



ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATURE ASSOCIATION

Spring 2013

\$4.00

QUARTERLY



THE POWER OF ART

by Jean Muenchrath

Art is everywhere! It's more than inspiration hung on walls. It shapes our natural world and influenced the creation of many of our national parks.

Outside, Nature is the ultimate artist. In Rocky Mountain National Park, she exhibits an endless variety of form, color and beauty. Here, Nature molded the mountains through geologic uplift and sculpted them with glacial ice. She paints the sky with a palette of colors and weaves plants and animals into an intricate tapestry of life.

In the 1800s, artists were lured to the West by word of Nature's masterpiece and they accompanied many of the early exploration expeditions. While documenting western landscapes in paint, photos and prose, artists revealed a world unimaginable to the eastern populace. Their images highlighted magnificent scenery — steep, snow-covered mountains, boiling water erupting from the ground, and the grandest canyon on Earth. Their art work influenced American values and politics and left us with a legacy of national parks.

Albert Bierstadt was one of the earliest artists who journeyed west for creative inspiration in 1858. His artistic talent eventually brought him fame and fortune. In the 1880s, the Earl of Dunraven commissioned him to create a

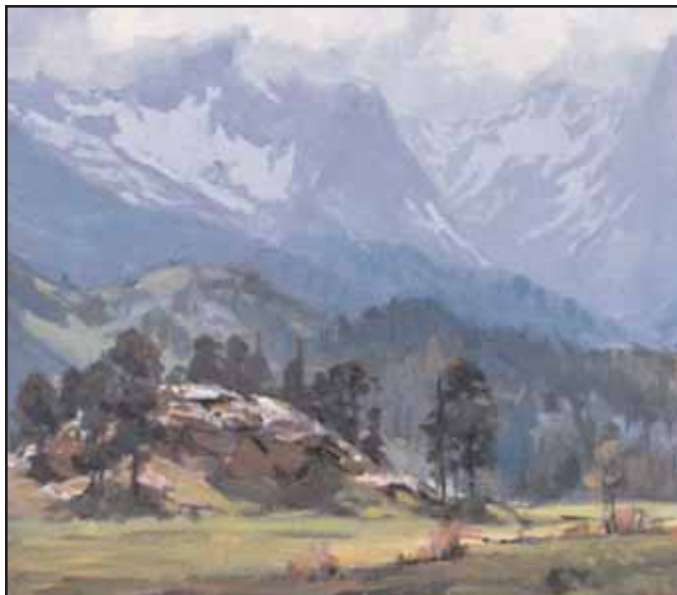
large painting of Estes Park and Longs Peak for \$15,000 — an enormous sum for the time. The scenic grandeur captured in Bierstadt's paintings enticed early travelers to the Rockies and continues to inspire artists and park visitors today.

Photographer William Henry Jackson joined scientific expeditions to Yellowstone and Colorado, including Mesa Verde and the Estes Park area. Locally, he sketched, painted and photographed Longs Peak, Moraine Park and Lumpy Ridge. Jackson's talent also led Thomas Moran to achieve artistic acclaim. Influenced by Jackson's photography, Moran mastered the portrayal of dramatic and subtle light in his paintings. Jackson's photographs and Moran's paintings both played a crucial role in persuading Congress to protect Yellowstone as our country's first national park in 1872.

Writers also were influential in shaping public opinion towards conservation. In 1873, Victorian writer and world traveler Isabella Bird arrived in Estes Park. Her descriptive words and captivating tales of climbing Longs Peak drew visitors to the area from as far away as Europe. More than 130 years later, her book, *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains*, continues to beckon people to the area.

Writer and naturalist John Muir was instrumental in the establishment of Yosemite National Park in 1890. Muir also served as a role model for Enos Mills, another prolific

(Art, continued on page 2)



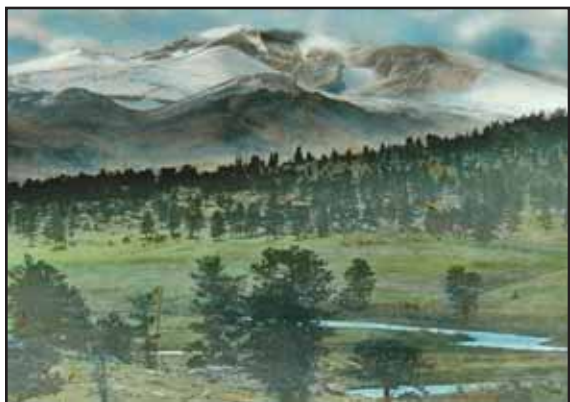
Suzanne Baker, *Artist-in-Residence, 1994* Image: Courtesy RMNP

(Art, continued)

writer. When not guiding climbers up Longs Peak, Mills wrote countless books, letters and essays to spread the idea of conservation. His nation-wide lectures were illustrated with hand-tinted slides, wild stories from his experiences in nature, and pleas to protect the natural resources. Mills relentlessly campaigned for the creation of Rocky Mountain National Park until his vision was finally realized in 1915. He also promoted for the protection of Indiana Dunes National Seashore and Mesa Verde, Death Valley and Olympic National Parks.

Other writers also made significant contributions towards protecting America's other scenic treasures. Crater Lake was set aside in 1902 with the help of Oregon writer William Steele. George Grinnell achieved political influence as the editor of *Forest and Stream* magazine, the founder of the Audubon Society, and while serving as an advisor to President Theodore Roosevelt. His efforts led to the creation of Glacier National Park in 1910.

In the process of transforming paper, ink



Longs Peak, William Henry Jackson, ca. 1873

Image: Courtesy RMNP

and canvas into creative images, early-day artists gave us more than uplifting tales and beauty on the walls. Their inspiration helped preserve many national park areas as a lasting gift for future generations. Today, more than 280 million visitors come to national parks each year for inspiration, rejuvenation and recreation.

How does art, and the national parks it helped to create, bring inspiration to your life?

As Rocky's Artist-in-Residence Coordinator, my life has been enriched by the many

artists who have participated in this program. My favorite day of the year is calling the finalists to congratulate them on their selection. Sometimes they scream with joy or laugh in disbelief, but they always tell me that their dream just came true. When the artwork they've donated to the park arrives a year later, I open each box with the same eagerness and suspense of a child at Christmastime.

These Artists-in-Residence have inspired me with their personal stories. Sometimes, during their public programs, they delve into the powerful role that art plays in their lives. One of these artists revealed an amazing story of how art had helped to heal his body and spirit. After a stroke, he lost his ability to coordinate the movement in his hands. He was devastated; he could no longer write or play music. During the next few months, his wife placed his hands on a portable keyboard next to his hospital bed. This reawakened his propensity for creating music. Slowly, his fingers began to wiggle and eventually the music in his heart flowed out of his fingers and into the keyboard.

