*RMNP Chief, Branch of Planning & Compliance Larry Gamble*



JOIN THE TEAM FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

and help raise \$1,000,000 to support educational programs in RMNP!



It's easy!

1. Fill out the participation form, pledging the number of human-powered miles you can complete during the year. Miles can be completed anywhere.
2. Turn your completed miles into dollars for the Next Generation Fund by committing at least \$1 per mile. This is easy when you ask sponsors to help support your mileage pledge. Sponsors can be family, friends, neighbors, co-workers — or you!
- 3) Fill out the sponsorship form (available by mail or online at rmna.org). Mail your collected donations to RMNA, or make your donation online. You'll get mileage credit per donations received, and we'll add it to the team tally.

Watch the Team's progress!

MMC updates, special participant stories, and photographs will be posted on our website and in the RMNA *Quarterly* newsletter. Stay tuned!

You can also send your pledge and dollars online to rmna.org. All contributions are tax-deductible.

Learn more at rmna.org

Million Mile Challenge Participation Guidelines

- 1) Miles must be human-powered to count.
- 2) Miles can be completed anywhere.
- 3) For every mile pledged, a minimum of \$1 donated is recommended.
- 4) You can either complete the miles yourself, or by sponsoring someone else.
- 5) You can sponsor your own miles and/or find others to sponsor them.
- 6) Outright donations are accepted.
- 7) Credit towards a mileage pledge is based on money collected by and received from the participant.
- 8) Pledge payments will be accepted incrementally through 1/31/2011.

Nature. Pass it On.

Join the Team as we bike, run, skate, ski (or whatever!) one million miles through 2010 — and raise \$1,000,000 for the Next Generation of conservationists!

MILLION DOLLAR MATCH
A generous, anonymous donor has committed a \$1,000,000 matching gift for this special year-long event.



Cut here and mail your registration form to:

RMNA Million Mile Challenge
PO Box 3100
Estes Park, CO 80517

Million Mile Challenge Registration Form



You can also register online at rmna.org, or at any visitor center in Rocky Mountain National Park.

* Name _____

* Address _____

* City _____ * State _____ * Zip _____

* Email _____

* Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

* Miles Pledged through 2010: _____
(recommended: \$1 per mile)

Please check if you prefer to receive information about the Million Mile Challenge through the U.S. mail instead of via email.

(*required)



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Quick Fix Science

A Closer Look at the Canada Thistle Rust Mite

In 2005, Rich Hansen of the U.S. Department of Agriculture initiated a study of the Canada thistle rust mite with the objectives of (1) describing mite biology under field conditions in northern Colorado, (2) documenting potential utilization of native *Cirsium* species, and (3) locating mite populations in Colorado and adjacent states. The mite is known from seven eastern and mid-western states, but its distribution in the West is largely unknown.



Canada thistle in bloom.

The Project: Study the native Canada thistle rust mite, *Aceria anthocoptes*, including its distribution on the plant.

Initial studies focused on determining the density of populations of the mites under field conditions and what parts of the thistles harbored the most mites. Hansen harvested Canada thistles along transects at the Agricultural Research Station farm site northeast of Fort Collins, Colorado. He measured plant height, crown width, and flowering status. He picked ten leaves and five flower buds or flowers from each plant and returned to the laboratory where he recovered the mites by liquid extraction and filtering. Hansen also collected five large plants and divided these into subsamples of the upper, middle, and lower thirds of the plant to determine if mites were differentially distributed. In the park, he searched for mites on the native *Cirsium* thistles.

The Results: Rust Mites are present on thistle during the growing season, but the reason for a bimodal fluctuation in mite numbers is presently unknown.

Rust mites were present on thistles during the growing season from the time of initial stem growth through winter senescence, or death. Populations exhibited a bimodal pattern, with peak populations in July and September- October, though it is not known what causes these fluctuations. Although mite numbers showed a statistically weak relationship between thistle height or crown width, it is not biologically meaningful. The relationship between thistle development and mite abundance is difficult to sort out because flowering status, plant height and crown width, and sampling date are significantly interrelated. Mites were most abundant in the upper third of the thistles, and least abundant in the lower third. Further, mites were more abundant on thistle leaves than on stems/branches or flowers. Thus, leaves may prove to be the sampling unit of choice.

Sampling at other sites, including the park, found that mites are common in the western U.S. and are found on four species of native thistles. In 2007, Hansen sampled 7 native thistles at 14 sites in northern Colorado. He found mites on all thistle species, and the mites from Canada thistle and native species are superficially similar. Mites from the native thistles may or may not be *A. anthocoptes*; taxonomists are currently examining the specimens.

