



[Lark Bunting](#)  
(*Calamospiza melanocorys*)  
State Bird of Colorado

*Special Interest Articles*

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[Audubon Birds Pro](#)

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## Natural Science Workshop in Sundance

Despite subzero temperatures, 15 educators attended Audubon's Natural Resource Workshop in [Sundance, Wyoming](#) on March 1st. Teachers spanning pre-school to high school were given the means to bring the outdoors into their classrooms and bring their classes outdoors. This workshop was sponsored by [Rare Element Resources](#) and allowed us to combine our shared goal of giving Wyoming youth an opportunity to learn about science and natural resources.

One of the workshop participants noted, "*The workshop was very effective because you could do so many cross curriculum activities and it addressed many learning strategies.*" Another said, "*They had a fun way of teaching us so much about birds, trees, and the environment. I never knew it could be so much fun!*"

The teachers who participated in this all day workshop received curriculum guides from [Project Learning Tree \(PLT\)](#) and [Flying Wild](#) as well as our sagebrush ecosystem poster and the new "Exploring Wyoming's Natural Environments" guide. This guide was developed by the Wyoming Project Learning Tree Steering Committee and was funded by [Wyoming State Forestry](#). The goal of this guide was to give our teachers specific information that makes the activities in the PLT guides more relevant to Wyoming environments. [Community Naturalist Jacelyn Downey](#) worked on the Wyoming habitats portion providing teachers with the key plants and animals of eight habitats. Additionally, she created [habitat flashcards](#) that can be printed out and used to teach about our amazing habitats. Go to [Audubon's teacher resource webpage](#) to access this and other education resources.

One of the programs presented at the workshop was Flying Wild. This program developed by the Council for Environmental Education, provides activities and ideas for teachers to use birds to learn about math and science. With lessons ranging from how to teach youth to use binoculars, to creating an obstacle course that teaches kids the dangers that migrating birds face, to comparing the wing beats of a hummingbird to a student's flapping speed, this curriculum guide covers all things bird. Additionally, the Flying Wild guide is used as a planning tool for bird festivals like those celebrating [International Migratory Bird Day](#).

In addition to the guides and other resources that the teachers receive when they attend these workshops, teachers receive the continuing education credits that they are required to meet each year. Furthermore, many of the pre-service education students who attend the [University of Wyoming](#), [Casper College](#), and [Sheridan College](#) are required to take the workshops as part of their studies.

Our Community Naturalists began organizing teacher workshops across the state in 2006. Each year, they facilitate 6 or more workshops training approximately 100 educators. By giving teachers the resources to feel comfortable teaching about wildlife, Wyoming's unique habitats, and natural resources with their classes, our educators had been able to reach more than 20,000 Wyoming students!

If you are a teacher or someone who works with youth and you'd like to attend a Flying Wild (birds), Project Learning Tree (forests & other habitats), Project Wild (wildlife), or Project WET (water) workshop, contact Jacelyn Downey at [jdowney@audubon.org](mailto:jdowney@audubon.org) or (307) 756-3941.

## HABITAT HERO PROGRAM SUPPORT

The Habitat Hero program is excited to introduce our new Program Administrator, Sienna Bryant. Bryant comes to us with great experience: she has run a watershed education program, taught environmental education in both Washington and Colorado, mentored students in the MESA program, and taught physical and earth sciences to 8th and 9th graders as a junior high teacher. She brings a B.A. in Environmental Education and a Masters in Teaching, plus a wealth of social media expertise. As your Social Media Coordinator, Bryant put us on the virtual map with an active presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. As she says,

"I am still handling the social media piece, but I am now helping with workshops, partner communications, program logistics, and anything else that might come up as we continue to grow. I am excited to have a bigger role in this team and look forward to working with all of you!"

Welcome to the Habitat Hero team, Sienna Bryant!

## WRAN RADIO PANEL

Abby Burk, Audubon's WRAN CO Coordinator, participated on a radio panel on KGNU Boulder yesterday morning, focusing on the Colorado Water Plan. The panel consisted of James Eklund – Director of the Colorado Water Conservation Board, Sean Cronin – Chairman of the South Platte Basin Roundtable, and Abby. Callers phoned in some of their concerns about the creation of a state water plan and the panel responded. Thanks for all you do! Please continue to reach out to your local basins and attend your basin public input meetings. Let your basin representatives know what healthy rivers mean to you.

**You can listen to the recorded radio panel discussion here:** <http://www.kgnu.org/apublicaffair/3/4/2014>. For more information about the Colorado Water Plan and how you can be more involved in the planning process, visit [Colorado's Water Plan website](#).

And another good resource here: [Colorado Foundation for Water Education](#).

## HOW'S THAT NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION COMING?

If it's been more than 5 years since you've updated your important documents, this is a great time to do so and feel a sense of accomplishment. Major life events (such as a marriage, death, or birth in your family) can change your intentions as well. In addition to your Will or Living Trust, you may also need to update the beneficiary designations on retirement accounts, bank and other investment accounts, and life insurance policies. Keeping copies of your beneficiary designations with your Will can also make your plans more clear and accessible to your executor.

Suggested language: *I bequeath \_\_\_\_\_% of my residuary estate (or \$\_\_\_\_\_ ) to the National Audubon Society, Inc., a not-for-profit organization, with its principal offices located at 225 Varick Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10014, for its ongoing environmental conservation and education purposes (or name a specific state or program). Tax ID # 13-1624102.*

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## Be a Habitat Hero! With Garden in a Box



This is an excellent example of Wildscaping!

Garden in a Box from [High Country Gardens](#) gets you started on a beautiful springtime adventure!

[Habitat Hero Birdwatcher Pre-Planned Garden](#)

[Audubon Rockies Habitat Hero fact sheet](#)

## The Sagebrush Ecosystem

The unbroken Sagebrush country that provides crucial habitat for the Greater and Gunnison Sage-grouse is one of the most awe-inspiring landscapes of the Rocky Mountain West. The sage encompasses approximately 120 million acres and stretches from eastern Washington to central Wyoming and down to northern New Mexico and Arizona. It is home to a plethora of species, including 297 species of birds, 87 species of mammals, and 63 fish species.

This fertile but fragile landscape has been fragmented, degraded, and, in some areas, completely eliminated by many different human activities. By some accounts, the sage-brush steppe habitat has declined by 50 percent from its levels just a century ago.

[Learn More About the Sagebrush Ecosystem Here!](#)

## Western Rivers Initiative ~ Our Rivers Need Your Voice!

The West has suffered through drought, fire, and floods over the past several years. We can no longer ignore the issues surrounding our water supplies versus our growing water needs. To that end, Colorado is preparing the first ever statewide water conservation plan.

“The plan will leverage and integrate nine years of work accomplished by Colorado’s Basin Roundtables, the Interbasin Compact Committee, and Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWBC) to determine how to implement water supply planning solutions that meet Colorado’s future water needs while supporting healthy watersheds and environment, robust recreation and tourism economies, vibrant and sustainable cities, and viable and productive agriculture.” [Read the Colorado Water Plan!](#)

Audubon Rockies is going to need your voices to make sure that human and wildlife water needs are met. By taking action now, we can ensure a secure water future for ourselves (throughout the West), our wildlife, and our future generations. No matter where you live in the West, the birds need your voice. Please join the Western Rivers Action Network and be heard.

[Please click here to join the Western Rivers Action Network TODAY:](#)

**Our Rivers Need Your Voice!**

[Visit the Audubon Rockies Newsroom!](#)

