

# *images*

OF BOULDER COUNTY PARKS AND OPEN SPACE



*spring 2011*

## Images

volume 33, number 1

*The mission of the Boulder County Parks and Open Space Department is to conserve natural, cultural and agricultural resources and provide public uses that reflect sound resource management and community values.*

**COVER PHOTO:** Agricultural Heritage Center at the Lohr/McIntosh Farm.

### PHOTOGRAPHS & ILLUSTRATIONS

Osprey Platform Work . . . . . Brad Milley  
Loukonen Hill Property . . . . . Jan Burns  
Plein Air Artist . . . . . Joshua Buck  
Wood Lily . . . . . POS Collection

### NATURE DETECTIVES

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Non-credited articles are by the editors. Suggestions and comments are welcome; please contact us at 303-678-6201 or [pfried@bouldercounty.org](mailto:pfried@bouldercounty.org).

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# Fourmile Canyon Fire: The Story Continues

by Erica Christenson

As landowners continue to valiantly pick up the pieces and rebuild after the tragic Fourmile Canyon Fire, Boulder County staff has taken over the task of implementing rehabilitation treatments established from the FES (Fourmile Emergency Stabilization) team report. Parks and Open Space staff will manage public treatment contracts and provide technical support to individual landowners for private land treatments.

## Background: The FES Team and Their Report

The FES team is made up of natural resource specialists and experts from Boulder County, the Bureau of Land Management, United States Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), CSU Extension Services, and Colorado State Forest Service. Participating county departments include Parks and Open Space, Transportation, Land Use, and Public Health. The goal of the FES team was to identify imminent post-wildfire threats to human life and safety, property and critical natural or cultural resources and recommend immediate actions to manage unacceptable risks.

The FES Team assessment concluded that erosion and debris flow were the greatest risks to life and property. While they acknowledge the wide array of rehabilitation techniques available to landowners, the team determined two types of treatments to be installed using federal and state grant funds: aerial mulching and roadside seeding.

## Funded Fire Rehab Treatments

Roadside seeding treatments consist of spreading seeds by hand in pre-determined areas for weed prevention. These seeding areas consist of 100 feet on either side of roads and driveways in areas moderately to severely burned with less than 60 percent slope. In total, approximately 600 acres will be seeded by hand, utilizing volunteers. Projects begin in mid-March and continue through mid-April. Residents can expect increased traffic on roads due to the shuttling of volunteers, staging areas for

## Dates for Restoration Projects

When:	Register At:	Time:
Sat, March 19	<a href="http://wlr.org">wlr.org</a>	all day
Thu, March 24	<a href="http://voc.org">voc.org</a>	TBD
Sat, March 26	<a href="http://voc.org">voc.org</a>	all day
Thu, March 31	<a href="http://wlr.org">wlr.org</a>	TBD
Sat, April 2	<a href="http://voc.org">voc.org</a>	all day
Tue, April 5	<a href="http://wlr.org">wlr.org</a>	TBD
Sat, April 9	<a href="http://wlr.org">wlr.org</a>	all day
(more dates will be added)		

For more information contact:

WRV: Mary at 303-543-1411 or [mary@wlr.org](mailto:mary@wlr.org)

VOC: Sue at 303-715-1010 x 119 or [sue@voc.org](mailto:sue@voc.org)

port-a-potties, tools, vehicles, and volunteers walking on public and private lands to spread seeds and travel to treatment areas. Contracts with VOC (Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado) and WRV (Wildlands Restoration Volunteers) will be coordinated by Erica Christensen, a Boulder County Plant Ecologist and Volunteer Coordinator.

Aerial mulching treatments consist of certified weed-free straw being dropped from helicopters in pre-determined areas; the main objective is erosion control. The areas (we call them polygons) were developed from a set of criteria that includes slope (between 20 to 60 percent), severity (moderately to severely burned areas), flood/debris flow risk, and values downstream (including human life, safety and property). In total, approximately 1,800 to 1,900 acres will be aerially mulched inside the fire boundary. The workflow will include staging the straw in strategic locations in late March, and helicopters dropping the straw in April. During the staging period, residents can expect a large increase in semi-truck traffic for straw deliveries. During the mulching period, residents are asked to leave the area for the day (preferred) or stay indoors, and bring in pets/livestock. Helicopters will be flying during daylight hours only, and residents can expect temporary road closures as helicopters fly overhead. Aerial mulching treatments will be applied by contractors. These contracts will be coordinated by Jennifer Kesler, a Boulder County Plant Ecology Specialist.

*NOTE: Bald Mountain Scenic Area will be closed during the fire rehab treatment.*

*Visit [www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.com](http://www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.com) for specific date closures in mid-March. Also the James F. Bailey Assay Office Museum will not open for the 2011 season until June 18.*

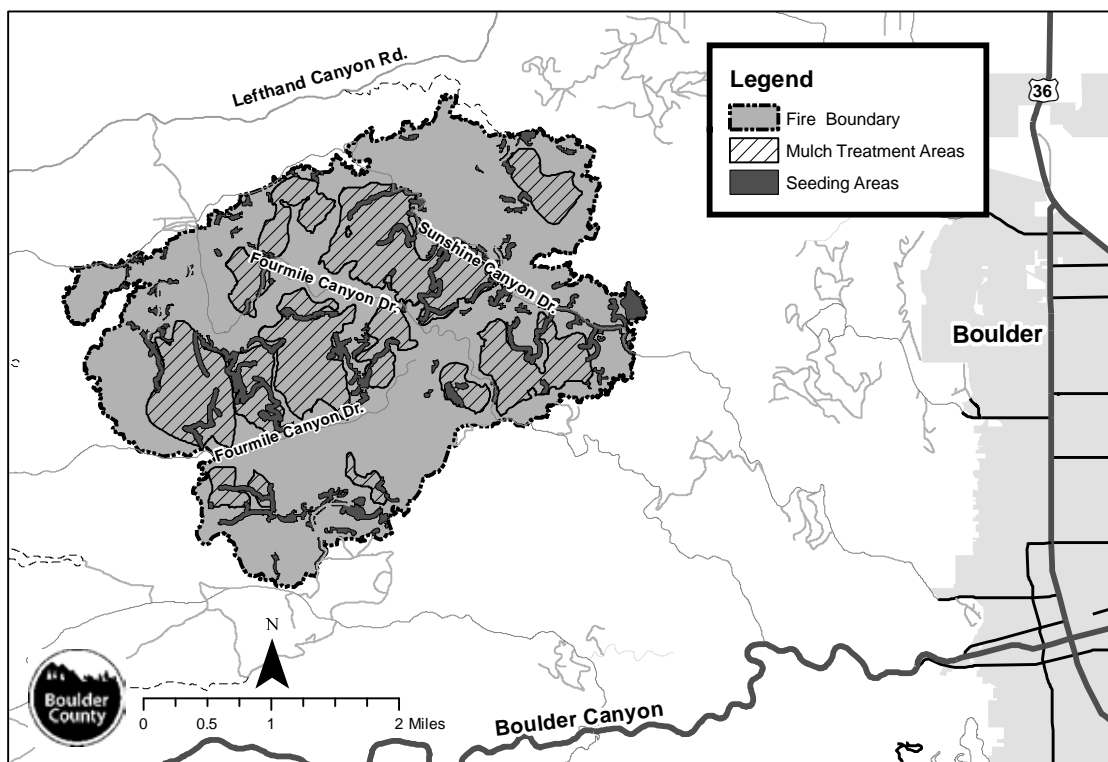
## Information for Those Within the Fire Boundary

Because of the mix of private and public land within the fire boundary, an integral piece of this rehabilitation process will include receiving permission from landowners to install treatments on their properties. This civic duty will not only protect the individual landowner, but his/her neighbors near and far, and the water quality of the area. A land-owner permission form (waiver) needs to be signed by every landowner inside the Fourmile Canyon Fire boundary, regardless of whether a treatment will occur on that property. This waiver will allow access onto private land for treatment purposes. This waiver can be found on the official Fourmile Canyon Fire website at [www.bouldercounty.org/fourmilefire](http://www.bouldercounty.org/fourmilefire).

Also on this website, residents and landowners can find a host of other tools and resources, including the FAQ (frequently asked questions) newsletter.

Public meetings will be held regularly in each fire protection district, and a calendar of dates can be found on the Fourmile Canyon Fire website. These public meetings are crucial for keeping community members informed of upcoming changes, and in addition to public and private rehabilitation treatments, other topics include transportation (roads, culverts, ditches, etc.) emergency notification and flood preparedness.

