

# Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory

2013 Annual Report



**Our Mission: conserving birds and their habitats**

**Our Vision: healthy, native bird populations sustained in healthy, native ecosystems**

### Brighton Headquarters

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Brighton, CO 80603  
(303) 659-4348 | Fax (303) 654-0791**

Tyler Edmondson, Community Education Coordinator  
Christine Fabian, Chief Financial Officer  
Nancy Gobris, Biologist/Banding Coordinator  
Meredith McBurney, Biologist/Bird Bander  
Kacie Miller, Education & Outreach Director  
Abigail Mohney, Staff Accountant\*  
Emily Snode, School Programs Coordinator  
Michael Wright, Staff Accountant\*

\*employment began in 2014

### Fort Collins Office

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Tammy VerCauteren, Executive Director  
Jenny Berven, Northern Goshawk Project Coordinator  
Jeff Birek, Outreach Biologist  
Jennifer Blakesley, Biometrician  
Francyne DeBauge, Science Project Manager & Finance Administrator  
Angela Dwyer, Wildlife Biologist  
Seth Gallagher, Stewardship Director  
David Hanni, Science Director  
Greg Levandoski, Director of International Operations  
Matthew McLaren, Biologist  
Arvind Panjabi, International Director  
Teddy Parker-Renga, Communications Manager  
David Pavlacky, Biometrician  
Laura Quattrini, Stewardship Program Manager  
Rob Sparks, Research Biologist/GIS Manager  
Erin Strasser, Biologist  
Nick Van Lanen, Biologist  
Chris White, Biologist  
Brittany Woiderski, GIS Biologist  
Erin Youngberg, Biologist

### Nebraska Office

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Katy Kuhnel, Shortgrass Prairie Coordinating Wildlife Biologist\*  
Larry Snyder, Landowner Outreach Biologist  
Magdalena Vinson, Nebraska Education Coordinator  
\*employment began in 2014

### Field Offices

Noah Bates, Private Lands Range/Wildlife Ecologist, Kremmling, Colorado  
Jason Beason, Special Monitoring Projects Coordinator, Paonia, Colorado  
Pedro Calderón-Dominguez, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist, Chihuahua City, Chihuahua  
Casey Cardinal, Private Lands Range/Wildlife Ecologist, Lamar, Colorado  
Nancy Drilling, Dakotas Projects Coordinator, Rapid City, South Dakota  
Brandon Elkins, Range Conservationist, Gillette, Wyoming  
Nancy Hernández Rodríguez, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist, Chihuahua City, Chihuahua\*  
Colin Lee, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist, Greeley, Colorado  
Brandon Miller, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist, Steamboat Springs, Colorado  
Martin Moses, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist, Durango, Colorado  
Garrett Pantle, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist, Saratoga, Wyoming  
Duane Pool, Landscape Ecologist, Bismarck, North Dakota  
Roberto Rodríguez, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist, Chihuahua City, Chihuahua  
Christina Santana, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist, Gunnison, Colorado  
Chase Taylor, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist, Pueblo, Colorado  
Aaron Trujillo, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist, Fort Morgan, Colorado  
\*employment began in 2014

### Former Staff Members Employed at RMBO in 2013

Rachel Bock, Staff Accountant  
Kelly Corman, Private Lands Range/Wildlife Ecologist  
Susan Heinz, Staff Accountant  
Ross Lock, Wildlife Biologist  
Alberto Macías-Duarte, Research Ecologist  
Noe Marymor, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist  
Andrew Pierson, Shortgrass Prairie Coordinating Wildlife Biologist  
Nathan Schmitz, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist  
Judith Spiegel, Chief Financial Officer  
Bill Tiedje, Landowner Outreach & Program Technician