A very powerful artist program was presented to park visitors by a poet who had emigrated from China. Following his poetry reading, given in perfect English, he told a riveting tale that left his audience stunned and silent. As a champion for free speech, he was pursued by Chinese security police after the uprising in Tiananmen Square in 1989. He barely escaped imprisonment. He dodged his pursuers by jumping from a window on a public bus, running down crowded alleyways, and hiding in unlikely places en route to the international airport in Beijing. There, he

met with someone who secretly helped him out of the country. My appreciation for the value of free speech has never been the same.

I was also deeply affected by a talented eight year-old painter from Texas. In 2010, Leah became the park's youngest Artist-in-Residence. Her enthusiasm for art and nature were contagious to everyone she encountered here in the park. Later, I joined her at two Dallas area schools where she presented at the school assemblies. I was impressed by how she empowered the students. Through her art, stories and eloquence, she inspired children to believe in themselves and to reach for the stars. I have been deeply touched by Leah and her family and will look back on their time in the park as one of the highlights of my career.

Jean Muenchrath is an Interpretive Ranger in Rocky Mountain National Park, and manages the park's Artist-in-Residence program.

Artistic Influence Today

Today, nearly fifty national park areas have Artists-in-Residence Programs. Participants continue the tradition of early-day artists by recording and interpreting the values of national parks through their art work.

Rocky Mountain National Park has hosted 233 Artists-in-Residence since 1984. The program offers professional writers, composers, and visual and performing artists the opportunity to concentrate on their artistic medium for two weeks. The inspiring landscape fosters both personal and professional growth.

A jury panel of professional artists selects up to eight participants each year. These artists give two public talks during their stay and donate to the park an original piece of art work inspired by their residency. Their contributions not only document on-going changes within Rocky Mountain National Park, they also encourage visitors to see the landscape through new eyes.

For more information about Rocky's Artists-in-Residence program, visit the park's website at www.nps.gov/romo/supportyourpark/artist_in_residence.htm



Kevin Munte, *Artist-in-Residence, 2008*

Ski Hidden Valley Premiers This Summer!



Hidden Valley in its heyday as a ski resort in the 1970s. Photo: NPS

For almost a century, winter sports enthusiasts have flocked to Hidden Valley in Rocky Mountain National Park. The valley's forested lower slopes were first denuded by logging around the turn-of-the-century, and periodically since then by devastating wind-driven events called "blowdowns," where

weak-rooted ponderosa pines could be felled by the thousands along wind corridors. Even intrepid park ranger Jack Moomaw admitted to cutting a few trees to make skiable runs. The most famous (or infamous) was the FIS/ Suicide run for the 1934 Down Mountain Races held in and around Estes Park that spring, where fearless skiers dropped down Suicide run more than 1,000 vertical feet in a measured mile!

Brian Brown's feature-length documentary, *Ski Hidden Valley Estes Park*, premieres this summer, telling the past, present, and future of this most special place. In the last four months, Brian has interviewed almost 40 former and current Hidden Valley skiers, ski area and Park Service employees, concessionaires, patrolmen and instructors. In their own words, they tell their stories of Hidden Valley's present and past. For the film's visual record, Brian has collected more than 2,500 feet of motion picture film, over 300 slides and photographs, many trail maps, postcards and other memorabilia.

Chapters of the film highlight HV's humble beginnings as a sawmill operation and camp for Trail Ridge Road construction; then, as decorated 10th Mountain Division veteran George Hurt and his family created the first concession in 1947; Hidden Valley's heyday of the 60's and 70's as Ted James' concession saw thousands of skiers each year; then, the film highlights HV's amateur "hotdog" freestyle team of the mid-70's; through the local Recreation District taking over the concession in 1977, and their community-rich programs like Winter Carnival and The Challenge Cup; the controversial, permanent closing of Hidden Valley in 1992, and some noble attempts to save it; up through the present-day, where fearless backcountry skiers still challenge themselves on Upper and Lower Hidden Valley's slopes and old runs.

Estes Park resident Brian Brown owns and operates BrownCow Productions, a full-service video production company since 2004. For more information about the Hidden Valley film, including the official trailer, visit the active Facebook Page at <http://www.facebook.com/SkiHiddenValleyEstesPark>, or the film's website at www.skihiddenvalleyfilm.org

Cover photo credits

Cover photos (clockwise from lower left to upper right):

"Winter Tundra Views," by RMNA Member Cynthia McKee Brady, Oklahoma City, OK; **"Ice Flow Monster,"** by Robert Hest, Northfield, MN; **"Spring Squall"** by RMNA Member Walt Kaesler, Estes Park, CO. Please send photos or high resolution scans to nancy.wilson@rmna.org by June 1 for publication in the 2013 Summer *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]

Are there any airplane crash sites in Rocky? If so, where? I'd like to hike into them, if possible. To my knowledge, there have been three fixed-winged aircraft and one helicopter that have crashed within park boundaries. The oldest was a Vought F4U Corsair that crashed in 1949 flying into the north facing ridge at Iceberg Pass. Two of them were flying up Fall River when they encountered low hanging cloud cover. They banked south to turn around and head back down. One made it, the other was too low, which resulted in pilot fatality. The aircraft remains were removed sometime in the late 1990s or early 2000s., and there is not much left at the site. Another private aircraft flew into the North Facing side of Hagues Peak sometime in the early 1990s. This, too, ended in a pilot fatality and the aircraft was removed by helicopter. In addition, a private fixed-winged aircraft crashed more recently in Forest Canyon in 2011. Two people survived. Once again the aircraft wreckage was flown out by helicopter. The helicopter crash occurred on Hallett Peak in the 1990s during a Search and Rescue operation. On board were the pilot and park employees, all of whom survived. This helicopter also was removed. In the end, there really is no wreckage at any of the sites to see. — *Jeff Connor, Resources Management Specialist.*

What kind of activity do beaver have during the winter? Do they stay inside their lodges throughout the winter, do they sleep, or do they leave the lodge to fish or find food? First, though many people think beavers eat fish, beavers are strictly herbivores. The cambium (inner bark) of aspen, cottonwood and willows are preferred foods. Although the living chamber(s) within their lodge (or streamside burrow, as we often find in the park) are high and dry above water, the entrances and exits (usually 2) are underwater, well below a level where winter ice would block their movement in and out of the lodge. In the classic situation, they will have cached a large supply of wood limbs and branches underwater near the lodge entrance during late summer and fall to sustain them through the winter. They do not hibernate, but they put on fat reserves in the fall, and their main activity is, most likely, feeding, including diving down to the food cache and dragging their next meal back to the living area. Typically, the mated pair and their offspring from the previous year (at least) will spend the winter together in the same lodge, totalling 4 to 8 beaver. Rarely do beaver expose themselves outside the protection of the ice or lodge during winter. — *Gary Miller, retired RMNP Biologist.*