The roadside seeding treatment will be installed entirely with volunteers, and we need your help to spread and rake seeds. Check the Fourmile Canyon Fire website for the most up to date information.





# Osprey in Boulder County Get a few Upgrades

by Dave Hoerath and Brad Milley

Tom Miller, owner of the 35-acre Eagle Crest Farm in rural Boulder County, has always been conservation-minded. He worked in the California condor captive breeding program before moving to Colorado. He bought his property with the intent of keeping the farm rural, breeding Percheron draft horses, and preserving the beautiful historic barn. In 2008, Miller decided to protect his property from development forever and chose a conservation easement with Boulder County Parks and Open Space.

## The ABCs of Conservation Easements

Conservation easements are best described as an agreement between a private landowner and Boulder County, where the landowner agrees to restrict their property rights in some way. The most common restriction is limiting the number of houses and buildings allowed on the property. This maintains the rural, open character of the land and keep it from becoming more developed. In some cases, like Eagle Crest Farm, the conservation easement also requires that the property's water rights never be "sold off." This ensures the property stays agriculturally viable for generations to come.

The landowner and Boulder County agree to specific terms, sign an agreement, and the property is protected forever, no matter who buys the property in the future. Boulder County then monitors the property to make sure that the tenets of the conservation easement are being upheld, and also offers guidance to the landowner when needed. The end result is that the property stays in private ownership, but is protected from future development. A win-win for the landowner and conservation!

## Attracting Osprey

Miller's love of birds of prey and commitment to making a difference led him to erect two telephone poles and top them with platforms to provide nesting and perching areas for osprey.

Osprey are large raptors that live primarily by catching and eating fish. There are just a few nests in Boulder County as osprey have moved in to take advantage of the fish now present in the many reservoirs and gravel pit ponds. Not just any location provides the right space for osprey, so wildlife agencies have constructed platforms for them for years. Two of those platforms got upgrades this winter, including Miller's. These birds require very large nests. The nest platform on Cattail Pond at the Boulder County Fairgrounds had six full-sized birds at fledging time in 2009!

Parks and Open Space has a strong volunteer workforce that includes Richard Gunderson. He put his professional carpentry skills to work designing and building two strong and lightweight osprey platforms for the department.

In addition to the Miller site, the Lagerman Reservoir platform was almost 20 years old and in need of replacement. It's one thing to have two nice platforms with two places to put them, but getting them up there is no picnic. Enter the Facilities Division of the Boulder County Administrative Services.

On a calm, sunny day in December, the team pulled up to the Lagerman platform; really just a tangle of sticks and twine atop a 2-by-4 box frame with no sides. Biologists Will Keeley and Dave Hoerath had decided to shift the nest platform to the western pole at the site to give the birds more space away from the reservoir trail. Shop Foreman Joe Thiltgen brought the right equipment, saved the collection of sticks, and sawed the old platform to a long-armed perch.



*Top: Wildlife biologist Dave Hoerath and ranger Graham Fowler work together to build the new platform.*



*Right: Arborist Cathy Thiltgen, takes a ride in the bucket truck to work on the platform.*

After persuading some grazing bulls to let us by, we bounced the truck through the bunchgrass pasture to the other pole. Thiltgen had to balance the four-foot platform on the bucket and transfer it to the platform 35 feet up. That was the easy part. The pole was a treated utility pole that was cured so hard the screws wouldn't go in! He had to pilot drill the holes to get the long lag screws to go in. Eighteen screws later we had a new platform!

The team (now joined by Grounds Seasonal Marisa Heidt and Ranger Graham Fowler) then met Miller at his conservation easement. Miller led the truck through his pasture (full of the beautiful black Percherons) to his western platform. Osprey had used this platform for several years, but its small size was reducing success, including a complete nest failure in 2010. Land Stewardship Specialist Brad Milley, who helped negotiate this conservation easement, came out to congratulate Miller and film the proceedings.

Arborist Cathy Thiltgen had the ornery task of dismantling the old platform. She had to back out about 40 screws that made the old nest wind firm! Again, the tricky balancing act with the big platform and small bucket had the team envisioning the shiny redwood platform falling helplessly to the ground and exploding in slow motion. With direction from below, she oriented the nest to best withstand the wind and put all the screws in easily. She also attached a few starter sticks into the new platform and was almost done. She had to wait out a period of very cold wind gusts, but went back up in the bucket to cut loose the long strand of twine that had become tangled on the pole. Professionals can't leave a job unfinished!

This tale of cooperation will continue in the fall after the nesting season. The platforms are complete—now it's up to the birds!

## Research on Boulder County's Open Space Lands

*The Boulder County Parks and Open Space Department offers grants for research on county open space lands each year. All proposals are reviewed by a team of resource specialists, and awarded research projects are monitored during their activities on open space. The following is a summary of a 2010 study conducted by Rick Adams, professor at the University of Northern Colorado. The research project focused on quantifying bat species usage, abundance, diversity and foraging patterns to thinned forest mosaics at Heil Valley Ranch Open Space.*

**Abstract:** The goals for summer 2010 were to quantify the effects of a new forest thinning treatment at Heil Valley Ranch (HVR) that incorporated a mosaic design of opened and unthinned habitat patches within a treatment area. We used sonar-call collection and mist netting along transects established through opened and unthinned patches and compare bat activity patterns in terms of overall call abundance and species richness. We also conducted radio-telemetry of a lactating female fringed myotis (*Myotis thysanodes*) to locate this species roost site and assess usage of the habitat mosaic. In addition to bat sampling, we also sampled for insects along transects to assess biomass loading per habitat type. Analysis of bat activity and pattern of habitat usage during different moon-phases was also conducted. We also continued to monitor bat populations throughout HVR with limited mist netting at Ingersol Quarry and Geer Canyon as well as any ephemeral water sources that occurred. We also continued to monitor PIT-tagged bats in Geer Canyon by using our submersible reader in the artificial water source.

**Conclusions and Recommendations:** The importance of forested tracts to the forest clutter specialist species such as *M. thysanodes* and *M. evotis* is clear. However, our data thus far indicate that the maintenance of the forest tracts is important to all bat species, although the level of importance for open area species may vary night-to-night based upon

environmental conditions. Two of the species using PA2 are clutter specialists and require close-stands for foraging. Other species that typically are adapted to using edge or opened areas, still appear to require forest stands of sufficient density in order to avoid predation during nights having high moon illumination and/or under more stormy/windy nights when forest stands provide some cover from adverse conditions. In addition, the insect biomass calculation showed that the untreated forest was significantly higher in insects and it seems reasonable to assume that denser forest stands provide a microenvironment that is more stable in temperature and humidity thereby promoting insect reproduction and dispersal. From 27 visual observations, bats also appeared to be using the tree-islands within the opened areas. Although our mistnetting attempts within these 'islands' resulted in no captures, bats were observed flying low around the outer edges, perhaps using them to provide cover if a predator was detected.

The data collected in 2010, although representing only a single field season, showed the importance of untreated stands to the diversity and foraging activity of bats and in the stability of insect populations that support at least six species of bats, one of which, the fringed myotis (*M. thysanodes*) is considered a 'species of highest conservation concern' by the Colorado Division of Wildlife and a 'sensitive species' by various federal agencies (BLM, USFWS, USFS). It is our opinion that further reductions in stand density in the PA2 Mastication area would negatively affect bat species diversity and possibly the reproductive efforts of the fringed myotis colony, one of only a few known in Boulder County. These factors should be seriously weighed before further manipulations of this treatment area are implemented.

*If you want to read the full report, or other funded research, visit the department's website at <http://www.boulder-county.org/live/environment/land/pages/posresearch.aspx>.*

# F is for Falcons!

by Francesca Giongo

Falcons are diurnal raptors, or birds of prey, belonging to the genus *Falco*. They are very agile hunters, and all have a similar body plan characterized by long, pointed wings that allow them to fly at high speed and change directions rapidly. Different from the larger hawks which kill prey using their talons, falcons kill prey by severing the spinal cord with their notched beak. All falcons cache their food, stashing it to be retrieved at a later time. They also regurgitate undigested material such as feathers, beaks and claws in the form of elongated balls called pellets.

As in most birds of prey, female falcons are larger than the males. There is no agreement among researchers as to why this is. One hypothesis is that it allows male and female to hunt for different-sized prey, reducing intraspecific competition. Another hypothesis is that females are larger due to the increased energy required by egg laying, incubation, and brooding.

