

ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTDOORS

THE NEWSLETTER OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTDOOR WRITERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS
HOLIDAY 2009

Jack's Jaunts

They Call the Wind Mariah

Story & photos by Jack Olson

(Ed. note: For those too young - or otherwise impaired - to remember... Jack's title is taken from the very beautiful song of the same title from the 1969 movie *Paint Your Wagon*.)

Have you ever heard of a place, heard it was great, and never got around to going there, even though it was pretty close? I think we all have. That's why there's a bucket list.

Sometimes we get gumption, and proudly troop up to that magical location. But sometimes it takes a bit of a push, a kick in the jeans. My push came in early August this year from Kathy and Wayne Turner who now live near Fairplay, Colorado. We had hiked Shrine Ridge and were coming back when they uttered the fateful words, "Want to go up to Windy Ridge?" Well, yes.

Windy Ridge is noted for its bristlecone pine forest. Is it really that good? Is it really that windy? Can I walk there safely in the rocks at timberline? I was to find the answers were yes, yes, and yes.



Twisted remnant of one who fought the good fight



Trees bend to the will of the wind up here

First, the directions. Windy Ridge is accessed through the town of Alma, Colorado, which is located six miles north of Fairplay on Colorado 9. In the middle of town there's a small sign on the west side of the road that says, "To Kite Lake". Take that street left (if coming from Fairplay, right if coming from Breckenridge). There is soon another Kite Lake sign; follow it. You'll take the dirt Park County Road 8 about three miles into striking Buckskin Gulch.

Look for a sign pointing to a road on the right going to Mineral Park and Windy Ridge. This is a slow, but interesting drive. I don't think I'd take my car all the way because of low clearance. You'll get to an old mining area, Mineral Park, and negotiate through it on the main road. After about four miles from the bottom you will reach timberline and a parking area on the right for Windy Ridge. There's an interpretive sign and a trailhead.

Back to the good stuff. There's about a quarter mile trail through the tundra to the bristlecone pine forest. And there you are confronted by every definition of "twisted" that you can imagine. Some pines spiral upward, agonizingly seeking the sky. Some huddle in a rounded hunch, pointing east, away from the deadly prevailing winds. And most surprising of all, some sprawl parallel to the ground, with just one small branch for support.

You can wander where you will around this wonderful forest which, although solidly anchored to the ridge for centuries, seems to vibrate with movement. Was it windy? Oh yes, but it was at our back walking there and happily let up before we hiked back. At this time of year, fall was on the way and the last little alpine wildflowers told us that



Along the trail

snow would be there any day. Windy Ridge is on the southeast slope of 14,172 foot Mt. Bross at about 11,700 feet. Walking at that elevation can be taxing for some, but the terrain is relatively flat. As with any mountainous region at or above timberline, watch for approaching storms.

One more treat---the view. You are up high and with



Officers

President, Tom Cummings, Cushing, OK
Vice President, Al Perry, Evansville, IN
Secretary, Kathleen Turner, Fairplay, CO
Treasurer, Barb Laine, El Prado, NM

Board of Directors

Richard Holmes, Boulder, CO (2010)
Joe Zinn, Monte Vista, CO (2010)
Kenita Gibbins, Denver, CO (2011)
Richard Youngblood, Katy, TX (2011)
Sherry Zurey, Golden, CO (2012)
Clare Gutierrez, Edinburg, TX (2012)

Awards Co-Chairs

Frank Zurey, Golden, CO
Richard Holmes, Boulder, CO.