For more information on the park's research program, see www.nps.gov/romo

PARK PUZZLE ANSWERS





A curious black-tailed weasel paused from its hunting to get a good look at the photographer...

Photo: RMNA Member Dick Orleans



For comments or questions contact:

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Nature Association Notes...

Creating moments of inner stillness is often much easier in the great outdoors. Deep breaths of cold winter air, the brush of a breeze on the face and the subtle sounds of wildlife and trees remind us that so much more is happening than we can see at a mere glance.....Estes Park resident **Bob Leadley** was out in October shoveling the first big snow of the year, in full daylight, bending over to lift the wet snow and throw it aside. At one point in the process he heard the sound of feet padding on the snow, gathering speed, and when he looked up he was almost face to face with a pouncing bobcat. The animal checked itself quickly when it saw Bob's full height (which is not diminutive, by any means), turned tail and skedaddled. <Whew!> That was a close call!.....RMNA Sales Clerk **Amy Miller** reported multiple moose sightings east of the Divide by visitors in September. One cow moose was spotted at Cub Lake, a bull and cow moose at Sprague Lake and three moose at Thunder Lake..... Former Ranger **Jeff Maugans** was amazed this fall by the most amazing production of ponderosa pine seeds he'd ever witnessed. Even now, with snow covering the ground, seeds continue to fall from opened cones. According to Jeff, this should benefit birds and other wildlife that feed on the small, but nutritious, seeds of this ecologically very important and widespread pine. Around 1995 Jeff observed another better-than-average year, but not like the crop of 2009. According to some sources,



This Dusky grouse is a Bierstadt Moraine resident. Photo: RMNA Member Betty Neale

ponderosa have medium seed crops every 3-5 years and heavy seed production every 8 years. Since 2009 was an El Nino year, and if there's a wet summer this year, Jeff predicts that this could result in an above average number of ponderosa pines germinating and surviving (which will be a timely response to the devastation of the limber pine). Time will tell.....Resources Management Specialist **Jeff Connor** noted that there was a higher than average number of Clark's nutcrackers in the park lately. He attributed this to the fact that limber pine have been getting hit hard by the mountain pine beetle, with an overall reduction in pine cone supply, so the nutcrackers shifted to ponderosa pine cones as their primary seed source.....**Jeff** also reported that there are studies currently being conducted on populations of Clark's nutcracker that are being affected by the devastation of white pine (and their seed cones) in the northern U.S. from mountain pine beetle and white pine blister rust. Clark's nutcracker numbers have been significantly reduced, either by death or relocation as a result. Researchers are sampling different nutcracker populations through blood samples to determine if the genetic makeup is uniform across their entire range, or if there are differences that will mark distinct populations and their distribution.....Estes Park Resident **Dean Martinson**

observed a coyote walking through a meadow, oblivious to the path of the four mule deer that were approaching, on a collision course with the coyote. Two of the deer in front started running ahead toward the coyote which turned around and started jogging away. Apparently, that wasn't good enough for the two deer, who sped up and urged the coyote to a faster pace. This continued across the entire meadow, such that whenever the coyote slowed to a jog the deer were on its tail.....Facility Management Systems Specialist **Debbie Mason** caught sight of a porcupine walking alongside the road in the Colorado River District in mid-October.....RMNA Member **Ted Stuart** heard 14 turkeys in his driveway in late November, just before Thanksgiving (hmmm, I'm wondering if he might have had a conniving thought or two in his head...?). Two of the turkeys stretched their wings to the fullest extent and gave Ted a nice view of their 6' wingspan.....Facility Management Supervisor **Tom O'Neil** contacted Resources Management about a small issue at the Hidden Valley Pavilion. Apparently there was some "white wash" decorating the concrete beneath the eaves where an owl, most likely great-horned, frequently sat. Along with said discoloration were numerous owl pellets, universally appreciated by science teachers and naturalists alike for their educational value.....According to a study conducted by the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, there's a healthy population of little owls in the park, including sawwhet, flammulated and great-horned owls, with smaller populations of pygmy, long-eared and boreal owls...February and March are common mating periods for owls, so keep your ears tuned to the subtle hoots and screeches in your neck of the woods.....



Mark your calendars....

The annual
RMNA Membership Picnic
has been scheduled for
Saturday, August 7, 2010
Stanley Park Pavilion
11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Stay tuned for more details!