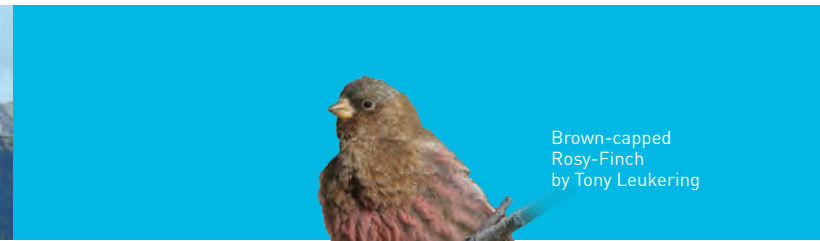
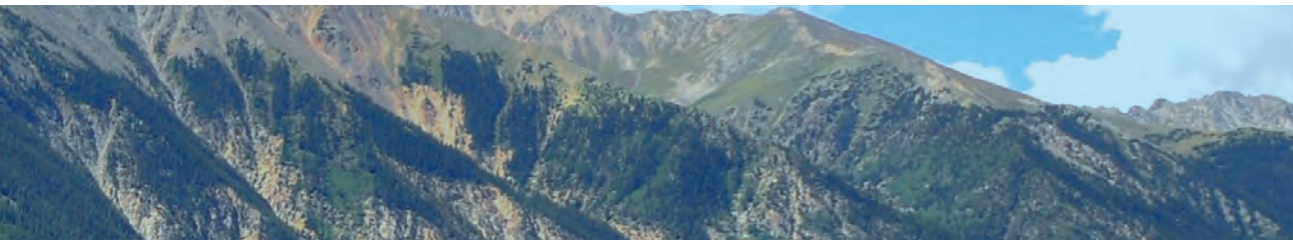
### Board of Directors

Peter Ampe, J.D.  
Stephen L. Bloom, Ph.D., ABPP (Vice Chairman)  
David M. Charles, M.D.  
Steven Deitemeyer, C.F.  
Jack Ferguson  
Grady Grissom, Ph.D.  
Chuck Hundertmark, M.A., A.P.R., A.T.M. (term ended May 23, 2013)  
Larry Modesitt, M.B.A., CQE, CTP (Chairman)  
Joe Roller, M.D.  
D. Jean Tate, Ph.D.  
Warren Taylor, Ph.D. (Secretary)  
Ed Warner, M.S., L.H.D.  
Tiffany Watts, CPA



The staff and board gather for a photo in October of 2013 with guest Greg Miller at the amphitheater at RMBO's Environmental Learning Center at the Old Stone House at Barr Lake near Brighton, Colorado.

**2013 RMBO Annual Report published April 2014**  
**Writer and editor: Teddy Parker-Renga**  
**Designer: One Tribe Creative**



Brown-capped Rosy-Finch  
by Tony Leukering

## One Acre, One Child, One Partnership at a Time

In 2013, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory celebrated its 25th anniversary. It was a big year.

We realized a 500,000-acre milestone for conserved and enhanced wildlife habitat on private lands, offered eight weeks of camps and advanced bird population monitoring across the West, among other successes. At RMBO, we are accomplishing our mission of bird and habitat conservation one acre, one child and one partnership at a time. We envision a planet where everyone is contributing to a healthy world and together we are improving native bird populations, the land and the lives of people.

Thank you for investing in our mission. With your support, RMBO has increased its funding to tackle the greatest needs for our birds. You are helping us conserve dwindling grasslands at home and abroad, make critical discoveries for species of conservation concern, get citizens involved in science that leads to conservation, and provide life-changing experiences for children where they learn to love and appreciate birds, nature, other people and – most importantly – themselves.

In 2013, RMBO set an ambitious fundraising goal of \$250,000 to complement our 25th anniversary. Thanks to you – and one amazing man, Jim Duggan, who committed his legacy to RMBO – we achieved this goal during our Quarter Century Campaign, which ended in February of 2014.

As you read this annual report, celebrate the tremendous strides we are making for bird conservation with us. The next 25 years offer many challenges, but our staff, board, volunteers and supporters are up to the task. Conservation is a way of life for us. Thank you for your continued support.

**Tammy VerCauteren**  
Executive Director



## In Memoriam: Jim Duggan

In November of 2013, RMBO and the local birding community lost an extraordinary friend, Jim Duggan. We will miss his smile, passion for birds, handyman skills and friendship. Jim bequeathed a major gift to RMBO in 2014, allowing us to establish an endowment. We are deeply grateful to Jim for his commitment to and belief in our efforts. We will miss Jim dearly, but his legacy will impact people's lives – and the birds themselves – for generations to come. Thank you, Jim, from all of us.

## Migrate with Us

What makes it so enjoyable to be a part of Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory?

It feels wonderful when we do something meaningful now that has a big impact in the future. As RMBO progresses each year, we widen our scope and achieve greater accomplishments. Perhaps more importantly, we collaborate to get results. We and our partners work together with public and private landowners and managers. When we help a rancher make the land more productive and valuable, everybody feels good about it, and the birds benefit along with the rancher.

