

**Boulder County Nature Association**  
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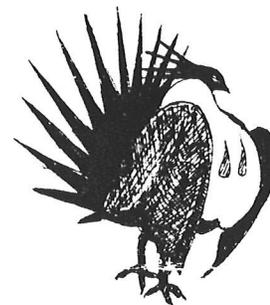
## **COLORADO BREEDING BIRD ATLAS**

The Colorado Breeding Bird Atlas, organized by the Zoology Department of the Denver Museum of Natural History, is a five-year project to determine what species of birds nest in the state, where they nest, and how many. Volunteers census the birds in priority blocks three miles on a side in the southeast corner of each topographic map in the state. Twenty-five BCNA volunteers worked 70 of these blocks.

In addition to volunteers, four paid census-takers worked on the project this summer. To provide some of the flavor of being out in the field, we're including some of the notes from Beth Dillon's report. And if this inspires you to volunteer next summer (your last chance), contact Hugh Kingery at the Denver Museum of Natural History (370-6336).

### **Block Statistics:**

# blocks worked: 25 (15 complete; 4 incomplete; 6 borderline)  
Hours including travel, gaining permission and block work: 466.5 hrs  
Hours of field work in blocks: 329.5 hrs  
Mileage including travel to, from and within blocks: 5,616 miles  
Number of days in field: 41; camp nights: 38; motel nights: 3



### **Notes on miscellaneous blocks:**

**Pitchpine Mountain:** includes Irvine SWA; great block with diverse habitats; lots of moose sign; good spot for Bufflehead (beaver ponds adjacent to aspen groves) but did not detect any; one aspen had nesting Red-naped Sapsucker, Tree Swallow and House Wren in it; sat out an electrifying thunderstorm under a willow bush! After the thunderstorm a Western Wood-pewee was sitting on a branch within 10 feet of me, seemingly unmindful of my presence. I watched for a short while and then moved on along the creek. The pewee then dashed by and perched on a branch at knee level, 3 feet in front of me. I watched it 30-45 seconds and then looked over my shoulder to see a flying Sharp-shinned Hawk within 30 feet or so. The hawk then dashed into the willows. Maybe the pewee thought I was safe to hide near?

**Delaney Butte:** Saw a Cliff Swallow swimming in Grizzly Creek trying to reach shore. By the time I got to it, it had drowned. Further examination showed it was a young bird, likely on its maiden flight. One of its wings was severely deformed and dysfunctional. The mosquitos in the willow bottoms are ferocious! An unplanned dip in the river allowed me the chance to dry out on a beaver lodge. Have you ever spent any time on a lodge? Well, the beavers make some pretty strange sounds including belching-like noises and worse!

**Agate Mountain:** Majority of block is mountain grassland, with a narrow, isolated strip of aspen/conifers on a north facing slope. The only human around for miles was a cowboy staying in a trailer in the block. I got lucky on this one, as it is a desolate area and private property. On my second trip, after playing trailer/mountain tag (similar to phone tag) the cowboy invited me over for dinner, which turned out to be his birthday. In lieu of cake, he got a raspberry nutrigain bar. He cooked, I washed dishes, what a deal!

**Turkey Canyon:** Common Poorwill-NY!; the adult lumbered off the nest, rocking and hissing. It took awhile before I found the chick, balled up motionless. I leaned down to get a better look and the chick lunged at me, spread its wings (feathers still in shafts) and hissed. It was definitely more homely looking than ferocious. What a treat!