## The Home Life of Falcons

Falcons are monogamous. They pair for life and return to the same nesting site year after year. During courtship, all species perform acrobatic aerial displays that include vertical dives, high speed turns, and loop maneuvers.

Falcons do not build their own nests. The larger species use their feet to scrape debris and make a little depression, called eyrie, in open areas on top of cliffs. Occasionally they will take over stick-built nests of ravens or hawks. Smaller species use natural cavities in trees, woodpecker holes or abandoned magpie nests. Although falcons tolerate human presence, at times a single disturbance will cause them to abandon their nesting sites. Both Boulder County and City of Boulder open space departments adopt seasonal area closures to protect nesting sites.

## Falcons in Boulder County

Three species of falcons breed in Boulder County: the American kestrel, peregrine falcon and prairie falcon.

### The Kestrel

Of the three, the kestrel is the smallest and most common. Because of its small size (comparable to a robin) it used to be called sparrow hawk. The kestrel is also the species with a more pronounced sexual dimorphism. The female is an almost homogeneously rusty color, whereas in the male the outer half of the wings is blue-gray. Also, the tail of the female has numerous dark brown bands; the tail of the male has just one black band at the edge.

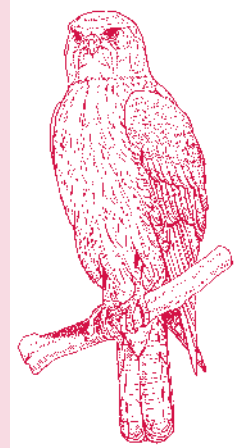
Kestrels are found in a variety of habitats, from grasslands to foothills to mountainsides, and even in urban environments. They require perches from which to hunt and cavities to nest. They are most commonly seen perched on power lines. This is the only falcon that hovers when hunting, beating its wings rapidly while keeping its head motionless. In the winter it feeds on rodents and small birds. In the summer a much larger part of its diet is comprised of insects.

### The Prairie Falcon

Similar in size to the peregrine falcon, the prairie falcon has a more uniform sandy coloration on the back and pale underparts. The black line running from the eye down the cheek is narrower than in the peregrine, resembling a mustache. The body shape is more tubular, and the tail is longer relative to the body. In flight, dark axillary (wingpits) areas, extending outward to include most of the under-wing, impart a characteristic two-toned coloration to the wing.

The prairie falcon has the most restricted range in North America, being found only in the western half of the continent, from southern Canada to central Mexico.

Even as it needs cliffs for nesting, the prairie falcon is a bird of open, treeless country. It prefers shortgrass prairies and high deserts, but occasionally nests above timberline in the tundra. They are very territorial during the breeding season, attacking intruders several times their size, including humans. They prey mostly on small mammals and birds. Prey preference varies with the season. Mammals, especially ground squirrels, are favored in spring and summer; birds, especially horned larks, in fall and winter. When hunting, the prairie falcon tends to glide low, often just a few feet from the ground.



**American Kestrel** (above left)  
length: male 9" - female 10"  
wingspan: male 21" - female 22"

**Prairie Falcon:**  
length: male 15" - female 17"  
wingspan: male 37" - female 43"

The prairie falcon is the falcon with the most restricted range in North America, found only in the western half of the continent, from southern Canada to central Mexico. In the United States it is considered a species of concern. The main threat is loss of habitat to urban development. A nest at Hall Ranch Open Space fledged four young last year, living proof of the essential role open space plays for the well being of this species in Colorado.

### **The Peregrine Falcon**

The peregrine falcon is a crow-sized falcon. Females are about 30 percent larger than the male. It has a slate gray/bluish black back and wings, and white to rusty, barred underparts. The top of the head and the nape are black, and the black extends down to the cheeks, forming a distinctive helmet.

The most important habitat requirement for the peregrine is the presence of cliffs, used for both nesting and perching sites. In Colorado, this means that they primarily nest in the foothills and montane ecosystems between 4,500 and 9,000 feet.

However, peregrines have recently adapted to nesting on man-made structures, such as bridges and tall buildings. This falcon specializes in hunting medium sized birds, either from a high perch or, more often, in full flight. Once prey is spotted from the air, the falcon folds its wings, tucks its feet, and dives at speeds that can reach 200 mph, making it one of the fastest creatures on earth! The prey is generally struck with a clenched talon, then the falcon turns in mid-air to catch it. Depending on the area, birds typically taken include pigeons (urban areas), mid-size songbirds, shorebirds, and waterfowl.

During the 1950s-1970s the number of peregrine falcons plummeted worldwide due to the use of DDT and similar pesticides which caused their eggshells to become too thin and break. Following the ban of DDT and vigorous recovery efforts, the peregrine was removed from the U.S. Endangered Species List in 1999. In Colorado, we went from only six occupied nests in 1964 to 71 in 1995, thanks also to the reintroduction of more than 500 captive-reared birds.

## **Agricultural Heritage Center**



*10th Anniversary 2001 - 2011*

Be sure and visit the the Agricultural Heritage Center at the Lohr/McIntosh Farm during its 10th season.

Get a glimpse into the history of agriculture in Boulder County and enjoy the rural surroundings. This site focuses on the years 1900 to 1925 when local families prospered as farmers and witnessed the coming of the Modern Age.

### **Site Highlights**

- Interactive exhibits
- Two barns
- Outhouse
- Milk house
- Blacksmith shop in use during special events
- 1909 farmhouse furnished with items from the 1910s
- Animals on site April through October including chickens, pigs, draft horses and sheep

Farm animals, planting and harvesting implements, and interpretive signs along the trail provide information about early agricultural practices. The farmhouse is furnished with period furniture of the 1910s. Also, the big red barn contains interactive exhibits for all ages to enjoy—including a real tractor cab!

### **Schedule**

The center will be open every Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 10:00am to 5:00pm from April 2 until October 31. Admission is free.

Tours of the site are offered on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays at 11:00am. Visitors are welcome to join a tour or wander around the site on their own. Groups can also arrange special tours of the site year-round.

The center is located at 8348 Ute Highway 66, west of Longmont. For additional information or to schedule a group tour, call 303-776-8848 or visit the department's web site [www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org](http://www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org).



# 2010 Open Space Acquisition Summary

by Jan Burns



*The Loukonen Hill Property*

In 2010, Boulder County spent \$17,649,921 to preserve approximately 1,677 acres of land and water rights and make option payments on five properties to be purchased in future years. Of the 1,677 acres preserved, the county acquired 610 acres in fee title and 1,067 acres in conservation easements. Two of the acquisitions were donations of conservation easements, valued at approximately \$1,420,000, which preserved 160 acres and extinguished five development rights.

## Significant Acquisitions

A few of Boulder County's most significant 2010 acquisitions were:

### **Loukonen Hill & Dairy Farm Properties**

The 76-acre property located just east of Lyons and 139 acres of the Dairy Farm property located along the east side US 36 north of Nelson Road were purchased for \$5,709,458. The Loukonen family also gave the county conservation easements over six residential parcels and two agricultural outlots (200 acres in total), which they retained, and conveyed a 50 percent interest in the water rights that are tied to those parcels to the County. The county has options to purchase an additional 467 acres of the Dairy Farm property over the next nine years for a total purchase price of \$11,672,532. The Loukonen properties are adjacent to thousands of acres of fee open space and conservation easements in the US 36 corridor and the Indian Mountain/Rabbit Mountain area.

### **Hall Ranch II**

150 acres purchased for \$3,900,000 and the county will purchase the remaining 425 acres for \$9,370,000 in 2011. The property is located southwest of Lyons along SH 7 and connects the Heil Valley Ranch and Hall Ranch open space properties.

### **Pasqual**

78 acres of irrigated agricultural land located in the southeast corner of N. 95th St. and Vermillion Road purchased for \$3,000,000. It is adjacent to the western boundary of the PUMA 66 Open Space and the Clark (John) Open Space north of Vermillion Road and contributes to the rural buffer of open space north of Longmont.

### **Diggins Conservation Easement**

270 acres of irrigated agricultural land located in the northeast corner of Boulder County purchased for \$1,450,000 plus the conveyance of the fee title in the adjacent Harless Open Space, subject to a county-held conservation easement, valued at \$978,000.