Conference Committee

Don Laine, El Prado, NM
Jack Olson, Denver, CO
Cecilia Travis, Golden, CO

Webmaster

Barb Laine, El Prado, NM

Photo Workshop

Coordinator:
Nic Showalter, Villa Grove, IL
Instructors:
Jack Olson, Denver, CO
Jared Gricoskie, Boulder, CO

Scholarship Chair

Mike Hammond, Amarillo, TX

Past-Presidents' Council

Jim Baker, Stillwater, OK
Barb Laine, El Prado, NM
Lee Carr, Cedaredge, CO
John Catsis, Silver City, NM
Beto Gutierrez, Edinburg, TX
Jack Olson, Denver, CO
Dusty Fullinwider, Apache Junction, AZ
Bob Hyde, Sterling, CO

Communications Director

Don Laine, El Prado, NM

Supporting Member Liaison

Lynda Cummings, Cushing, OK

Medical Advisor

A.H. "Beto" Gutierrez, MD, Edinburg, TX

www.rmowp.org

Rocky Mountain Outdoors

Published bi-monthly by
Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers, Inc.

Editor: Don Laine
Layout/Design: Barb Laine

Send editorial materials to Don Laine, don@rmowp.org; PO Box 1200, El Prado, NM 87529.

Deadline for newsletter submissions is the 20th of the month preceding month of publication. Newsletters are published:

Jan/Feb	Mar/Apr	May/June
July/Aug	Sep/Oct	Nov/Dec

Copyright © 2009 by Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers, Inc. Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited without written permission from the author or editor.

Book Reviews by John Catsis

Birds of Western North America, 1,134 color photos, 416 pages, paperback, \$18.95

Birds of Eastern North America, 1,118 color photos, 336 pages, paperback, \$18.95

By Paul Sterry and Brian E. Small, Princeton University Press

This two volume work has more great photos and more complete information on the birds it covers than any other quality guidebook I've seen. The maps also seem to be a bit more detailed, and perhaps even more up-to-date; thanks to the work of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.

While co-author Paul Sterry may not be as familiar as John James Audubon, he has written books on the birds of Britain and the wildlife of North America. And Brian Small is the photo editor of *Birding Magazine*.

To judge completeness I compared the coverage of hummingbirds in the Western edition to the entries found in my copy of the National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America, Third Edition. It had four more entries than was contained in Sterry's and Small's work; and two of them are commonly found either along coastal California or in southeast Arizona.

Despite these apparent shortcomings, the new guides represent a new standard, incorporating more detailed descriptions and larger photographs of each bird listed. Lucky for us who live in the West. We've got more birds to enjoy than those in the East; 80 more pages worth!

Flying to Yellowstone?

Those planning to fly to Yellowstone for RMOWP's 2010 conference have a number of airport choices, although most will probably include changing planes in either Denver or Salt Lake City. The Gallatin Field Airport (www.bozemanairport.com) in Bozeman, Montana and the Jackson Hole Airport (www.jacksonholeairport.com) near Jackson, Wyoming, are probably the most convenient, and both offer rental cars and other services. You can also fly to Yellowstone Regional Airport (www.flyyra.com) in Cody, Wyoming, or to Casper or Cheyenne, Wyoming, or even Denver or Salt Lake City and drive the rest of the way. If you'll be flying to Bozeman, Jackson Hole, or Cody you'll want to check the flight schedules carefully since there will probably be fewer flights after Labor Day - when our conference takes place - than at the height of the summer season.

Jack's Jaunts few obstructions. You can see all over South Park, east to Mt. Silverheels, and back up to Mt. Bross. Take a little lunch, take a little time, and just kick back and enjoy the experience.

Some bristlecone pines exceed 4,000 years in age, although those on Windy Ridge are closer to a thousand years. Not spring chickens. This area has been designated as the Bristlecone Pine Scenic Area, the only location specifically set aside to protect these ancient wonders. There is no website as such for the area, but you can Google (of course) Windy Ridge, Colorado, or Bristlecone Pine Scenic Area and pick from the links. I've found that some don't completely agree on a few facts but you'll get the idea.

Windy Ridge is located in Pike National Forest. The road should be open in the summer, and until that indeterminate time in fall when the snow no longer melts. If you haven't been there before, take my advice and put Windy Ridge on your bucket list. There's your push.

The What & Why of Bird Behavior

Want to know what that bird is doing and why? The Cornell Lab of Ornithology at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, has announced a new online course on bird behavior called "Investigating Behavior: Courtship and Rivalry in Birds."