What is the history of research on glaciers in Rocky Mountain National Park and what have these studies revealed? There has been a long and interesting history of glacier research in Rocky Mountain National Park. For in-depth information about this topic, I encourage readers to enjoy a nice summary of this previous research at: www.nps.gov/features/romo/feat0001/GlcResearch.html#Anchor-Topics-21683. In brief, these studies have shown that while the park's glaciers are relatively small, they are somewhat resistant to climate change due to their position in high elevation sheltered bowls called glacial cirques. The park's glaciers receive an augmented supply of snow delivered by strong winter winds and the sheltering rock walls shade the ice from much of the bright summer sun. That said, increasing summer temperatures and increasing deposition of regional dust on these glaciers (among other factors) will likely endanger the long term existence of our glaciers.—*Paul McLaughlin, Acting Director, RMNP Continental Divide Research Learning Center.*

Fungi: Friend or Foe?

by Mary Ann Franke

Keeping bad company with mold and infections, fungi have an image problem. The word “fungus,” according to the Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, can be “used to describe something that has grown rapidly and is considered unpleasant or unattractive.” Certain species do give fungi a bad name, including parasites, like the one that causes chytridiomycosis, an amphibian disease considered responsible for the decline of boreal toads in Rocky Mountain National Park.

Yet the fungi stereotype seems unfair since many are beautiful, or at least useful. Neither plant nor animal themselves, fungi obtain their food from the organic matter with which they live, for better or worse, in sickness and in health. *Armillaria ostoyae*, the honey fungus, causes root rot in conifers, while *Tricholoma magnivelare*, better known as the pine mushroom, forms a sheath around the root tips of conifers that helps the tree take up water and mineral salts.

Fungi can be classified into three major groups: parasites, saprobes and symbionts. The enzymes in saprobes break down dead organic matter and woody debris such as pine cones into nutritious soil. The symbionts co-exist in a mutually beneficial relationship with other organisms. An example is *Suillus lakei*, a mushroom that grows with Douglas-fir, increasing the tree’s resistance to drought and extreme weather in the Rocky Mountains.

Most of the approximately 1.5 million fungi species are inconspicuous because of their small size and homes underground or in



Galerina autumnalis is a deadly poisonous mushroom, found in relatively wet forests on very well decayed wood.

dead or decaying matter. Some species become eye-catching when they join algae to produce lichen, a slow-growing and often colorful crust that can form on soil, rocks or trees. The algae feed its fungus sugars and other carbohydrates obtained through photosynthesis while benefiting from the fungus’s capacity to absorb water and mineral nutrients. Lichens can thrive on bare and rocky surfaces with wider extremes of temperature, radiation, and drought than most plants can tolerate. This ability earns lichens a prominent place on Rocky Mountain National Park’s tundra, where their growth helps break down rocks into soil.

A similar co-dependence occurs in the 90% of vascular plants that need specific fungi to colonize in or around their roots. If conditions above ground do not allow the sprouting of its leaves, the moonwort fern found in the park can remain viable underground for up to 10 years through its symbiosis with a fungus in the soil.

Not a precise botanical term, “mushrooms” are the fleshy, fruiting bodies that generate the fungus’s reproductive spores. These fruiting bodies are large enough to be easily visible above ground. Species documented in the park include the *Coprinus comatus*, also known as the shaggy mane, which grows saprophytically on nutrient rich soils and is capable of pushing up through hard-packed earth and even asphalt.

Some mushroom species are useful as nourishment for humans. However, unlike the park’s wild berries, mushrooms are a protected resource that cannot be picked for personal consumption. The National Park Service does authorize the collection of mushrooms for the purposes of research by mycologists, the scientists who study fungi. These specimens are stored in the Sam Mitchel Herbarium of Fungi at the Denver Botanic Gardens, with a smaller collection at the park herbarium.

The Colorado Mycological Society obtained research permits to conduct a “Mycoblitz” in the park in 2008 and 2009. On a typical mycoblitz day, a team of volunteers led by an expert mycologist look for mushrooms in various

habitats, including the debris on the forest floor, down and standing trees, meadows, burned land and tundra. The park’s 2012 BioBlitz included the participation of a field team from the Mitchel Herbarium led by its curator, Vera Evenson. The same team is planning more to do further field explorations in the park this summer.

The mushroom season in Rocky Mountain National Park usually runs from June through September, with different species producing fruiting bodies at different times. The last three seasons of mycological field work have resulted in an inventory of nearly 500 specimens in the Mitchel Herbarium. This may be just a fraction of all the species in the park that produce mushrooms, but each season poses a greater challenge for participants as the more common species have already been found.

To be safe, no matter how “friendly” a fungus may be to the plant with which it is cohabitating, wild mushrooms are considered potentially toxic to humans until they’ve been identified otherwise. But, like bird watchers adding to their life list of observed bird species, mycologists take pleasure in finding a “new” mushroom, pretty or plain, edible or simply edifying.

For the last 17 summers, Mary Ann Franke has been an NPS writer-editor at Yellowstone National Park. This winter (and through April), she’s been serving as a volunteer at the McGraw Ranch Research Center.



Coprinus comatus, also called shaggy ink cap, lawyer’s wig, or shaggy mane. Edible, but this mushroom will turn black and dissolve itself in a matter of hours after being picked or depositing spores.



Hebeloma alpinum, a small genus that has been documented in the park with no known good edible species.

Meet RMNA's Retail Team!

Bringing you behind the scenes of RMNA to meet the folks that create the RMNA bookstores, from seeking and buying the products engaging park visitors, to merchandising the stores and keeping track of it all — heeeeeere's the Team!



**Chris Wenzel,
Retail Manager**

Having lived in Estes Park for the past 22 years, I love the outdoors and camping in the wilderness. I also love the great indoors of unique retail shops! With more than 10 years in sales under my belt, I welcome the chance to be a part of the RMNA retail team. I am married to my best friend, Jeff, and we are

blessed with 4 children, Michelle, 16, Bryan 18, Scott, 21, and Andrea, 28. Also, two adorable dogs, Bear and Thunder. I encourage everyone to come visit the park visitor centers to see all the great new products – especially the plush bears!



**Amy Stevens,
Retail Manager**

Around here, Amy is known as The Tornado on Wheels! Believe me, she's a force to reckon with!

I grew up in Estes Park, left to experience the world and came back to buy and manage multiple retail stores in Estes Park. Now, it's time to apply what I know to these amazing RMNA stores! Buying! Marketing! Managing! Selling! I couldn't do any of it

without all the help I get from my amazing staff and my brilliant husband, John, and, of course, the invaluable insight I glean from my 2 boys, one in college and one in high school. And then, there's my little dog Zoe, who is not to be outdone by any dogs named Bear or Thunder, mind you. We have a lot of great plans for this year and look forward to sharing them with you! I



**Judy Heider,
Retail Assistant**

Many years ago I asked one of the clerks in the RMNA bookstore where she got her hunter green (my favorite color) RMNA polo shirt. She told me you have to work in the bookstore to get one. Great! I thought. In 2008, I retired after 39 years in health care in Kansas City, Missouri, and, in 2009 I realized my dream of living full time in Estes Park. I dusted off my resume and got my very own green shirt! I've now worked in the bookstore, in the warehouse, and currently I process all of the internet and phone orders, supply visitor center stores, and assist with inventory control, among many other things. I am thrilled to be helping an organization that I have belonged to for years and supporting my "hometown" National Park.