### **Ross-Regnier Exchange**

Boulder County conveyed the fee interest its 108-acre Ross Open Space in Weld County to the Regnier Family, subject to a conservation easement, in an even exchange for a conservation easement over 73 acres of the adjacent Regnier property that prohibits any structures. Boulder County received a \$720,000 grant from the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) for the 73-acre conservation easement. Boulder County also purchased a conservation easement over an additional 137 acres of the Regnier property for \$935,000 plus FRPP grant funds of \$1,065,000. These parcels are irrigated agricultural land located in the Boulder Creek corridor in Weld County.

### **Imel Conservation Easement Donation**

The donation of a conservation easement valued at \$730,000 over 120 acres located west of Jamestown that extinguished all three building rights associated with the property.



# NATURE DETECTIVES

Spring 2011



## A Few Minutes in the Life of a Pocket Gopher --

*Wait. ... Is it day or night? Winter or summer?  
Who cares? It is always dark and cool underground.*

*Okay, here goes. Dig, dig, dig, dig, dig with my amazing front claws. Come to big rock. Dig around it - dig, dig, dig, dig. Come to little rock. Bite it with my four yellow front teeth and pull it out. Push the little rock and loose dirt under my body, and kick it all behind me with my back feet. Lots of dirt back there.*

### Time to Clear the Tunnel

*Somersault to turn around and use my chest and front paws to push the dirt out the tunnel to above ground. Quick, always plug the tunnel with some dirt before a weasel or rattlesnake comes along. Zip backwards to my digging spot, feeling the way with my tail. Run into a salamander. No worries, it lives in my tunnel.*

### Finding Food

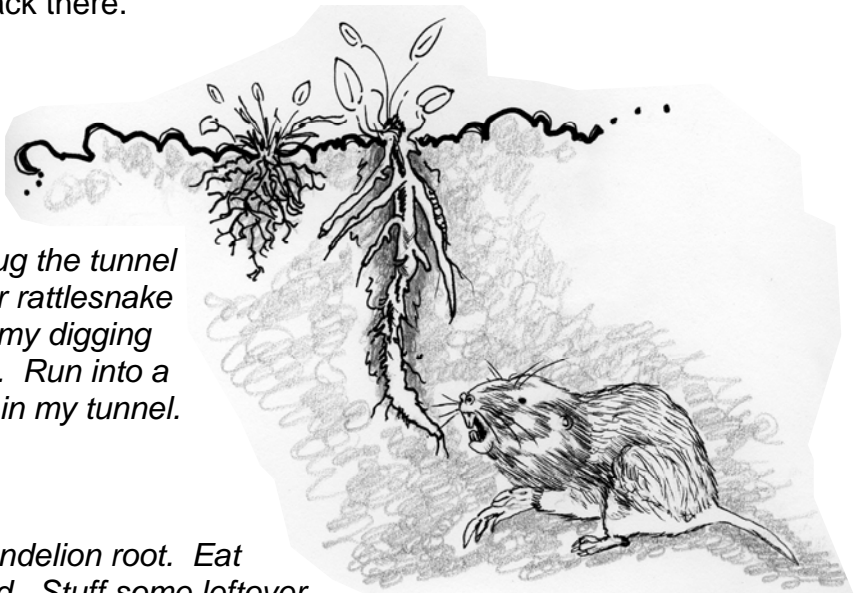
*Dig, dig, dig. Sniff out a tasty dandelion root. Eat some of it. Mmmm. Tastes good. Stuff some leftover root in my cheek pockets to take later to a food storage room. Dig, dig. Oops. Hard spot. Use teeth to dig. Gnaw, gnaw, gnaw, gnaw.*

### Lots of Work Living Underground But It's a Life

Ancient pocket gophers seem to have figured out eons ago that there isn't much competition from other animals for plant parts growing below ground.

Moles, you might remember, also live underground, but they eat insects. Underground is pretty good habitat for avoiding hordes of predators, too.

Boulder County has two different kinds of pocket gophers and spring is the perfect time to detect just where they might be living.



Pull Out and Save

## Detecting Signs of Gophers in the Spring



Pocket gophers tunnel through snow like it is just another kind of soil. As they tunnel back below ground, they push earth into the snow tunnels. The dirt in the tunnels sinks to the ground as the snow melts. Squiggly ridges of dirt above ground indicate a pocket gopher tunneled through snow at that spot. The dirt ridges are not tunnels; gophers are below ground once the snow is gone.

### Pocket Gophers are the Real Deal

Often any rodent that digs in the earth is carelessly labeled a gopher, but pocket gophers are the only animals rightly called gophers. Appearing above ground as little as possible, they live in soils from the plains grasslands to the high alpine. Our Northern Pocket Gophers accept a wide variety of soil types for tunneling compared to our Plains Pocket Gophers.

Plains gophers tend to be bigger so they like soil that is easier to dig, and they do most of their digging with their huge front claws. Northern gophers use their sharp front teeth more as they gnaw through tough places, but they also dig with their claws as they engineer their tunnels and burrows.

Pocket gophers tunnel to find food and shelter. They avoid soil that is too wet or too dry and packed or so loose the tunnels cave in. They dig side tunnels for food closets and toilets. Nest burrows are usually in the deepest tunnels.



### Tunneling for Food

In winter, gophers gobble underground roots, bulbs and tubers. Snow tunnels bring them to shrubs and trees for nibbling. In summer, they will pull plants down into their tunnel right through the ground. They make quick trips above ground for juicy green leaves and stems or seeds. Plants provide all their water.

### Tunneling for the Ecosystem

During one year, one gopher can push a couple tons of soil to the surface! (One ton is 2000 pounds.) Minerals in the dug-up dirt will nourish new plants. Pebbles will break down into new topsoil. The digging helps the earth absorb snowmelt and rainwater and brings air to plant roots. Gopher-buried plants make soil fertile. Go gophers!



## Tunnel Bodies

Built for life in a tunnel, pocket gophers look a bit like 6-to-12-inch, furry sub sandwiches with buckteeth and a short tail, hunched over powerful feet with really long claws. Their soft brownish fur readily sheds dirt and usually matches the color of their earth homes. Their fur is comfortably rubbed forward or backward in the tunnel because, unlike the fur on a dog, it doesn't lie one direction.

## Gopher Tunneling Tools

Their feet are nearly hairless, but bristles around the edges turn the feet into efficient dirt scoopers. Sparse hairs on the short tail and their facial whiskers guide gophers in the dark. Small ears help detect what's unseen, and small eyes boost senses above ground.



Like all rodents, gophers have continually growing teeth. The front incisors stick out slightly for digging, and the back molars are used for grinding and mashing plant parts. As the four incisors develop in baby gophers, they grow right through their lips. Sounds gruesome, but it means the gophers can close their mouths to keep out dirt while digging tunnels or harvesting plants.

## Pockets Are Handy

Gopher “pockets” are fur-lined, open pouches outside of their cheeks. The pockets do not open into the mouth. Gophers can handily turn them inside out to dump gathered food and nest materials. Muscles flip them back into shape.

## Teeth as Weapons

Gophers don't like company so unless they are starting a family, other gophers are unwelcome in the tunnels. Gophers show their teeth and claws and make angry clicking and panting noises to try to scare intruders. Teeth are a last resort with weasel and snake predators. Gophers first try to plug or collapse the tunnel between themselves and those hunters.