Your contributions have enabled us to help people conserve lands for birds far beyond what was imaginable at my first board meeting in 2007. Your support allows us to extend south to Mexico into our thrashers' and sparrows' wintering grounds and to work cooperatively with partners nationally and internationally. Habitat loss is the biggest factor impacting bird conservation. With your support, we will continue to enhance more acres. I'm even more excited about our plans for 2014.



Larry and Tammy celebrate RMBO's 25th anniversary in March of 2013 at the Old Stone House.

After 25 years of progress, does the name "Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory" reflect what we do? When we talk to folks, many of them first think of an observatory being a place to look at something – like stars. While we do have lofty aims, we direct them more to the land and its creatures than to the heavens. To describe our work more completely, our name will be migrating and "observatory" will be history. Our mission, however, will remain the same.

Take flight with us; we look forward to migrating together with you.

**Larry Modesitt**  
Chairman of the Board

# Science

Advancing Knowledge Across the Annual Life Cycle of Birds

To enhance bird populations, conservation actions must be applied when and where birds need them most. Many species, however, don't stay put. Birds migrate, usually thousands of miles a year, so Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory scientists migrate with them. RMBO scientists work on the breeding grounds in the warmer months and wintering grounds in the cooler ones and use cutting-edge technology to identify migration routes and stopover sites. Through scientific monitoring and research, RMBO is informing conservation and advancing

knowledge across the annual life cycle of birds.



## Monitoring Birds on the Breeding Grounds

### IMBCR Program

Every year in late spring, biologists and technicians fan out across the western U.S. to survey birds on their breeding grounds under the Integrated Monitoring in Bird Conservation Regions (IMBCR) program. The program, coordinated by RMBO, is one of the largest of its kind in North America, stretching across 13 states from Arizona's deserts to Montana's mountain peaks. In 2013, RMBO and its partners at the Avian Science Center, Intermountain Bird Observatory and Wyoming Natural Diversity Database conducted 1,370 IMBCR surveys, detecting 184,246 individual birds of 338 species. Data gathered through the program help scientists identify trends in bird populations and inform land managers about birds.



Expanding the program southward in 2013 resulted in species observed for the first time during IMBCR surveys, including Elegant Trogon, Five-striped Sparrow, Magnificent Hummingbird, Botteri's Sparrow and Flame-colored Tanager (pictured above).

## Using Technology to Track Migration

### Tanagers and Ospreys in the Rockies

In the summer of 2012, RMBO biologists deployed geolocators on 10 Western Tanagers in Rocky Mountain National Park to discover important stopover sites, migration routes and wintering grounds for this local population. To find this out, however, they needed to get the tiny devices back – not an easy task. In 2013, they headed back to the same sites in the park where they first captured the tanagers. With a little luck on their side, they spotted four of the tanagers and recaptured two birds with their geolocators. The data revealed the Western Tanagers stopped in west Texas and southeastern New Mexico for a month to molt, taking advantage of the monsoon season and burst in insects and vegetation it brought, before heading south to winter in southern Mexico and northern Guatemala. See map to right.



Also in 2013, RMBO and the National Park Service outfitted two Ospreys near Rocky Mountain National Park with satellite tracking units. The park is interested in learning where its breeding birds migrate and winter to inform conservation and education. Above, Mike Britten with the National Park Service releases Rainbow; the other bird is named Shadow. Track their migration at [www.RMBO.org](http://www.RMBO.org).

“By working across the annual life cycle of birds, we can better identify the factors driving population declines and ensure we are taking the right actions in the right places at the right time.”