The five-week course gets to the heart of bird behavior, which is all about sex and survival, and is designed to



Northern Flicker © Richard Holmes
2009 Honorable Mention ~ Fauna Category

help people learn how to observe and interpret some of the ways birds are communicating with their behavior.

"It's not your typical text-heavy, lecture-based tutorial," said course instructor and content coauthor Colleen McLinn. "It's packed with multimedia and interactive activities that make this course unlike anything

else available. We wanted to create a learning environment that's friendly and accessible to everyone."

The online course explores a basic principle of bird behavior each week, featuring common and exotic spe-

cies, from Florida scrub-jay families in which siblings help raise new chicks to the jaw-dropping plumages and bizarre dances of the birds-of-paradise.

The next five-week session begins January 6 and courses are also scheduled to begin on February 17 and March 31. For more information and to register, go to the course list at www.ecornell.com or go directly to www.ecornell.com/birds or call 866-326-7635. The cost of the course is \$295 plus a \$30 dollar registration fee.

Fishing by the Numbers

The American Sportfishing Association (ASA), a loyal supporter of RMOWP, has released some recently compiled fishing numbers.

It probably should not come as a surprise that Florida has the most anglers - 2.77 million, but Texas is a close second with 2.52 million and California rounds out the top three with 1.73 million. The stats show that Florida also has the most fishing-related jobs - some 75,100, followed by Texas (59,000) and Minnesota (43,100).

Just over half of the anglers surveyed have incomes greater than \$50,000 per year, and 17% earn more than \$100,000 annually. Over half have attended college.



Learning to fish on the Little Rio Grande in New Mexico's Carson National Forest Summer 1979 © Don Laine

One-quarter of the country's anglers are women, and the total number of U.S. anglers is greater than the population of California. America's most popular game fish is the large-mouth bass. The ASA also tells us that more Americans fish than play

golf and tennis combined.

ASA is the sportfishing industry's trade association. See www.asafishing.org.

Magazine Seeks Shotgun Articles

Outdoor writers are invited to submit their shotgun articles to Shotgun Sports Magazine, which has announced that it is looking for articles on hunting, trap, skeet, sporting clays and other shotgun-related subjects. A press release stated that the magazine's readers also like gun-cleaning and maintenance tips, as well as reloading advice. Pay usually ranges from \$50 to \$200, including photos, for all rights, and the publisher asks that writers do not query but submit completed articles. Information, including writers' guidelines, can be found on the magazine's website, www.shotgunsportsmagazine.com.



Appeal to Fellow RMOWPers

by Cecilia Travis

I am writing a short article for "Currents", published by the North American Nature Photographers Association, on workshop opportunities for disabled (especially mobility-impaired) photographers. In addition, I am developing a web site, accessiblenature.info, which will contain links to places and organizations which cater to nature study, photography and other non-athletic outdoor pastimes for the disabled.

I am looking for names of workshops or tour leaders that accommodate photographers in wheelchairs, as well as other disabilities. Where are good places for the disabled photographer to go?

I also need anecdotes from or about disabled photographers - the good, bad, or funny things that happened, advice for others.

RMOWP member Angelo Sciulli got me started on this and it is taking on a life of its own. Please email (mail@ceciliatravis.com) or call (303-885-8467) me with your ideas. Thank you!

Observations on Nature and a Book Commentary

Text & photo by Kenita Gibbins

I know no other group of people more interested in the beauty of nature than RMOWP. Yes we have our cameras around our necks or mounted on a tripod, but something bigger than all of us draws us to this obsession of ours. We know the adrenaline rush when we find a flicker peeking her head out of her tree cave. We don't mind rising before the crack of dawn just to see the sun rise. How crazy is that? I'm now learning the joys of putting cameras in the hands of our grandchildren, walking the walk with them through the woods. It's my privilege, it's my duty.