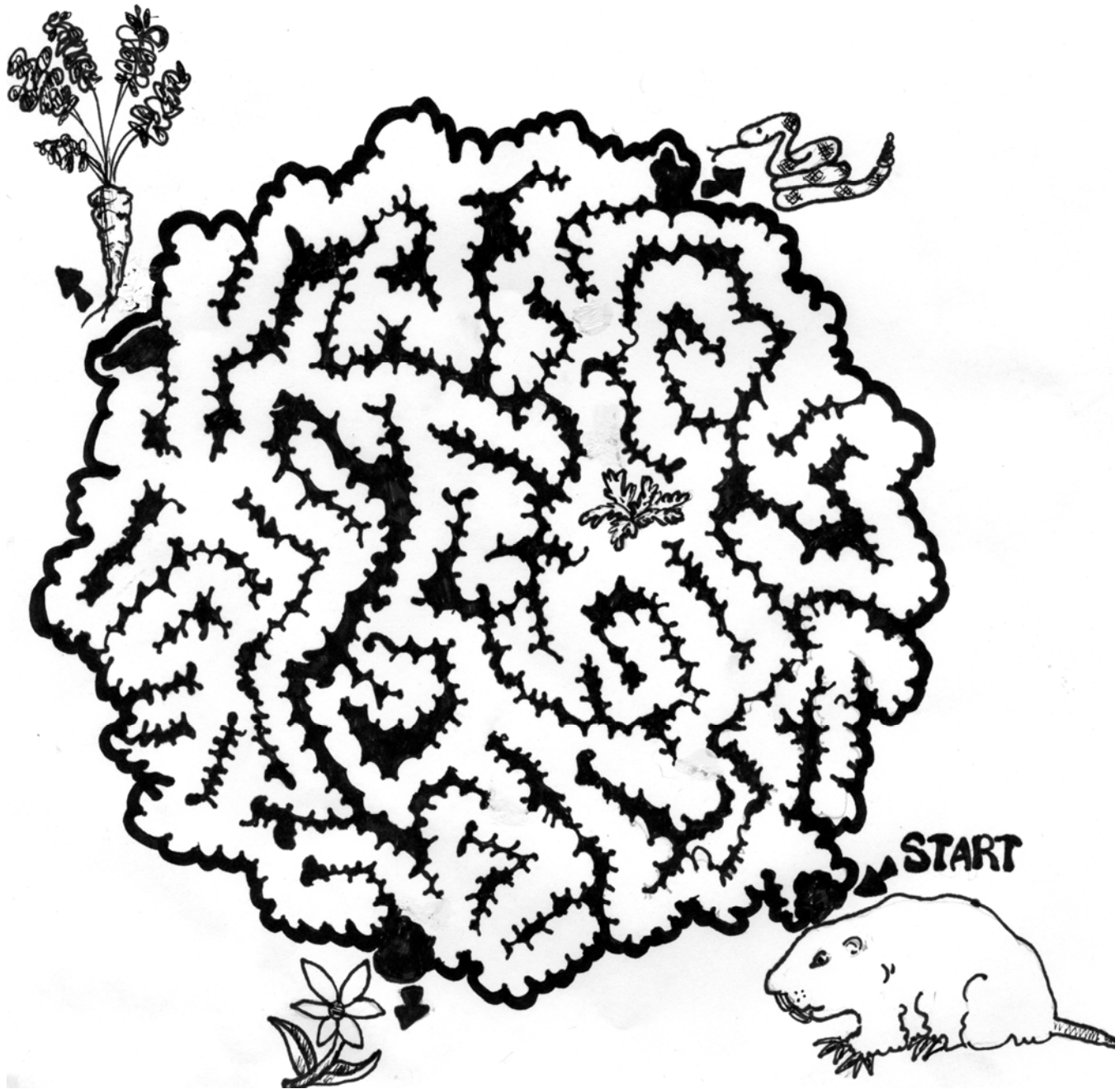
## The Digging Life

Baby gophers are typically born in the spring. In about a month, when they are a third the size of adults, they leave home, find their own territories and dig in.

If they escape weasels, snakes, badgers, foxes, coyotes, bobcats, owls, hawks and skunks, lucky gophers might live five years, but more likely, two years. Their life-long tunneling even helps other critters. Gopher tunnels are used for hiding and safe traveling by at least 22 other animals. Dig, gophers, dig!

## Amazing Pocket Gophers

Help this pocket gopher travel through its tunnels to find some plants to munch.



## Spring Signs of Pocket Gophers

Some good places in Boulder County to find squiggly pocket gopher ridges include Betasso Preserve, Hall Ranch and Heil Valley Ranch. Look in open meadow areas for the best chance of finding gopher signs.





# Call for Artists: 2011 Plein Air Art Exhibition



*Local artist Valerie Meyers paints "en plein air"*

The Boulder County Plein Air artist community and the Boulder County Parks and Open Space Foundation are excited to host a Plein Air Art Exhibit featuring Boulder County's open spaces.

The show will feature a combination of invited and juried artists. Along with four invited artists, a panel of jurors will choose additional artists to participate.

Karen Imbierowicz, Partnership Coordinator for Boulder County Parks and Open Space says, "Living in such an athletic and health focused community, we are all very familiar with our recreational users of open space. We are less familiar with the artist community who quietly set up their easels on the side of the trail and capture the aesthetic beauty of the place we call home."

Bill Daniels, a local artist and invited participant in the show looks forward to exploring new venues. "Participating in the inaugural Plein Air Art Exhibit featuring Boulder County Parks and Open Space is very exciting for me because of the opportunity to celebrate the special places that have become old friends and to get acquainted with new ones!"

This show benefits the Parks and Open Space Foundation, a not-for-profit fundraising partner of Boulder County Parks and Open Space.

## What Is Plein Air Art?

"Plein air" is defined as the act of painting outdoors. The focus of the artwork is usually landscapes. The painting is usually done in one block of time in the field, so the immediacy of the moment is captured.

Carol Jenkins, another artist invited to participate in the show, describes why she enjoys the process of plein air painting. "... my greatest love is plein air painting. The weather, the light, and the land all become part of me. Heading out into nature, looking around and being inspired by a beautiful composition and translating that to my canvas right then and there is always exciting to me."

## Who Will Participate?

Four local artists have enthusiastically agreed to participate in the art show. These artists are:

- WF Daniel
- Molly Davis
- Jason Emery
- Carol Jenkins

Both professional and non-professional artists are encouraged to participate.

## Paint-Out Details

Artists will participate in a two-week "paint-out" to be held between June 1 and June 14. Artists will have access to Boulder County Parks and Open Space agricultural, prairie, forested, and aquatic open space areas to produce artwork for the exhibit. Additionally, artists will be allowed access to certain restricted open space areas during this time.

## Information for artists wishing to apply:

- Artist must be a resident of Boulder County
- Acceptable media— pencil, pastel, oil, watercolor, and acrylic
- Submit three digital images of your outdoor/en plein air art with your entry form, due by March 30
- The two-week paint-out will be held between June 1 and June 14th
- Entry fee is \$20.00

## Artwork Exhibit and Sales

An exhibit featuring the invited and juried artists' work will be held at the Old Firehouse Art Center in Longmont, from August 19 to September 3rd. A catalog featuring the artists and their artwork will be produced to promote the show.

## For Complete Information

Go to [www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org](http://www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org) for complete information including prospectus, requirements, and entry forms.

# Rare Vascular Flora of Boulder County

## (Plants People Don't See So Often)

by Geoff Goss

"Feeeeeeeeeeed me Seymour!"

Yes, Audrey II from *Little Shop of Horrors* was shamefully among the first things that came to mind when the topic of rare plants was discussed. Probably because I'm more than a little weird.

If you *also* think of the oversized talking Venus flytrap when asked about rare plants, then I can sympathize with you and your poor sweet family. If you don't know what Audrey II is, or have never seen the "*Little Shop of Horrors*" movie, then I wouldn't worry about it. But that was all before...

It was before I learned that there are plants at least as interesting and (nearly) rare as the ferocious, fictitious flora. Some are beautiful, some are outright strange. Some are federally endangered, some are locally rare. Some of these plants are so scarce that a person would be lucky to see one specimen in a lifetime. Or perhaps you could look right at one and not know it. They won't try to eat you either, so that's a plus.

### Location, Location, Location

There are around 3,000 plant species native to Colorado. Of those, roughly 10 percent are in some way rare. According to the Colorado Natural Heritage Program's 2007-2008 critical resources survey, there are 58 rare or imperiled plant species and 63 plant communities of concern in Boulder County. A plant community is a grouping of plant species that are typically found together, often dictated by environmental and climatic factors. What makes these species and communities rare is often dependent upon their location.

For example, much of the Great Plains is covered with big bluestem grass. Locally, however, it is a very peculiar occurrence. During the last ice age, big bluestem on Colorado's Front Range was cut off by glaciation from big bluestem in states further east. When the ice receded, the big bluestem community here was left all alone. In fact, xeric (dry) and mesic (not too wet, not too dry) tallgrass communities are both a locally rare occurrence, although they are quite common elsewhere.

### Rocky Mountain Monkeyflower

One very uncommon Boulder County plant is the critically endangered and wonderfully named, budding monkeyflower, also known as the Rocky Mountain monkeyflower. This elusive yellow jewel is only found at altitudes between 8,400 and 11,120 feet along both sides of the Continental Divide. It clings to moist cliff ledges and under rocky overhangs, eking out an existence with only eight documented populations. It is considered critically imperiled globally and statewide. Its pollen is sterile, preventing it from sexual reproduction. Instead, the



Wood lily

leaf stalk develops into a miniature, complete version of itself, falling off as the original plant continues to mature. Water then presumably carries the fallen mini-monkeyflower to a new home.