**New! Glow-in-the-Dark
Animal Tracks T-shirt for
Kids! \$12.95**

**New! Amazingly
soft plush wildlife!
New! Junior Ranger Items!**





**Call
800-816-7662
to order any of
these new
products!**



**Dale Friedrich,
Warehouse Manager**

Back by popular demand! After spending seven great years at RMNA in such positions as Retail Assistant, RMNP Retail Manager and Warehouse Manager, I retired and moved to Loveland in November of 2010 with my wonderful wife Brenda and Barefoot the cat. Since retiring, we have enjoyed camping in our teardrop trailer, volunteering and spending time with the grandkids. With all of the new faces around RMNA this year I am happy to suspend my retirement and return for the 2013 season to offer any assistance that I can to this superb organization. So, once again, I'm Dale the Warehouse Guy!

**Keep an eye peeled for some
exciting changes in the
Beaver Meadows Visitor Center!**

-  **New carpet**
-  **New products**
-  **New store design**
-  **Visitor-friendly checkout counter**



Rocky Mountain Field Seminars A Summer of Adventure Awaits!

*Let us whet your appetite for
Rocky Mountain National Park through a host of new
Rocky Mountain Field Seminars this summer!*

Grand Lake Safari! A Bus Tour Adventure!

(June 11, 18, and 25; July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; August 6, 13, 20, 27; September 3)

Discover the Holzwarth Historic Site and the historic town of Grand Lake and receive a unique overview of park history, flora, fauna and geology – all this while viewing stunning landscapes from the comfort of a 14-passenger van.

Kids' Photojournaling in Rocky (ages 7-12)

(June 20; July 18; August 1)

Explore along the Big Thompson River capturing photographs of wildlife and beautiful landscapes. Afterwards, enjoy quiet reflection and journaling about the experiences in Rocky Mountain National Park.

RM Fields Seminars to Collaborate with Shadowcliff Lodge

RMNA will be collaborating with Shadowcliff Lodge on the park's west side, for the **Rocky Mountain Family Eco-Vacation: An Intergenerational Experience**, an all-inclusive family vacation package for kids ages 7 to elders, **June 23-28, 2013**. Enjoy multiple nature programs led by RMNA instructors Kevin J. Cook and Jeff Maugans. Explore the facets of nature with Kevin in *Trees, Rocks & Plants* and *Waste = Food*, a hike in RMNP exploring nature's laws. Jeff Maugans will lead a morning birding excursion into the park. RMNA's Olson Fellow will assist with activities and seminars.

For more information or to register for the eco-vacation, contact Shadowcliff at carl@shadowcliff.org or 970-627-9220.

Native Plants in RMNP (June 12)

Planting in the Park (July 1)

Small Mammals Research (July 12-13)

Banding Boreal & Saw-whet Owls (October 5)

Get behind the scenes in RMNP through service learning seminars! These courses offer a hands-on service project assisting with a current park project and include an educational component as well.

Rocky Mountain Trailblazers

Kids' Hiking Series (ages 7-15)

On each of these moderate hikes, Kids can look for evidence of animals, through tracks and scat and other signs, and learn to identify plants and flowers. Trailblazers will receive a hiking passport to record details of the trip, and a cool trail patch for their backpack or clothing upon completion!

The Pool (June 29)

Cub Lake (July 13)

Gem Lake (July 27)

Emerald Lake (August 17)

RM Field Seminar Instructors Profile

RMNA is pleased to introduce two new instructors for the upcoming season. Marlene and Walter Borneman, of Estes Park, are avid mountaineers who both have have climbed all of Colorado's 54 14ers, while Marlene has climbed all 126 of the named summits in RMNP!

Walter Borneman is the coauthor of the first complete guide to Colorado's fourteeners, *A Climbing Guide to Colorado's Fourteeners*, first published in 1978, and *100 Years Up High: Colorado Mountains and Mountaineers*. He is the author of several other books about topics in American history, including mountains, railroads and the American West. He is the President of the Board of Directors of the Colorado Mountain Club Foundation.



Marlene Borneman is the coauthor of *Rocky Mountain Wildflowers*, sold in RMNA bookstores. She spends much of her time locating and photographing wildflowers in their native habitats. Since 1974, she has studied and photographed Colorado flora while climbing all 126 of RMNP's named summits, all 54 of Colorado's fourteeners, and 33 of the 50 state highpoints. She is a member of the Colorado Native Plant Society.



Together, they will lead the new seminar **Longs Peak Up Close** (September 7) connecting with Longs Peak's history, heritage and folklore, from geology to its colorful characters.

Marlene will lead **Diversity in Wildflowers** (July 20), an exploration of the west side of RMNP and the common and not-so-common wildflowers found there. Come learn about the diversity of the park's plant life.

SPRING HIKING WITH (OR WITHOUT) SNOWSHOES!

Mild and mellow or brisk and snowy, who knows what spring will bring? Whatever happens, we're going hiking!

Join Membership Manager Curtis Carman for hikes in Rocky Mountain National Park throughout the year!

This free hiking series was designed to give RMNA Members the opportunity to hike to various sites in Rocky Mountain National Park with a group of like-minded individuals while learning more about RMNA, RMNP, and each other. Limited to 15 people per hike, outings explore a different area in Rocky Mountain National Park each month. Come with your questions about current RMNA projects, park management issues and natural history stories.

Call Curtis Carman at (970) 586-0108.

Or, email him at curtis.carman@rmna.org

Spring Schedule: **April 26 - Hike to MacGregor Falls**
 May 24 - Hike to Cub Lake
 June 28 - Hike to Lake Haiyaha