The book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*, by Richard Louv, was reviewed at my book club. Following are my notes from my friend's review of Last Child:

Nature inspires creativity in a child by demanding visualization and the full use of the senses. In nature a child finds freedom, fantasy, and privacy - a place distant from the adult world, a separate peace. Research in the 1980s recorded opinions of 3,000 children about nature. Paul, a fourth grader responded, "I like to play indoors because that is where the electrical outlets are." A fifth grade girl said, "When I'm in the woods, I feel like I'm in my mother's shoes. Then they cut the woods down and I felt like they had cut down a part of me."



Kenita's son Brock & his family on Kenosha Pass, Colorado: (counterclockwise from center front) Averie (age 8), family dog Remy, Brock, Reece, Brock's wife Trina (a professional photographer), and Landon.

Author Richard Louv believes fewer families are using the National Parks. Boy Scouts are getting away from camping because of the liability. Children are not into their food. They don't have a garden. They've never seen a turkey's head chopped off.

The young and the rest of us need nature, gardens, pets to live. We have television addiction, junk food frenzies, child obesity and 30 hours a week in front of the computer. Children need more exercise, less anti-depressants. Nature can reduce these problems. Our children aren't looking out the windows of the car even if they do go somewhere, they are watching a DVD. We need to invent nature games like naming things that don't make noise - such as the sun rising.

We see lack of respect for nature and this brings lack of respect for people. There are more dangers in the house than outside, with things like black widow spiders and air pollution made by closed windows. We need to show children we are passionate about our environment and having them in nature.

"Each new year is a surprise to us. We find that we had virtually forgotten the note of each bird, and when we hear it again it is remembered like a dream, reminding us of a previous state of existence...The voice of nature is always encouraging." ~ Henry David Thoreau, March 18, 1858.

Jon Sheppard's Getting Up in the World



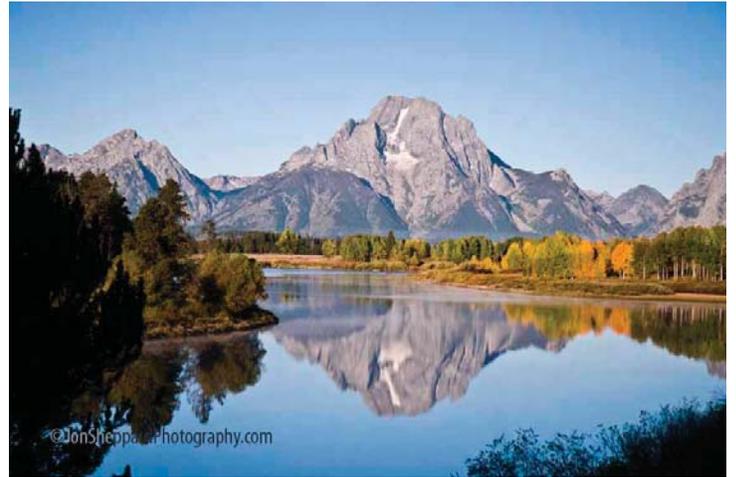
Jon on Mt. Lincoln, one of five 14ers in Colorado's Mosquito Range

In mid-September, member Jon Sheppard climbed Mt. Lincoln, which tops out at 14,286 ft. Jon says this brings his total of Colorado's 14ers climbed to 21, & was "super as I had not done a 14er since the early-mid 1990s." Mt. Lincoln is one of five 14ers in Colorado's Mosquito Range.

Jon climbs with a partner -- always a good idea -- and for this one he joined up with 79-year-old Charles Mader. Charles' claim to fame is that he "climbed all 54 14ers back in 1959." Back when trails were practically non-existent and what access roads there were, were totally overgrown. "So it was bushwack to timberline and the summit the next day."

(For a complete list of Colorado's peaks that soar to 14,000+ feet go to www.14ers.com.)

Images from Yellowstone
by Jon Sheppard © 2009



Jon Sheppard writes:

Hi All, This past September I had a wonderful trek up to Jackson Hole and Yellowstone.