### Moonworts

One group of Boulder County rarities that are perhaps more strange than beautiful are the moonworts. A fern, the name "moonwort" comes from the plant's leaflets that resemble half-moons and the Anglo-Saxon word wort meaning "plant." Personally, the name conjures

some crazy cosmic origin, backed-up by its bizarre appearance. For one, it has two stalks emerging from the ground – one with leaves, and the other with tiny spore-filled cases that resemble little clusters of grapes. No surprise that the moonwort is sometimes referred to as the grapefern. Secondly, it only spends a small portion of its life above ground. When underground, it gains nourishment symbiotically from a mycorrhizal fungus, in return providing the fungus with carbohydrates.

### A Front Range Orchid

Moving from the odd to the fragile, we have the Ute ladies'-tresses orchid. Stunning in its delicateness, this orchid species is found along the Front Range near major sources of water. It has small white flowers spiraling up a stalk of about 14 inches. The helical arrangement of the flowers is indicated in its genus name, *Spiranthes*. Our over two-dozen orchid species in Colorado are often eclipsed by their showier tropical relatives commonly sold as ornamentals. Spy one of our natives through a hand-lens however, and you will see a flower every bit as magnificent.

The possible presence of such rare plants puts me in awe. It should go without saying that unlike an animal, a plant cannot run away if faced with eminent danger. Many plants have no defense against a carelessly-placed hiking boot or, much worse, a person picking them. This is why we rarely hear mention of specific plant locations. After all, the wood lily is native to Boulder County. Its beauty is its downfall. Often when people see them, they pick them, which is why we don't see them so often.

### Rare Treasures

Why do humans cherish rarity? Do we truly wish to preserve that which is tenuous and fragile, or is it more selfish? In reality, we all probably have a little bit of both in us. We wish to care for something that cannot care for itself. It brings to mind the fragility of all life on our planet, which brings us closer to each other and to the rare thing itself. Whatever the true cause for our concern, we reach the same conclusion...humans love the rare. In the discussion of rare Boulder County plants, I know one thing. I will never think of a fake talking plant again.

# Discover Boulder County

## A CALENDAR OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY EVENTS

### Wildflower Hikes and Slideshows

#### Spring Wildflower Slide Programs

**Monday, April 11; 6:30pm to 8:00pm**  
**REI Store, Community Room, 1789 28th Street, Boulder**

—and—

**Wednesday, May 11; 7:00pm to 8:30pm**  
**Longmont Public Library, Meeting Rooms A & B  
4th Avenue and Emery Street, Longmont**  
Learn about the variety of wildflowers found in Boulder County, where and when to look for them, and some interesting facts about some of our native plants.

#### Spring Wildflower Hikes

**Wildflowers of Legion Park Hike**  
**Saturday, April 30; 10:00am to noon**  
**Legion Park; east of Boulder on Arapahoe Road; 0.5 mile west of 75th Street**

Join volunteer naturalists for a leisurely spring stroll through the pinyon and ponderosa pines. Besides having a great view of the Continental Divide, this park is a wonderful place for early season wildflowers.

**Wildflowers of Rabbit Mountain Hike**  
**Saturday, May 14; 10:00am to noon**  
**Rabbit Mountain Open Space; NE of Lyons on North 55th Street (turn north on 53rd Street off Highway 66)**  
This transitional foothills zone is home to Easter daisies, Nuttall's violets, Pasque flowers, spring beauties, cacti, and more. Join volunteer naturalists for a moderate 2-mile hike that will take you from grassland to ponderosa pine and mountain mahogany shrubland in search of early bloomers.

**Wildflowers of Heil Valley Ranch Hike**  
**Saturday, May 28 10:00am to noon**  
**Heil Valley Ranch; North of Boulder off Lefthand Canyon Drive; meet at group picnic shelter**  
Join volunteer naturalists for a spring wildflower hike in the beautiful foothills of Boulder County. We will hike a leisurely 1.5-mile loop through forest and meadows in search of spring wildflowers, enjoying some beautiful vistas along the way.

#### Who are the Owls?

**Monday, March 7; 7:00pm to 8:30pm**  
**Louisville Public Library, 951 Spruce Street, Louisville**  
Owls have been regarded with fascination throughout recorded history and across many cultures. To some they are symbols of wisdom; to others, harbingers of doom and death. Over half of the owls recorded in the U.S. have been seen in Boulder County, and most of those owls nest here. Join volunteer naturalists to learn about these fascinating creatures of the night.

#### The Unique World of Water

**Saturday, March 12; 10:30am to noon**  
**Lafayette Public Library, 775 west Baseline Road, Lafayette**  
Join volunteer naturalist Steve Kaverman and learn about the world of water in Boulder County. Providing water for residential, agricultural and recreational use impacts nature in ways you may not have imagined. Take a walk across the county on a room-sized map as we explore the natural and not-so-natural flow of water. You may find that where your water comes from, how far it travels, and getting it where and when we need it has created a very unique world of water for plants, animals and you! This program is geared to older children and adults.

#### Forest and Fire Ecology Hike

**Sunday, March 13; 10:00am to noon**  
**(Meeting location will be given to registered participants)**  
Join volunteer naturalists for an easy one-mile hike to learn about the natural role of fire in ponderosa pine ecosystems and some of the forest management practices that can lessen the effects and scale of wildfires. You will also see evidence of the recent Fourmile Canyon Fire, and learn about some of the possible rehabilitation efforts that may be employed in the future. Register by calling 303-678-6214 by Thursday, March 10.

### All Programs

All ages are welcome unless otherwise noted. NO PETS PLEASE! Be prepared for cool temperatures and muddy conditions on trails. Bring drinking water and dress in layers. See the back cover for park locations. For information about these programs, or to arrange a volunteer-led program for your group, please call 303-678-6214.

# Discover Boulder County

## A CALENDAR OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY EVENTS

### **The Hidden World of Bird Nests**

**Saturday, March 19; 10:00am to noon**

**Walden Ponds Wildlife Habitat Area; 75th Street between Valmont Road and Jay Road; meet at group picnic shelter near Cottonwood Marsh**

Bird nests appear in an almost infinite variety of forms, from a mere scrape in the ground to intricately woven hanging nests. However, nests in deciduous trees and shrubs remain unseen until leaves drop in the fall. Join volunteer naturalists for an easy hike in search of bird nests and learn about breeding bird behavior. Bring binoculars and a bird field guide if you have them.

### **What's the Deal with Spring?**

**Sunday, March 20; 10:00am to noon**

**Heil Valley Ranch; North of Boulder off Lefthand Canyon Drive; meet at group picnic shelter**

What's blooming? Who's singing? Who's having babies? How are these springtime events connected and what does the position of the sun in the sky have to do with it? Join volunteer naturalist Larry Nygaard and others on a leisurely, two-mile hike and celebrate the first week of spring by looking and listening for signs of new life along the trail.

### **Spring Awakening: Bears in our Backyard?**

**Saturday, March 26; 1:00pm to 2:30pm**

**Foothills Nature Center; 4201 N. Broadway, Boulder (Wonderland Lake Trailhead)**

Black bears have always been part of our landscape. In springtime, as days begin to lengthen and temperatures start to warm, black bears and their cubs emerge from their winter dens. Join volunteer naturalists Louise Alderson and Susan Holley to explore how bears live during each season – with a focus on springtime.

### **Visit the Champion Cottonwood Tree**

**Saturday, April 2; 10:00am to noon (drop-in)**

**Champion Cottonwood Site; East side of Crane Hollow Road, just north of the intersection of Crane Hollow and St. Vrain Roads in northern Boulder County near the town of Hygiene. Please park carefully along Crane Hollow Road near the entrance gate.**

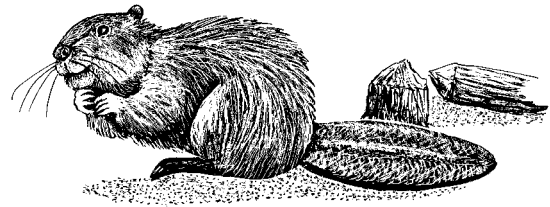
The majestic plains cottonwood stands out in the landscape. This water-loving tree has long been treasured for food, shade, and habitat. Since 1967, Boulder County has been home to the largest plains cottonwood tree in North America according to the National Register of Big Trees. This stately tree, over a century old, stands some 105 feet tall and nearly 9 feet in diameter. Join volunteer naturalists to see and learn more about the story of this sentinel of the plains. No hiking is required.