2012 Member Hike to Bridal Veil Falls. (photo: Lisa Thompson)

Park Puzzler by RMNA Member Joel Kaplow

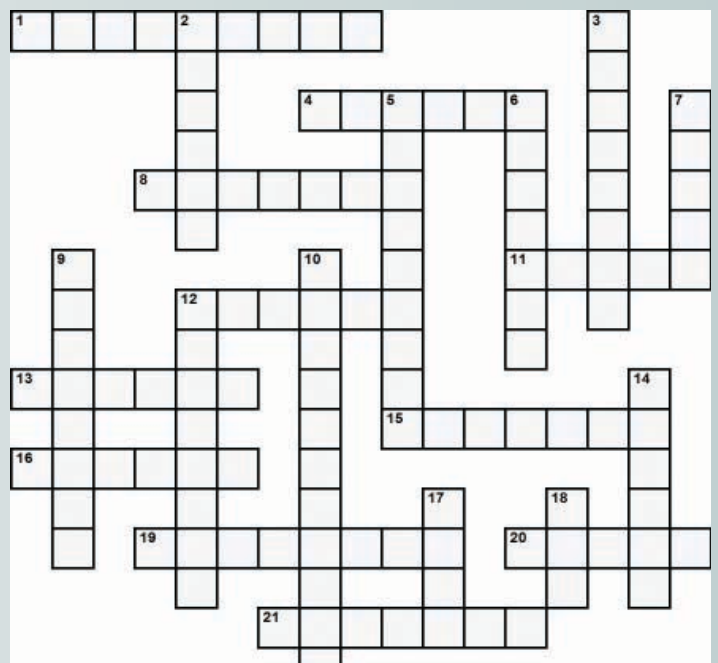
ACROSS

4. The last time a RMNP black ___ was put down was in 2003, after two backcountry campers were injured near Fern Lake.
5. After a long absence, ___ falcons, which can dive faster than 200 mph and are the fastest animals on the planet, have been spotted nesting in the park the last three years.
6. Usually found high up in a tree or on the side of a cliff, what's the term for a bird of prey's nest?
7. ___ Pass, located between McHenry's and Chief's Head peaks, is named so for the forty-foot-tall rock there which resembles a human. (2 wds)
8. This double-summitted mountain north of Grand Lake is named ___ Mountain, the Arapaho word for "twins."
10. Who is the new executive director of RMNA?
13. The first recorded human fatality caused by a 4-Across in Colorado happened in 1971, near ___ Lake.
15. If you see a rabbit minus its ___, chances are it was the victim of a great horned owl. They savor the delicious, nutritious brain.
17. Starting in 2007, National Geographic has been sponsoring a ___, where volunteers scour a different national park each year, taking inventory of living things in a 24-hour period. The first one was in Rock Creek Park in Wash., D.C., and it was RMNP's turn last August.
19. The park's Ochotona princeps, aka whistling hare, cony, rock rabbit, and American ___, is the smallest member of the rabbit family.
20. Trail Ridge Road and the Continental Divide cross each other at ___ Pass, named for a Colorado railroad man.
21. The largest of the tundra flowers, *Rydbergia grandiflora*, grows for several years without blooming, then blooms once and dies. It's also called alpine sunflower and ___-of-the-mountain.

DOWN

1. In addition to willows, elk and moose like to munch on ___ tree bark.
2. Tiny ___ Lake, east of Mt. Chiquita, is named for a rodent sometimes mistaken for a ground squirrel. The stripes on its cheeks and down its spine will tell you it's not a squirrel.
3. River otters use the same spot to "go" that is visited several times by all in the group. What is the term for this communal commode?
4. The tundra's appropriately named big-rooted spring ___ has roots that can grow

- as deep as ten feet below the surface!
9. An ___ fan is like a river delta, but is formed by a stream washing detritus onto flat land instead of into a body of water. The one in Horseshoe Park was formed in 1982 after the Lawn Lake flood.
11. At 13,560', ___ Peak is the tallest in the Mummy Range.
12. This year, the ___ Conservation Corps consisted of four groups of six collegians who helped improve trails in and around RMNP by removing fallen trees, felling standing hazard trees and performing various other heroic—and appreciated—feats.
14. RMNP's elk, bighorn sheep, moose and deer are all ungulates; they have ___.
16. Due to its shape, the smooth, sheer upper part of the east face of Longs Peak is called the ___, and is strictly for technical climbers.
18. At Rock Cut on Trail Ridge Road, visitors can take a half-mile stroll to the ___ Memorial. It's a rock outcrop with a metal plaque and mountain locator placed there in 1941 dedicated to the park's superintendent from 1921 to 1929.



WILDERNESS CLOSE ENCOUNTERS!



by RMNA Member Omayra Acevedo

There it was, seven feet in front of me, surreal as a dream. So close I could smell it—like something you might smell at a zoo.

The story of my encounter with a black bear began early on a hike up the Dream Lake trail at Rocky Mountain National Park. A friend and I stopped beside a small creek for a snack, took off our shoes and looked around. The rippling water, the trees lightly swaying, even the rock underneath brought to our minds the John Denver song “Rocky Mountain High.”

Refreshed, we resumed our hike. My mom always taught me to never walk with your gaze down—good advice since I grew up in the Bronx. Here in the mountains, hoping to keep my footing and not fall on my face, I ignore my mother’s advice. But I didn’t need to see the bear; I smelled it.

As the bear and I made eye contact, my heart raced, and adrenaline rushed through my entire body. I remembered the warning posted at the ranger station, “If confronted by a bear, stand your ground and seem bigger; if bear attacks FIGHT BACK!”

I stood my ground, and for some unknown reason, I felt at ease and safe. After what seemed like an eternity, the bear continued on its path. Instead of reaching for my bear spray or pocket knife, I grabbed my camera and took three of the coolest bear pictures ever!

I love this place!

Tell us your story! Whether wildlife, scenic or landscape, we’d love to share it with the Friends of Rocky Mountain National Park. Send your story (350 words or less), with a picture, if you have one, to: nancy.wilson@rmna.org or Nancy Wilson, RMNA, PO Box 3100, Estes Park, CO 80517

Rocky Mountain National Park is home to one of the most dynamic volunteer programs in the National Park Service. In 2012, 1,670 volunteers served more 102,000 hours in Rocky, making it one of the largest volunteer programs in the National Park Service. In 2013, these numbers will likely increase.

Volunteers augment paid staff in day-to-day operations and with special projects. Rocky is currently recruiting for more than twenty individual volunteer opportunities for this summer, ranging from road crew work to bird research, campground hosting and assisting in the visitor center, among others. The majority of these opportunities are suitable for those within commuting distance of the

ROCKY IN SEQUESTRATION

The effects of the sequestration on national parks will be felt far and wide, especially in terms of visitor services and employment. The amount to be sequestered for Rocky Mountain National Park is projected to be 5% (\$623,200) of park operating funds. The park currently is in the process of identifying specific impacts to operations for the remainder of the fiscal year that ends on September 30, 2013.

This reduction in operating funds for the remaining seven months of the fiscal year will limit Rocky Mountain National Park’s ability to hire a full complement of seasonal employees needed to provide visitor services for some 3 million visitors who are expected to visit park during that time period. For instance, with the loss of seasonal ranger staff, visitor center hours of operation will be reduced affecting some 140,000 park visitors. Formal interpretive/education programs will also be significantly reduced. In 2012, more than 2,500 formal interpretive programs were conducted serving approximately 65,000 park visitors. Visitors can also expect fewer rangers to respond to emergencies in the backcountry and less frequent cleaning of public restrooms and other facilities.

Glacier Basin Campground, currently slated to be closed the early part of the summer due to the Bear Lake Road construction, will remain closed for the entire year, thereby eliminating 148 single campsites and 13 group campsites. If the reduced funding levels continue into 2014, we will need to consider closing other park campgrounds. There are a total of five.