David Hanni, RMBO's Science Director

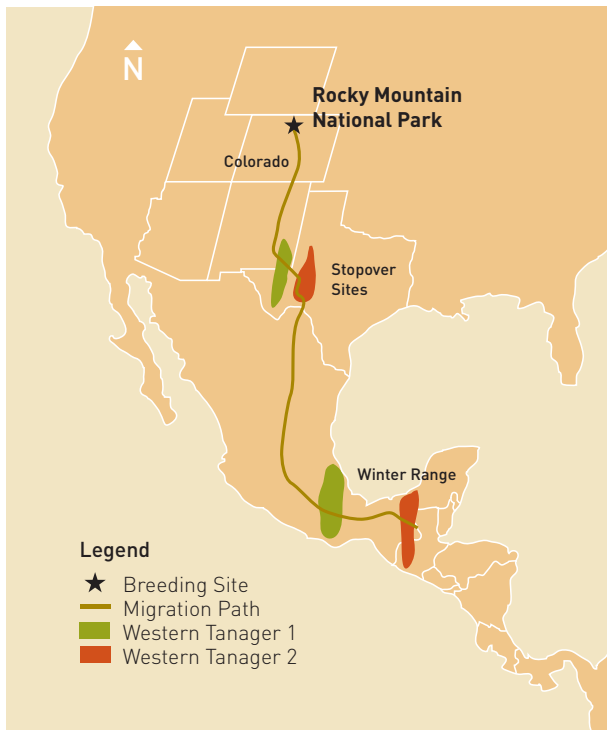


Lark Bunting  
by Jon Delorenzo

## Mapping the Connection of Birds Across Borders

### Western Tanager Migration Route

The map below shows the migration path, stopover sites and winter range of two Western Tanagers created from geolocator data. RMBO biologists outfitted the tanagers with geolocators in the summer of 2012 and recaptured the birds with their geolocators in the summer of 2013. See story to left.



## Studying Survival on the Wintering Grounds

### Sparrows in Northern Mexico

In March of 2013, RMBO completed its first season studying winter survival and habitat use of Baird's and Grasshopper Sparrows in the grasslands of Chihuahua, Mexico. Both of these species have experienced serious declines over the past five decades and are sensitive to habitat degradation. RMBO is filling in knowledge gaps about these sparrows on their wintering grounds to aid in the annual life cycle conservation of grassland birds. A total of 103 sparrows were captured and radio-tagged during the four-month study. Only 19 of those birds survived during a winter marked by little food, low cover and harsh conditions; eight additional sparrows likely survived but could not be confirmed. This study continues in 2014, with expansion to Durango, Mexico.



Only 19 of 103 sparrows survived the winter. This Grasshopper Sparrow was one of the survivors, making it through the entire study season. Its transmitter was attached in November, replaced twice and finally removed in March.

## Looking Ahead

→ In 2014, RMBO will develop and test a study design for monitoring the Mexican Spotted Owl on national forests in Arizona and New Mexico. The long-term plan is to develop methodology that will be used to monitor the population status of this federally threatened species.

→ RMBO recently completed a year of collecting bird and vegetation data in the pine-oak and cloud forests of western Mexico. The data will be used to help Mexico's National Forest Commission, CONAFOR, better integrate birds into forest management and guide its innovative payment for ecosystem services program on private lands.

→ RMBO's Jason Beason, Kim Potter with the U.S. Forest Service, biologist Carolyn Gunn and partners will continue research on Black Swifts in 2014, including deploying more geolocators on swifts outside Colorado, recovering swifts outfitted with geolocators in northern Idaho last summer and furthering a diet study and DNA analysis project.

# Education

Empowering People to Be Part of the Solution

Last year, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory connected with 26,603 people through education and outreach. One of those people was Francis Commercon. A high school senior, Francis has volunteered at RMBO's bird banding stations since he was a grade-schooler. He also participates in HawkWatch. With college on the horizon, Francis plans to pursue a career in biology thanks, in part, to these experiences with RMBO that have spurred his passion for nature and science. Francis is one of the

many people RMBO is empowering to be part of the solution for conservation.



## Connecting with Nature Homeschool Programs

RMBO's homeschool programs take students and their families through the conservation continuum, from observing and studying birds and nature to taking action through service learning. In 2013, along with lessons on migration, nests, prairies, raptors and more, students helped restore the prairie around RMBO's Environmental Learning Center by removing invasive, non-native plants. Educator Emily Snode said the enthusiasm for homeschool programs was "amazing" last year. All programs were full.



A student digs up an invasive weed from the prairie around RMBO's Environmental Learning Center. RMBO's homeschool programs engage the entire family while addressing important education standards and incorporating service learning.

## Inspiring Youth Summer Camps

In 2013, RMBO launched Taking Flight, a weeklong overnight camp for 12- to 14-year-olds in the Rockies. Campers enjoyed hiking, canoeing, rock climbing, making new friends and learning about the major life zones and ecosystems of the Colorado mountains. Every morning, they started the day birding in each ecosystem and even enjoyed a night up late to search for owls. On the final evening, one camper said, "I gained an appreciation for all the little things in nature and their giant impact on the world around us."