### **All About Beavers**

**Saturday, April 9; 10:00am to noon**

**Walden Ponds Wildlife Habitat Area; 75th Street between Valmont Road and Jay Road; meet at group picnic shelter near Cottonwood Marsh**

The beaver is one of nature's most accomplished engineers. They build lodges, dam streams, and otherwise modify the environment to create their habitat. Beavers have periodically taken up residence at Walden Ponds over the years and left some of their handiwork behind. While beavers are most active at night, we'll see signs of their hard work in felled shrubs and trees, and old lodges. Volunteer naturalists will lead this easy walk to learn all about these furry, water-loving mammals.



### **Rattlesnake!**

**Saturday, April 16; 10:00am to noon**

**Rabbit Mountain Open Space; NE of Lyons on north 55th Street; meet at group picnic shelter**

Enjoy a moderate 2-mile hike and learn about this fascinating reptile which can be found in the plains and foothills. Volunteer naturalists will lead this hike and share information about the western rattlesnake, including habitat, ecology, behavior, and how to be safe in rattlesnake country.

### **Beginning Birding**

**Saturday, April 23; 8:00am to 10:00am**

**Walden Ponds Wildlife Habitat Area; 75th Street between Valmont Road and Jay Road; meet at group picnic shelter near Cottonwood Marsh**

Join volunteer naturalists to explore the joys of bird watching! They will share tips for recognizing different types of birds, including songbirds, ducks and waterfowl, wading birds, raptors, and more. The emphasis of this bird-watching trip will be on practicing observation skills to help with bird identification. Be prepared for a slow-paced walk of up to 2 miles. Bring binoculars and a bird field guide if you have them.



# Discover Boulder County

## A CALENDAR OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY EVENTS

### **Pella Crossing: History and Habitat**

**Sunday, April 24; 1:00pm to 3:00pm**

**Pella Crossing Open Space; about one mile south of the town of Hygiene, on the east side of N. 75th Street (meet at the picnic shelter east of the parking lot)**

Join volunteer naturalists Joyce Costello, Barbara Preese, and Marsha Williams to learn about past and present residents of Pella Crossing. Learn about the agricultural and mining history of this area, and development of the ponds for wildlife habitat. We will keep an eye out for evidence of the birds and other wildlife. Be prepared to walk about 2 miles round trip on level trails. Bring binoculars if you have them.

### **I Spy Daytime or Nighttime Animals**

**Thursday, April 28; 9:30am to 10:30am**

**Walden Ponds Wildlife Habitat Area; 75th Street between Valmont Road and Jay Road; meet at group picnic shelter near Cottonwood Marsh**

Some animals rest or sleep at night, others hunt for food by the light of the moon. Join volunteer naturalist Diane Faigen and others to discover how these animals are different. Hands-on activities and a craft will also be part of the fun. This program is geared to preschoolers accompanied by an adult.

### **Geology of Rabbit Mountain**

**Saturday, May 7; 9:00am to 1:00pm**

**Rabbit Mountain Open Space; NE of Lyons on north 55th Street; meet at group picnic shelter**

Volunteer naturalist Dick Pratt and others will lead a moderately strenuous 3-mile hike where you'll learn about the interesting geology of the area. We'll also keep our eyes out for spring wildflowers, soaring raptors, and wildlife. Bring lunch, water, sunscreen, closed-toed hiking shoes/boots, and binoculars if you have them. This program is geared for adults.

### **Fossils and Flowers**

**Sunday, May 15; 9:30am to noon**

**(Meeting location will be provided to registered participants.)**

Join volunteer naturalists Megan Bowes and Sue Hirschfeld for a short, moderately strenuous hike to explore a landscape created by folding and faulting as the Rocky Mountains uplifted 70 million years ago. You will see fossilized evidence of the Cretaceous seas that once inundated this area, as well as some of the earliest blooming wildflowers in Boulder County. Register by calling 303-678-6214 by Thursday, May 12.

### **A Butterfly's Life – A Beginner's Guide to Butterflies**

**Thursday, May 19; 7:00pm to 8:30pm**

**George Reynolds Branch Library, 3595 Table Mesa Drive, Boulder.**

Do you love butterflies? Are you curious about the life cycle and activities of butterflies? Have you ever wondered where Monarchs go during their migration? Come experience this beginner's guide to butterflies, presented by volunteer naturalist Cathy Cook. This program will review the amazing life cycle of butterflies, and will cover basic information on behaviors, host plants, identification tips and the incredible Monarch migration. We'll share some interesting facts about the connection between plants and butterflies, give a brief introduction to local butterfly resources, and talk about when and where to look for those "flying flowers"...the butterflies.



### **Geology Walk at Sandstone Ranch**

**Saturday, May 21; 10:00am to noon**

**Sandstone Ranch Open Space; the Visitor Center is located south of Highway 119, one mile east of Weld County Road 1. Take the second (east) entrance to the Sandstone Ranch area, turning south on Sandstone Drive. Follow the signs to the Visitor Center parking lot.**

Join volunteer naturalist Dick Pratt to learn about the geology of Sandstone Ranch and Boulder County. From a scenic overlook, we will learn about this dramatic and diverse landscape, from the Great Plains to the Continental Divide. After a short and easy walk exploring geologic history, you can visit the historic Sandstone Ranch house to learn about some of the human history associated with this site.

### **All Programs**

All ages are welcome unless otherwise noted. **NO PETS PLEASE!** Be prepared for cool temperatures and muddy conditions on trails. Bring drinking water and dress in layers. See the back cover for park locations. For information about these programs, or to arrange a volunteer-led program for your group, please call 303-678-6214.

# Discover Boulder County

## A CALENDAR OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY EVENTS

### Cultural History Events

This spring enjoy two cultural history events—both are fun opportunities to explore the history of Boulder County. For more information please call 303-776-8848 or send an email to [skippen@bouldercounty.org](mailto:skippen@bouldercounty.org).

#### Spring at Walker Ranch

**Sunday, April 17; 10:00am to 4:00pm**

**Walker Ranch Homestead; 7701 Flagstaff Mountain Road, approximately 7.5 miles west of Boulder on Flagstaff Road**

For farmers and ranchers, spring is one of those times when the list of things to do seems almost endless. Calving, plowing and planting, repairs to home and out-buildings, and many other tasks seem to all need attention at the same time. Join us at the homestead as costumed volunteers recreate one of the busiest seasons of the year, demonstrating various chores associated with rural living in the late 1800s. Try your hand at beating a rug, preparing the garden, or churning butter.

#### Crafts and Trades of Olden Days

**Sunday, May 15; 10:00am to 4:00pm**

**Agricultural Heritage Center, 8348 Ute Highway 66 in Longmont**

Today, we have become accustomed to shopping the department stores for a sweater, or the hardware store if we need a new hinge for the backyard gate. Historically, these items would have been made at home using skills not widely practiced today. Blacksmithing, wool spinning, and candle dipping are just some of the activities that will be demonstrated as we celebrate traditional arts and crafts associated with rural living.



*A volunteer demonstrates spinning during Crafts and Trades of Olden Days.*

### Birds of Boulder County Slide Programs

**Tuesday, April 5; 7:00pm to 8:30pm**

**Lafayette Public Library, 775 west Baseline Road, Lafayette**  
—and—

**Tuesday, May 3; 7:00pm to 8:30pm**

**George Reynolds Branch, Boulder Public Library, 3595 Table Mesa Drive, Boulder; additional parking is available across Table Mesa Drive in the King Soopers parking lot**

Join volunteer naturalists to learn where to find and how to identify some of the birds that call Boulder County home. This slide program, which is geared to beginning birders, will take you from the grasslands to the alpine tundra, to explore an amazing range of ecosystems and habitats, and to learn about the birds that live there. You will also hear about some of the migratory birds that return to or pass through Boulder County at this time of year.



### Nature Hikes for Seniors

Boulder County Parks and Open Space hosts a nature hike for seniors every month. Programs include information about an area's history, wildlife and current resource management projects. For more information, call 303-678-6214. Please call in advance if you plan to bring a large group, so we have enough naturalists at the program.

**Programs begin at 10:00am and end at noon.**

March 31	Agricultural Heritage Center at Lohr/McIntosh Farm
April 28	Heil Valley Ranch Open Space (meet at group picnic shelter at southern trailhead)
May 26	Betasso Preserve

## Parks and Open Space Online

### Images is Online

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### Save paper and receive *Images* via email.