Trail Ridge Road, one of the signature mountain drives in North America, spans the park and connects Estes Park on the east side to the town of Grand Lake on the west side. With reduced funding levels, the park expects to be minimizing non-emergency overtime, which may affect the park’s ability to reopen the road in the event of late spring or early fall snow storms. Temporary closures can happen frequently (up to 10 days per season) in the shoulder seasons. These closures can be expected to affect the economy of Grand Lake due to lack of visitors being able to reach that destination.

In addition, it is not unreasonable to prepare for a loss of income to local communities and businesses that rely on recreation should fewer visitors decide visit to Rocky Mountain National Park. Some 3.2 million people visited the park in 2012. In 2011, visitor spending associated with visitors to the park exceeded \$196 million.

BECOME A PARK VOLUNTEER IN 2013!

Organized groups (scouts, school groups, families, etc.) may volunteer for a day or more in the park, and depending on availability, these groups may be eligible for free camping.

You’ll find all of our individual volunteer opportunities, as well as links to apply, online at: www.volunteer.gov, keyword search “Rocky Mountain” and agency search “National Park Service”. For more information, call the park’s Volunteer Office at 970-586-1330.

park, as most do not come with housing.

The park also has a wonderful Group Volunteer program, offering a variety of opportunities to groups ranging in size from 2-20 people. These projects include trail work and assisting in the greenhouse.

BIOBLITZ 2013: JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK AND PRESERVE



Last summer, Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP) was the focus of a frenzy of activity when the park collaborated with the National Geographic Society to conduct a BioBlitz event. BioBlitz is an event that focuses on finding and identifying as many species as possible in a specific area over a short period of time.

The two-day scientific endeavor/festival in RMNP centered around a 24-hour inventory period and brought together leading scientists and naturalists from around the country, as well as hundreds of local citizens and students to discover, document and celebrate the park's biodiversity in different habitats. In past years, BioBlitzes have mobilized thousands of participants, including children, and resulted in the discovery of hundreds of organisms, including species previously unknown to exist in a park – and even species previously unknown to science.

Additionally, each year a student is



2010 BioBlitz, Biscayne National Park, Florida



With 23,000 acres of forests, swamps, and marsh, the park's Barataria Preserve, near New Orleans, will be the focus of the event and offer plenty to discover.

selected as a Biodiversity Youth Ambassador by the host park to join a cadre of other young people from around the country to continue to raise biodiversity awareness in their home community and schools after the event is finished. Last year, Rocky Mountain National Park selected Parker Hopkins to be the third such ambassador, joining the Saguaro National Park Ambassador, Valysa Flores, and the Biscayne National Park Ambassador, Dara Reyes.

The National Park Service and the National Geographic Society initiated this effort in 2007 with the goal of conducting one BioBlitz per year in a different national park during the decade leading up to the NPS Centennial in 2016.

This year, BioBlitz will take place at Jean Lafitte National Historic Park and Preserve, in Louisiana, May 17 and 18.

Although participants will be encouraged to inventory every living organism, this year's event will concentrate on invertebrates – creatures without backbones. It's the perfect choice for a "Bayou-Blitz" – from shrimp, alligators and crawfish to mosquitos, butterflies and spiders.

Here's a link to learn more about the NPS/National Geographic BioBlitzes in our national parks:

www.nationalgeographic.com/explorers/projects/bioblitz/

Past BioBlitzes

- 2012 Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado
- 2011 Saguaro National Park, Arizona
- 2010 Biscayne National Park, Florida
- 2009 Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, Indiana
- 2008 Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, California
- 2007 Rock Creek Park, Washington, D.C.



2012 BioBlitz, Rocky Mountain National Park

First-time Family Camping Adventures in Rocky Through Camp Moreno



first such experiences. Started in 2010, Camp Moreno seeks to engage youth and families of color from urban environments in a meaningful outdoor experience that could be the beginning of a lifetime of involvement with outdoor recreation and the national parks.



by Mark DeGregorio

Think back to your very first national park experience. Did you hike or attend a ranger-led nature program? Was it your first camping experience with family?

Camp Moreno, a partnership between Rocky Mountain National Park's Education and Youth Outreach program, and the Denver-based Alpino Mountain Sports Foundation, has provided almost a thousand children and their families their

These underserved populations do not tend to have family traditions of using national parks, so Camp Moreno seeks to promote this value by involving the whole family in the national park camping experience. After a shared family camping adventure, it is much more likely that parents/family adults will become enthusiastic supporters of future camping trips rather than obstacles for the youth to overcome. The two-day camp is designed to demonstrate the ease, value and fun of creating family-friendly camping experiences on their own.



Through short camping adventures, campers have an opportunity to override any negative stereotypes they may hold about the outdoors. Experientially, it emphasizes the fun, healthy, educational and inspirational values of camping while creating awareness about the park's recreational resources.

Camp Moreno gives the families who attend the tools and the confidence to know that they can organize future camping trips on their own. The program is very hands-on, as families learn essential camping skills, including making reservations, selecting a campsite, setting up a tent, safe campfire and outdoor cooking skills, hiking and backpacking skills, Leave No Trace, and camping resources available in the park and throughout the West. By the time the two-day camp is over, participants have

usually gained basic competencies and discovered new ways to share family fun and to experience the great outdoors in a national park.

Alpino recruits Denver-area families through schools, scouting programs and the Catholic Archdiocese. Rocky Mountain National Park's education staff, including interns sponsored by RMNA's Next Generation Fund, provide the camp support and activities for the campers. Four weekend camps were conducted in 2012. Because of cuts caused by the budget sequestration, it is uncertain if, or how many, camps will be conducted in 2013. However, the park is hoping for a brighter future for this important effort to engage ethnically diverse visitors in the future.

Mark De Gregorio is the Education Program Manager for RMNP.

Help us save money! Share Your Email Address with Us!

Fun Fact: Mailing a letter costs RMNA approximately \$1.00 or more, including postage, materials and staff time. That can really add up! Communicating by email costs just a tiny fraction of that — virtually nothing. Please share your email address with us and we'll keep you informed about fundraising projects, special promotions, news, membership events, seminars and more. You'll get updates and information more quickly, and we'll save valuable funds to use for other needs. We promise we won't share any personal information with anyone....**ever!** Send an email to curtis.carman@rmna.org

Become a Friend of RMNA Through Facebook

Our Facebook community has grown to 3,730 fans. Are you one of them? Facebook is a fun way to stay in touch with the RMNA community. We post fun facts, news and fabulous photos, and you can share your own park photos and stories. Join us today at: www.facebook.com/RockyMountainNature

SUCCESS!

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATURE ASSOCIATION ACQUIRES JOHNSON PROPERTY FOR RMNP \$400,000 Fundraising Goal Reached

You did it! Thanks to you, we have raised the \$400,000 needed to acquire the Johnson Property. Congratulations!