Taking Flight kicked off the 2013 camp season. In total, RMBO's summer camps gave 90 children the chance to gain a deeper appreciation for Colorado's unique wildlife and habitats.



Taking Flight campers and staff pose before a wall of snow off Trail Ridge Road in Rocky Mountain National Park.

## Engaging New Audiences

### Outreach in Mexico

RMBO welcomed members of the local Mennonite community in Chihuahua, Mexico, into the field in 2013 to learn about the birds in their backyard. With a large presence in the area, this community was an important one to engage, so the day in the field was very exciting. They visited with RMBO biologists and helped release birds back into the wild after chatting with a reporter from "High Country News," who wrote about the experience in the Sept. 2 issue of the news magazine ([www.hcn.org/issues/45.15](http://www.hcn.org/issues/45.15)).

"We're applying our model of using the power of birds to raise awareness for conservation and inspire environmental stewardship in Mexico," said Arvind Panjabi, RMBO's International Director.



A farmer releases a Grasshopper Sparrow with the help of biologist Erin Strasser at a research site in Chihuahua, Mexico.



“Thank you for what you do for the birds, for us humans who love to watch and listen to them, and especially for the way you are investing in the future through educating children.”

Grandparent of Christmas Bird Count for Kids participant



Great Blue Heron  
by Bill Schmoker

## Banding Birds

RMBO and its partners operated two banding stations in the spring in Colorado and seven in the fall in Colorado and Nebraska in 2013. In addition, RMBO operated banding stations for Northern Saw-whet Owls in Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota. The stations served as outdoor classrooms for studying bird migration and anatomy and enhancing the public’s appreciation of birds.

The highlights to the right show what RMBO is learning about migration routes and how birds connect us. Last year was an unusual one along the Front Range of Colorado with flooding, and our banding stations captured the waters’ impact on migrating birds.



Keith Bagnall and Rheanna Fraser gather data on a Northern Saw-whet Owl banded last fall at RMBO’s station in North Dakota.

## 2013 Highlights

In the spring, a Broad-tailed Hummingbird first banded in the fall of 2010 near Fort Davis, Texas, was recovered at the Chatfield State Park station in Colorado. Also in the spring, a Yellow-rumped Warbler first banded in the fall of 2012 in Mackenzie, British Columbia, was recovered at the Chico Basin Ranch station in Colorado.

Eleven Northern Saw-whet Owls were recovered at stations in the Dakotas in the fall. One of the owls had first been banded in 2010 about 1,300 miles east on the shores of Lake Ontario.

In the fall, records were set for number of birds banded with 1,696 individual birds at Chico Basin Ranch in Colorado and 433 individual birds at Chadron State Park in Nebraska. In addition, the first Dusky Flycatcher ever banded in Nebraska was caught at Chadron State Park in the fall.



This Broad-tailed Hummingbird, first banded in the fall of 2010 in Texas, was recovered by RMBO at the Chatfield State Park banding station last spring.

## New Fort Collins Station

RMBO partnered with the Fort Collins Museum of Discovery to bring a bird banding station to Fort Collins, Colorado, in the fall. Despite flooding in the area delaying its opening, the station operated for several weeks a grouse’s flight from the RMBO office. Students and visitors stopped by the station, located on the west side of the museum, to see wild birds in the hand and learn about migration. The station is scheduled to be open again in the spring and fall of 2014.



Biologist Jeff Birek holds a Wood Thrush at the Fort Collins banding station. It was a pleasant surprise, as this species is typically found in the eastern U.S.

## Looking Ahead

→ RMBO will continue to offer a therapeutic program at assisted living facilities in the Denver area in 2014. Called Bird Tales, the program brings the healing qualities of nature to people with dementia by encouraging them to connect with birds through sight, sound and touch.

→ Next year, RMBO and its partners will offer gardening workshops for educators and backyard gardeners in Nebraska. Topics include pollinators and native plants.

→ RMBO is developing a technology-focused curriculum to teach students not only about birds, but the technology used to track and map bird migration.

# Stewardship

Starting the Conversation for Conservation

Some of the best habitat for birds lies on private lands. That's why, back in 1996, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory initiated its private lands program, forging relationships with landowners and creating simple, common sense tools to foster stewardship on working lands. Today, it continues this program in the U.S. and has exported its successful model to Chihuahua, Mexico, where ranchlands and associated grassland habitat are disappearing at an alarming rate. From Gillette, Wyoming, to Chihuahua, Mexico, RMBO is starting the conversation for conservation with private landowners.