AND!! I am so pleased that we will be meeting there next September.

So for the wonderful adventure. It was great. The weather was super and crowds were not bad at all. The only road block was two buffalo in Yellowstone facing a red SUV going the other direction. So me being a photo dude had to photo the stoppage.

As I passed the driver, a lady, I shared with her that buffalo, like the bulls in the bull fighting ring, don't like red. So don't do anything more to aggravate them. She believed me! I drove on.

Old Faithful and the lodge there is just like I visited it a few years ago. 1953 to be exact. There is much more to write about but that is for another day. So folks let's all get on up to YELLOWSTONE!!!

Cheers.



traffic jam the Yellowstone way

RMOWP ANNUAL CONFERENCE
YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK
SEPTEMBER 8-12, 2010
SEE YOU THERE!

Support Our Supporting Members

American Sportfishing Association, the industry's trade association, keeping people informed about emerging laws and policies that could significantly affect sportfishing. www.asafishing.org.

Coleman Company, the world's leading manufacturer of camping and outdoor recreation equipment, including the legendary Coleman lanterns, camp stoves, and coolers. www.coleman.com.

Delorme, a leading provider of mapping products for professional and consumer markets, including state atlases with detailed topographic maps in books plus Topo USA® software covering the entire country. www.delorme.com.

Freedom Group Family of Companies, the world's premier family of firearms, ammunition and related products, including such well-known brands as Remington, Marlin, and Harrington & Richardson. www.remington.com; www.marlinfirearms.com; www.hr1817.com; www.parkergunmakers.com; www.bushmaster.com

The Sportsman Channel, available nationwide through cable and satellite television providers, is the only network devoted to America's more than 50 million sportsmen, delivering complete hunting, fishing, and shooting programming 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.thesportsmanchannel.com.

Local Newspaper Lauds RMOWP Photographer

Recognition by your peers is good, but public recognition in your hometown newspaper can be pretty sweet, too. RMOWP member Al Perry of Evansville, Indiana, who consistently takes top honors in RMOWP photo contests, was recently the subject of a feature article in the Evansville Courier & Press. The newspaper, which serves some 30 counties in Indiana, Illinois, and Kentucky, spread the word about Al's photographic expertise - complete with a smiling photo - to its more than 75,000 Sunday subscribers.

The article described Al's photo excursions to Alaska - RMOWP members will remember Al's stunning Alaska still and video photography from his presentation at the Zion conference - and printed several of his photos. The newspaper also listed some of Al's photography tips: Good light, dynamic composition, selective focus, simplicity, and finding a fresh perspective.

Al's enthusiasm for the right photo gear was also discussed, about which Al was quoted as telling the reporter, "Whatever I lack in ability, I make up with equipment."



Red Tailed Hawk Attacking Brazilian Free Tailed Bats
Best of Show 2009

© Al Perry

Publications for Freelancers

The Outdoor Writers Association of America (OWAA) has announced two new publications that provide important information for freelance writers.

According to an OWAA press release, the *Legal Handbook for Freelancers*, authored by OWAA Legal Counsel Bill Powell, covers copyright basics, how to structure your business as a freelancer, defamation, privacy rights, protections for electronic communications, contracts, and how to use litigation to resolve freelancer-publisher business disputes.

OWAA's revised *Freelancers Guide to Business Practices* incorporates business tips and advice from more than 50 OWAA members, covering general business practices such

as setting income goals, how to get paid, legalities, and rights purchased. The guidebook also covers specialized business practices for magazine writers, newspaper columnists, photographers, artists and broadcasters.

A stand alone copy of the *Legal Handbook for Freelancers* costs \$15 for OWAA members and \$18 for nonmembers, and the *Freelancers Guide to Business Practices*, which includes all the information in the Legal Handbook, costs \$19 for members and \$24 for nonmembers.

Prices include shipping and handling, and they can be purchased at OWAA's online store at the group's website, www.owaa.org.