1. Go to [www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org/images](http://www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org/images)
2. Enter your email address in the space provided
3. That's it! You will receive ONLY 4 emails per year with the issue of Images

NOTE: If you wish to stop receiving the printed version, please (please, please!) send an email to [swilliams@bouldercounty.org](mailto:swilliams@bouldercounty.org) so we can remove you from the mailing list. *This is very important so we reduce our use of paper!* (Images is still available in printed version.)

### Read *Images* Online

1. Go to [www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org/images](http://www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org/images)
2. Click on the issue of *Images* you want to read

### Don't Miss a Hike, Outdoor Program or Special Event Receive Monthly Email Notices of our Hikes and Events!

1. Go to [www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org/hikesandevents](http://www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org/hikesandevents)
  2. Scroll to the bottom of the page
  3. Enter your email address in the space provided
- That's it! You will receive one email per month listing our hikes and programs.

### Find Us On Facebook: "Like" Boulder County Parks and Open Space to get the latest news.

Go to [www.Facebook.com/BoulderCountyOpenSpace](http://www.Facebook.com/BoulderCountyOpenSpace)

**We're on Twitter:** Follow us from your Twitter account.  
[www.Twitter.com/BoulderCountyOS](http://www.Twitter.com/BoulderCountyOS)



## Caribou Ranch Closed April - June

We want to remind you there is a permanent spring closure April 1 through June 30, to protect spring migratory birds, overwinter elk survival, and elk calving and rearing activities at Caribou Ranch Open Space. Please respect wildlife needs for solitude.

Violators can be fined up to \$300 by resident caretaker, park rangers and county sheriff deputies who patrol the open space property.

## Walker Ranch Volunteers



We are now accepting applications for volunteers at the Walker Ranch Homestead. This is a great opportunity for families to get involved in a volunteer activity together!

As an historical interpreter you help bring history to life. Volunteers dress in clothing styles of the late 1800s and demonstrate daily chores of a working western ranch including cooking on a wood-burning stove, churning butter, making roof shingles, practicing roping skills, and doing laundry the old fashioned way with a scrub board, wringer & tub.

Training is required to volunteer at Walker Ranch. Application deadline is April 20. Training takes place on Saturday April 30 and Sunday May 1. For more information and a volunteer application, please contact Sheryl Kippen at 303-776-8848 or [skippen@bouldercounty.org](mailto:skippen@bouldercounty.org).

## Seasonal Job Openings

The Boulder County Parks and Open Space Department is looking for temporary employees. Seasonal employment is often an important step in securing a full-time job in public land management.

Jobs in the Resource Management Division include: Education and Outreach Seasonal, Forestry Technician, Plant Ecology Maintenance Technician, Seasonal Park Ranger, Weed and Roadside Mowing Operator, Open Space Mowing Operator, Weed Technician and Wildlife (Prairie Dog) Technician. Jobs in the Operations Division include: Operations Mowing Crew, Trail Worker Positions, Tree Care and Boulder County Fairgrounds Worker. Jobs in the Youth Corps Division include: Youth Corps Assistant Team Leader, Youth Corps Team Leader, Youth Corps Field Coordinator and highschool-aged Corpsmembers.

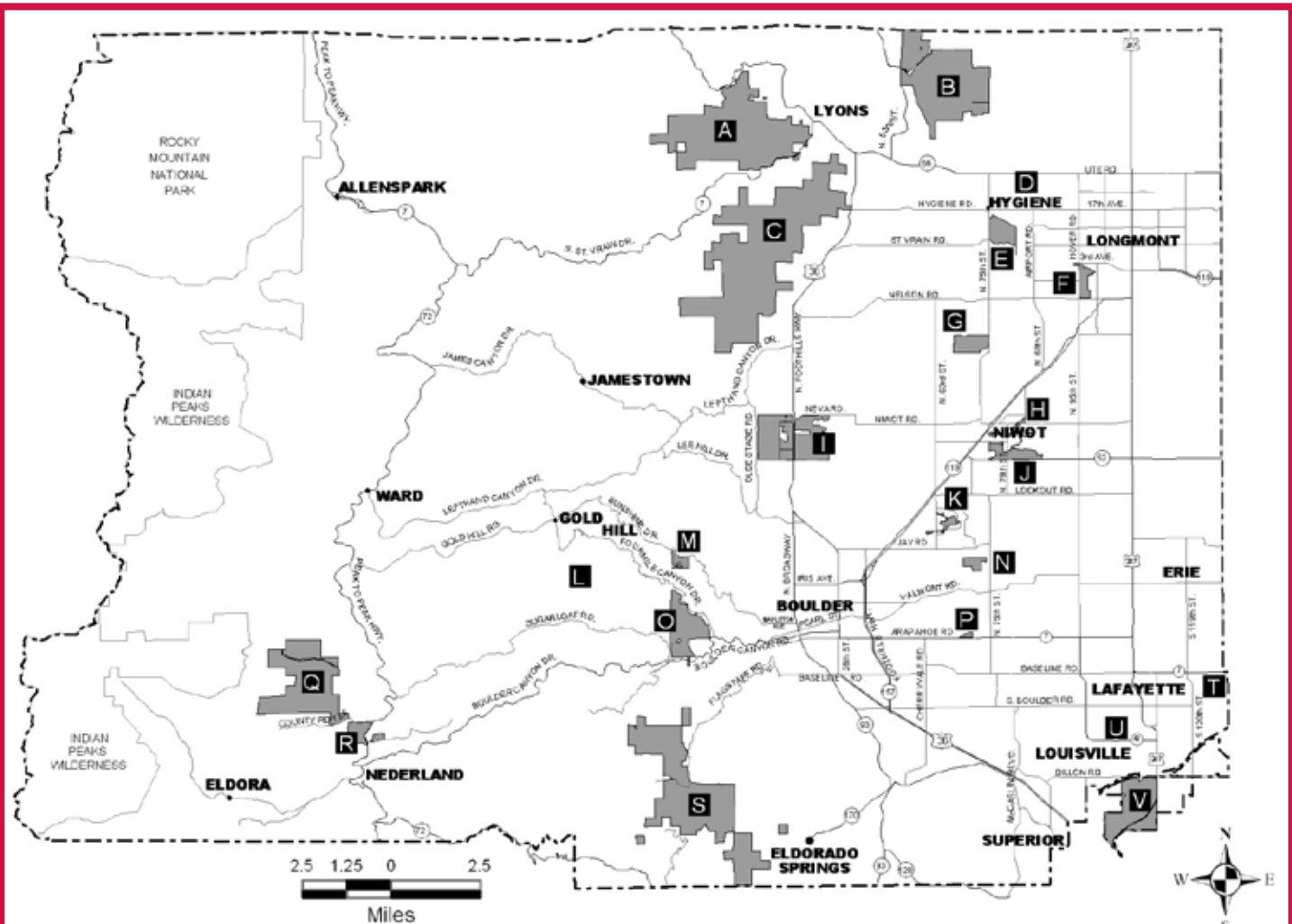
Some of these positions start in early spring, whereas others will not begin until June. Most salaries range from \$12 to \$14, and require a good driving record and valid Colorado driver's license. Keep in mind that of the 18 seasonal positions listed above, several employees will be hired for individual positions. For current openings and to apply, visit [www.bouldercounty.org/jobs/job\\_list.htm](http://www.bouldercounty.org/jobs/job_list.htm).



PARKS & OPEN SPACE DEPARTMENT  
5201 St. Vrain Road  
Longmont, CO 80503  
303-678-6200

[www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org](http://www.BoulderCountyOpenSpace.org)

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| A. Hall Ranch  | H. Lefthand Valley Grange        | P. Legion Park                                     |
| B. Rabbit Mountain                                       | I. Beech Open Space              | Q. Caribou Ranch                                   |
| C. Heil Valley Ranch                                     | J. Niwot Loop Trail              | R. Mud Lake  |
| D. Agricultural Heritage Center<br>at Lohr/Mcintosh Farm | K. Twin Lakes                    | S. Walker Ranch                                    |
| E. Pella Crossing  | L. James F. Bailey Assay Museum  | T. Flagg Park                                      |
| F. Boulder County Fairgrounds                            | M. Bald Mountain Scenic Area     | U. Coal Creek Trail                                |
| G. Lagerman Reservoir                                    | N. Walden Ponds Wildlife Habitat | V. Carolyn Holmberg Preserve<br>at Rock Creek Farm |
|  | O. Betasso Preserve              |  |