## Working at a Local Level

RMBO collaborates with partners in the U.S. and abroad to place private lands wildlife biologists (PLWB) in communities across the Rockies, Great Plains and northern Mexico. These individuals work with landowners, land managers and resource professionals to build trust and foster proactive, voluntary conservation efforts that benefit people, birds, other wildlife and the land. In 2013, RMBO added a second PLWB in Chihuahua City, Mexico, to increase capacity in an area of need for wintering grassland birds.

## Falcon Conservation

Last year, one of the few remaining Aplomado Falcons nesting in the Valles Centrales region of Mexico drowned in a water storage tank. To prevent this tragedy from repeating itself, and to protect other birds and wildlife from the same fate, RMBO worked with ranchers to place wildlife escape ladders in uncovered tanks around known Aplomado Falcon nesting and foraging areas. Also, RMBO biologists installed nest platforms for falcons on ranches to offset the decline of soap tree yuccas, this species' preferred nesting habitat.



An Aplomado Falcon utilizes a nest platform erected by RMBO. This iconic grassland species is teetering on the brink of extirpation from Chihuahua, Mexico.

## Loss of a Leader

In 2013, RMBO and the conservation community of southeastern Colorado lost a dear friend and partner. Rod Johnson worked with RMBO, Colorado Parks and Wildlife and others in his community of Eads to rehabilitate Kiowa Creek Natural Area, a haven for birds, other wildlife and people. Rod embodied the spirit of stewardship toward the land and community that drives RMBO's own programs.



Stewardship Director Seth Gallagher and Rod Johnson survey a restoration project along Kiowa Creek in Eads, Colorado.

## 2013 by the Numbers

**1,381 people reached** through landowner visits, presentations, workshops, public events and restoration projects in Colorado, Nebraska, Wyoming and Chihuahua, Mexico

**294 visits** with landowners

**111,033 acres** of prairie, shrublands and wetlands enhanced in Colorado, Nebraska and Wyoming

**160,000 acres** of grasslands enhanced in Chihuahua, Mexico

**\$547,916** in Farm Bill funds and \$336,896 in non-Farm Bill funds put toward improving wildlife habitat on private lands in the U.S.



**“If we don’t have happy songbirds, we don’t have happy anything. That’s where it starts.”**

Gary Visintainer, Visintainer Sheep Co., Craig, CO



Brewer's Sparrow  
by José Hugo  
Martínez Guerrero

## Aerial Surveys

In June, RMBO took to the skies over Weld County, Colorado, in search of degraded playa lakes. Playas have a noticeable footprint from the air, so aerial surveys are an efficient way to scout for playas in need of restoration. Eleven playas were identified for potential projects on private lands, with playa restoration benefitting ranchers and birds. The flight was donated by LightHawk. Also in 2013, LightHawk donated flights to RMBO to survey nesting activity of Ferruginous Hawks and Golden Eagles in Nebraska and possible Black Swift nesting sites in southeast Wyoming.



Biologist Noe Marymor and LightHawk pilot Stephanie Wells pose before their flight.

## State of the Birds

Published in July, the “State of the Birds 2013” report drew attention to the important role of America’s farmers, ranchers and foresters as stewards of bird habitat. As a leader in private lands conservation, RMBO served as a key partner in writing and editing this landmark document. The report celebrates the many contributions landowners make to conservation, including the farmers who participate in RMBO’s cooperative Mountain Plover nest-marking program.



For your copy, call 970-482-1707 ext. 30 or visit [www.stateofthebirds.org](http://www.stateofthebirds.org).

## Landowner Profile

### Visintainer Sheep Co.

“When songbirds flourish, everything else flourishes.” That’s the declaration of intent for Visintainer Sheep Co., a sheep and cattle ranch in northwest Colorado. Over the years, the ranch has shifted from production-based to forage-based management to support the economic viability of the ranch, as well as the long-term health of the range and the birds and other wildlife that depend on it.

The Visintainers have worked with RMBO and partners on projects to enhance the land, including reseeding lost sage-grouse habitat and rangelands after a fire in 2010. An exemplar of private lands conservation, the ranch was the recipient of the 2013 Leopold Conservation Award.



Dean Visintainer and biologist Brandon Miller talk on the Visintainers’ ranch.