More than 900 donors contributed to purchase this critical 3.89 acre parcel in the Kawuneeche Valley. The property will be transferred to Rocky Mountain National Park for permanent protection in the near future. This property, when returned to its natural state, will be a significant addition toward the goal of creating a contiguous natural landscape in the Valley, and will also improve wildlife habitat and enhance visitors' wilderness experience.

Rocky Mountain National Park identified the Johnson Property as a high priority for acquisition and enlisted RMNA's assistance to raise the needed funds. This private inholding within the legislated boundaries of the park is located at the headwaters of the Colorado River on the park's west side, not far from the Kawuneeche Visitor Center.

The Rocky Mountain Nature Association will transfer the land to the National Park Service, which will remove several small structures, power lines and a one-mile access road.

"We are incredibly grateful to everyone who contributed to this important project," said Charles Money, Executive Director for RMNA. "Thanks to you, more land has been set aside for permanent protection in Rocky Mountain National Park. This effort is a perfect example of how many

The Johnson Property cabin will be removed, along with the mile-long access road to begin the wilderness restoration project.



people working together can have a forever impact on our public lands."

According to Superintendent Vaughn Baker, "It was particularly important for the park to acquire this land, because one mile of the access road to the property is part of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. With this acquisition we can remove motorized use from this section of the trail. We appreciate that RMNA was able to obtain the funds to accomplish this significant purchase."



RMNA Land Protection Accomplishments

The Rocky Mountain Nature Association has an ongoing Land Protection Fund which sets aside money for future land protection efforts. Often, property sales by willing owners have a short time-frame for acquisition. This fund allows the organization to act quickly to purchase significant parcels for protection. Donations are always welcome and needed.

Since 1994, 19 parcels of land have been acquired for permanent protection in and around Rocky Mountain National Park. With the help of donors, RMNA has purchased a number of these, including:

- Jennings Tract, \$78,000
- Baldpate Tract, \$20,000
- Roessler Tract, \$415,000
- Adams Tract, \$280,000
- Sleepy Hollow, \$315,248
- Enos Mills (easement), \$54,136
- Miller Tract, \$1.02 million
- Fahy Tract, \$846,000
- Kueker Tract, \$600,000
- Owens-McMahon Tract, \$300,000
- McGowan Tract, \$18,100
- Johnson Property, \$400,000

Of special note, you may remember that we completed fundraising for the four-year Alberta Falls – Lake Haiyaha Loop Trails project just a little over a year ago. That was another \$400,000+ fundraising effort. Together, we are making a difference!

*Thank you
for your ongoing support!*



Your Gift to RMNA and “The American Tax Relief Act of 2012”

by Howard Fry,
RMNA Board Member

When making a gift to the Rocky Mountain Nature Association, here are two strategies to consider that may help to reduce your tax bill!

In the recently passed “The American Tax Relief Act of 2012,” Congress extended the Qualified Charitable Distribution provision for 2013 whereby individuals 70 ½ years old and older can redirect their IRA-required minimum distribution to a charity in an amount not to exceed \$100,000. **By instructing your IRA trustee to make the transfer directly to RMNA, your IRA distribution is a tax-free donation.**

Additionally, the donation may provide other tax benefits depending on your personal situation.

A second option to consider when planning your donation to RMNA is to transfer highly appreciated marketable securities from your investment account to RMNA. **By**

transferring the securities to RMNA’s brokerage account, you avoid the potential for capital gains tax on the net gain that you may otherwise incur if you were to sell the security and then send the proceeds to RMNA. Under The American Tax Relief Act of 2012, you possibly could avoid up to a 20% capital gains tax on the amount sold over your cost, depending on your personal situation. The value of the donation is equal to the fair market value of the donated securities. Once RMNA is in possession of the securities, we liquidate the holding and transfer the proceeds to the designated fund.

If you have any questions about these two opportunities to make your gift to RMNA, please do not hesitate to contact Julie Klett at 970-586-0108 x11. Also, it is recommended that you contact your Tax Preparer or Financial Advisor to review how these strategies will benefit your personal situation.

2012 Annual Appeal Update

We hope you have received invitations to support RMNA through our Annual Appeal campaign! As of today, we have received more than 875 gifts totaling \$167,738.36. That is tremendous—thank you!

If you are thinking about giving a gift, we welcome contributions at any time! Our priority fundraising projects for this year include the Next Generation Fund (to support youth education programs in 2013), and The Legacy Endowment, supporting projects of longterm significance. Please give what you can to the project closest to your heart.

For information on any of these projects (and others!), visit www.rmna.org and click on Park Projects, or call us at 970-586-0108.

Chasm Falls Project Redefined

The RMNA Annual appeal letter included an invitation to contribute to the Chasm Falls project. Rocky Mountain National Park wanted to build a handicapped-accessible viewing platform at this spectacular falls.

After further research, park officials reluctantly determined that a viewing platform would cause undue stress and damage to the sensitive natural resources in the area. This means that the accessibility portion of the project will not be moving forward as planned.

If you made a donation to the Chasm Falls project, you should have received a letter and/or an email requesting permission to redirect your gift to other projects within the park focused on improving accessibility to those whose mobility is impaired. Identified and suggested projects included the restoration of the Coyote Valley Trail on the park’s west side and the Lily Lake Trail restoration project. Over time, these popular



wheelchair accessible trails have become damaged and degraded to the point that accessibility is compromised.

Your gift would help to complete one or more of these important projects. If you have not already done so, please let us know if you would prefer that we retain your gift for accessibility projects like those mentioned above, direct it to another fund, or if you would rather it be returned to you.

We very much appreciate your support and your understanding. Friends like you make our work possible! Please contact Julie anytime at 970-586-0108 with your questions or concerns.

Donor Wall Update

Work on the Donor Recognition Wall at the Beaver Meadows Visitor Center is wrapping up! The original wall display was removed from the lower lobby for safe keeping last fall while the park worked to renovate the upper lobby, installing an elevator for improved handicapped access. The donor wall’s new location is an architecturally challenging site on the north wall of the lower lobby that required some creative problem-solving and a comprehensive redesign.

Construction work has progressed over the past several months and the Wall is nearly complete. The new larger, more modern display will be a stunning and fitting tribute to our many donors and supporters. Stay tuned! We appreciate your patience and will keep you posted. Contact Julie Klett if you have any concerns or questions at julie.klett@rmna.org, or at 970-586-0108, ext. 11.