## Looking Ahead

→ In the spring of 2014, RMBO will study the cost-effectiveness and durability of different types of markers for preventing collisions of Greater Sage-Grouse with fences. Markers help sage-grouse and other birds see and avoid fences, reducing deaths for species of conservation concern.

→ RMBO will host training workshops in Colorado, Montana and Wyoming with landowners and resource professionals to support the conservation of sagebrush birds and habitat.

→ In 2014, RMBO will continue to expand its private lands work in Mexico. It has already added a third position in Chihuahua City in 2014 and will add a fourth position in Janos with the support of partners.

# Engaging Citizens in Science

## Monitoring Eastern Screech-Owls

In March of 2013, RMBO launched a citizen science project to study the population dynamics and habitat needs of the common but little-understood Eastern Screech-Owl. Volunteers collected data at random sites along the Cache la Poudre River in Fort Collins, Colorado, detecting 19 Eastern Screech-Owls at nine sites during the three-month study. Using the data, 41 breeding pairs were estimated across all 69 possible sites along the river. Projects like this not only fulfill research objectives, but get citizens involved in science linked to conservation. In addition to the owl project, RMBO coordinated Bald Eagle Watch, ColonyWatch and HawkWatch in 2013, along with the 15th annual Barrow's Goldeneye count in Colorado. Visit [www.RMBO.org](http://www.RMBO.org) to learn how to become a citizen scientist.



Data gathered through the owl project will inform conservation efforts along the Poudre River in 2014 to benefit Eastern Screech-Owls (pictured above), other wildlife and people.

## Protecting Mountain Plovers

Mountain Plovers breed on flat, bare ground on the shortgrass prairie. Agricultural fields suit them just fine, as long as nests are not accidentally tilled. To help farmers avoid unwittingly plowing over plover nests, RMBO operates a nest-marking program in western Nebraska. In 2013, 79 landowners representing 212,000 acres took part in the program. With their help, 65 nests were located and marked; 72% of those nests produced young for a total of 115 Mountain Plover chicks hatched. Also in 2013, RMBO partnered with the University of Colorado Denver to study the plovers' habitat use. Sixteen plovers were radio-tagged and followed to discover where Mountain Plovers go to forage during their nesting cycle. Information from this study will help guide management and conservation efforts.



A Mountain Plover chick, no more than a week old, ventures from its nest in a crop field in Nebraska.

## DMNS Speaker Series

In 2013, RMBO and the Denver Museum of Nature & Science (DMNS) collaborated to bring avian experts to the museum to share amazing photos, stories and research on grouse, crows and the origin of birds. More than 750 people attended the series to learn the latest in bird science and conservation.



Wildlife photographer Noppadol Paothong conducts a photo workshop during last year's BBQ for the Birds, RMBO's annual picnic, after speaking about grouse conservation at DMNS a few days earlier as part of the speaker series.

## 2013 Volunteers

**Thank you to these citizen scientists, naturalists, bird banders, board members and other volunteers who donated their time and talents to help RMBO conserve birds and their habitats.**

- Tom Abbott
- Peter Ampe
- Arden Anderson
- Mark Anderson
- Julia Auckland
- Stacy Baker
- Dale Ball
- James Ball
- Misi Ballard
- Karen Balog
- Jim Banks
- Ben Baumgartner
- Shelley Bayard de Volo
- Bill Bell
- Elizabeth Berkley
- Kathi Bledsoe
- Valerie Bliss
- Steve Bloom
- Mitchell Blystone
- Georgie Bohlender
- Jennifer Bohn
- Ann Bond
- David Boyd