Donor wall rendering



The Rocky Mountain National Park Fund

*expresses special thanks to the following
people for their donations to RMNP projects:*

December 10, 2012 - March 5, 2013
629 Gifts - Total Donations: 359,415.36

ACCESSIBILITY PROJECTS

Barbara and Kenneth Card, Englewood, CO
Jack and Lynn Dailey, Montgomery, TX
Steven and Tanya Dutro, Windsor, CO
Katherine Reid & Gary Eastman,
Fort Collins, CO
Lloyd Fahrenbruch, Fort Collins, CO
John and Lynne Geweke, Estes Park, CO:
In Memory of Alan Geweke
Doris Glick, Westminster, CO:
In Memory of Barbara Jean Lewis
Donna Hahn, Lancaster, PA
Janene & Steven Hawkins, Burnsville, MN
Ruth Hess, Loveland, CO:
**In Honor of Her Siblings: Helen and
Rocky Lee, Inez Kelley, and Richard &
Shirley Tucker**
Robert and Ellen Hostetler, Monument, CO
Charles and Joan Hoyt, Clare, IL
Michael Kedda, Derwood, MD
Kay Kuner, Garland, TX
Theodore & Susan Larson, Centennial, CO
Ted and Kathy Massey, Sioux City, IA
Frances and A. R. Mitterer, Arvada, CO:
**In Memory of Her Mother,
Betty Hedlund**
Richard and Phyllis Preston,
Windsor Heights, IA
Jamie K. Redmond, Denver, CO
William and Norma Riley, Omaha, NE
Jane Wallower, Loveland, CO
Lisa Weisensel, Beaver Dam, WI
Norma L. Andersen, Fort Collins, CO:
In Memory of Dick Rutherford

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James A. Nissen, Estes Park, CO
Margie Swift, Broomfield, CO
Tom and Renee Adams, Greeley, CO:
In Honor of John and Ann Adams

JOHNSON PROPERTY ACQUISITION

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Mary and James Alfred, La Grange Park, IL
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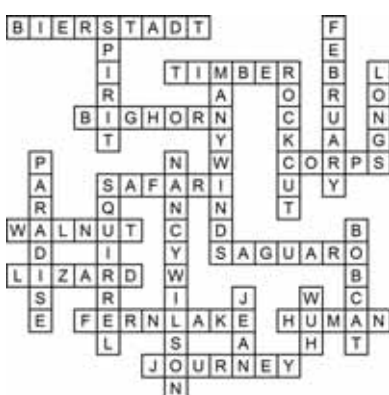
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Hoarfrost extravaganza!
 Photo by RMNA Member Liza Grant

NATURE ASSOCIATION NOTES...

First mountain bluebirds reported in early March! Welcome back! They've been spotted darting from fence post to fence post at Lumpy Ridge. Another great spot to watch for them is near the Alluvial Fan....Colorado River District Systems Specialist **Debbie Mason** reported an unprovoked attack by a moose in the Grand Lake area. The moose was passing through a friend's yard when it attacked her crippled dog that was otherwise occupied, causing a broken tooth and some bruises....Recently, late one evening, RMNA members **Kurt** and **Kerrie Badertscher** were travelling up Colorado Hwy 7 toward Allenspark from Lyons. Suddenly, near the town of Raymond, in their headlights appeared a fast-moving ball of fur crossing the road. Both the Badertschers and the ball stopped long enough in the middle of the road for them to see that the furry mass was two young mountain lions rough-housing while oblivious to traffic. As Kurt and Kerrie watched, the ball of fur divided into two young cats that bounded over the guardrail and disappeared, long tails waving.... Estes Park resident **Dean Martinson** watched in amazement as more than 300 crows lifted from some nearby trees and flew, cawing raucously, overhead....Resources Management Specialist **Jeff Connor** spotted a rough-legged hawk in Moraine Park not long ago. This bird breeds in Northern Canada and Alaska and winters in the lower 48 states....While snowshoeing off-trail from Bear Lake to Nymph Lake in January, Park Education Specialist **Katie Phillips**'s attention was snagged — impaled on the branch of a pine tree was the carcass of a snowshoe hare. There were no tracks beneath it, but the rabbit had clearly been cached. What animals might have done this? According to park biologists, raptors will cache a kill, but this one was tucked upward, underneath a branch, which would be awkward for a bird pull off. It was also too low in the tree. Lynx and bobcats will cache food (as do mountain lions), but something the size of a hare would most likely have been completely consumed by these felines. Pine martens will stash their food, and while usually they would hide their kill, it's

noted the presence of some mule deer legs dangling in a small pine tree just off Fish Creek Road on the edge of town. The legs, with hooves still attached, were casually slung over a branch. Is it a mountain lion cache? Or possibly a bobcat cache? Each week, the legs were stripped of flesh by small degrees, and, to this day, they are still hanging there....RMNA Development Associate **Julie Klett** watched a bobcat stalk, catch and eat a vole near Mall Road in Estes Park in mid-January....RMNA Executive Director **Charley Money** has observed a bobcat walking next to his house in Estes Park on three separate occasions, probably casing the joint....In early January, Olson Fellow **Emily Houser** and a couple colleagues went snowshoeing in Wild Basin. It was a blustery, snowy day with a fresh dusting of snow covering the ground as they made their way up the trail to Hidden Falls. About halfway to the frozen rock seep waterfall, they spotted some tracks crossing the trail. At first, they thought they must be human tracks, or snowshoe prints, but they were too big to be human feet, and too small to be snowshoes. Upon closer inspection, they noticed vague toe and claw impressions and distinct front and hind paw prints that appeared to lope along perpendicularly to the trail. The more brave among the group followed the tracks to seek their creator, to no avail. Although black bears often are held up as a quintessential example of a hibernating species, they are not true hibernators and may come out of hibernation when the weather is favorable to stretch and grab a bite to eat. Perhaps it was black bear tracks that they saw—or, as local legend might have it, perhaps it was Bigfoot!....Retired Wildlife Biologist **Gary C. Miller** suggested a really interesting online video about beaver for our readers. It's really cool! Check it out at: <http://biggeekdad.com/2011/06/the-beavers/#.UOB0qzJP9a0.gmail>....Early one morning in the middle of February, when the winds were blowing fiercely, RMNA Publications Manager **Nancy Wilson** spotted a coyote that was neatly tucked under a clump of sheltering junipers, out of the wind, with its eyes closed as the sun warmed its face....The Fern Lake fire has not produced any visible smoke for more than a month, although fire managers are maintaining a watchful eye. Firefighters will continue to monitor the fire area throughout the spring due to the remote chance the fire survives the winter. Normally, managers can count on winter snows to extinguish wildfires, but because the fuels are so thick and dense in Forest Canyon, it is conceivable that the fire could continue to be burning in litter and duff under rocks, stump holes or other sheltered areas and come back to life this spring after the snow melts. The drought conditions and the lack of winter snow is another contributing factor....Hold onto your hats, summer is coming, ready or not! We hope to see you in the park!



You just never know what might be lurking...
 (see Nature Notes) Photo: Louise Smith

PICNIC

Mark Your Calendars!
RMNA Membership Picnic!
August 3, 2013
 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
 Stanley Park Pavilion
 Estes Park, Colorado

possible that the deep snow may have influenced this situation. In addition, being smaller, a pine marten probably could not fully consume a snowshoe hare. The consensus? A pine marten is the most likely suspect. Over the next three days the carcass gradually disappeared, leaving only a tuft of rabbit fur and some tracks in the snow....Estes Park resident **Louise Smith**