# 2013 Volunteers



Marsh Wren  
by Ryan McDonald

- |                   |                      |                    |                         |                    |                  |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Bob Bradley       | Karyn DeKramer       | David Gulbenkian   | Eric Lutomski           | Tom Parchman       | Nancy Stocker    |
| Denise Bretting   | Larry DeMers         | Fran Haas          | Kathanne Lynch          | Brad Parks         | Ernie Stone      |
| Linda Broeren     | Leah Dempsey         | Carrie Harrod      | Marcie Maccaux          | Todd Patrick       | Tiffani Stout    |
| Glenda Brown      | Tom Dennehy          | Alison Hazel       | Cynthia Madsen          | Regine Paul        | Wendy Sydow      |
| Jill Brown        | Andrew Devlin        | Mike Henwood       | Marcia Maeda            | Bill Prather       | Joyce Takamine   |
| Steve Brown       | Coen Dexter          | Mindy Hetrick      | Joe Mammoser            | Elizabeth Prevatte | D. Jean Tate     |
| Lori Brummer      | Ariana Dickson       | Dave Hill          | Anna Mangan             | Dave Price         | Warren Taylor    |
| Mary Cay Burger   | Christy Dowling      | Jill Holden        | Edna Mason              | Scott Rashid       | Jim Thompson     |
| Peter Burke       | Georgia Doyle        | Charmaine Holloway | Charles Mathis          | Jennie Ratico      | Leon Thurmon     |
| Will Burt         | Rachel Dunbar        | Ed Holub           | Gary Mattes             | Nicole Reese       | Sharon Tinianow  |
| Katey Buster      | Alice Dunick         | Charles Hopton     | Kylie Mattes            | Rob Reilly         | Geoff Tischbein  |
| Nicole Buyck      | Ken Ecton            | Barbara Hughes     | Veronica Mattes         | Peter Robinson     | Jackson Trappett |
| Jay Carlisle      | Bill Eden            | Chuck Hundertmark  | Steve Matthews          | Andrea Robinsong   | Chris Tremilling |
| Casey Carter      | Rosemary Engard      | Diane Hutton       | George Mayfield         | Glenn Rodriguez    | Tyler Tretten    |
| Amber Carver      | Lee Farese           | Sherri Huwer       | Kay McConnell           | Joe Roller         | Amber Tyler      |
| Jim Carver        | Lee Farrell          | Jennifer Hyypio    | Tom McConnell           | Pam Roth           | Claude Vallieres |
| Joel Chapa        | Linda Farrell        | Adam Jack          | May McCoy               | Roger Rouch        | Ron Van Ommeren  |
| David Charles     | Jack Ferguson        | Heather Jackson    | Anabel Medina Hernández | Nina Routh         | Lois Vanek       |
| Carolyn Clawson   | Paula Fischer        | Cyndy Johnson      | Cara Meinke             | Chris Rurik        | Linda Vidal      |
| Jennifer Clay     | Dave Fletcher        | Carolyn Jones      | Karen Metz              | Tom Ryon           | Colin Wait       |
| Carol Cochran     | Bill Flowers         | Dale Jones         | Aran Meyer              | Bill Schmoker      | Sean Walters     |
| Francis Commercon | Nelson Ford          | LeAnn Joswick      | Lucinda Miller          | Jim Schmoker       | David Waltman    |
| Joyce Commercon   | Kate Frost           | Mary Keithler      | Megan Miller            | John Shenot        | Ed Warner        |
| Jim Compton       | Nelda Gamble         | Joey Kellner       | Rich Miller             | Mike Sherman       | Tiffany Watts    |
| Pat Conner        | Jim Gano             | Alice Kenitz       | Robert Miller           | Debra Sherrill     | Ellyn Weaver     |
| Jeff Connor       | Héctor García Barrón | Mary Kiesling      | Steve Mlodinow          | Janet Shin         | Katie Weeks      |
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| Susan Craig       | Janet George         | Steve King         | Sue Mozian              | Paul Slingsby      | Melissa Wolfe    |
| Mike Crosby       | Louise Glaser        | Mac Kobza          | Elizabeth Munson        | Tim Smart          | Ronda Woodward   |
| Eileen Cunningham | Ren Gobris           | Nick Komar         | Duane Nelson            | Jabus Smith        | Ashley Worth     |
| Charlie Curlee    | Liz Goehring         | Erik Larsen        | Suzanne Neuman          | Meredith Smith     | Brenda Wright    |
| Clem Dabrowski    | Kathy Goering        | Dave Leatherman    | Christian Nunes         | Sarah Smith        | Judie Wright     |
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| Steve Deitemeyer  | Bryan Guarente       | Forrest Luke       | Ken Pals                | Harriet Stephens   | Kathy Zlomke     |

## Volunteer Profile

### Time for What He's Always Wanted to Do



Dale Jones volunteers as a naturalist and citizen scientist. As a naturalist, Dale assists with education programs, having personally interacted with more than 4,000 kids and adults on behalf of RMBO. Dale retired in 2005 after a long career with the Army and Department of Defense, "and now that I'm retired, I've finally got time to do what I've always wanted to do," he said. Along with sharing his knowledge of nature, Dale monitors the Bald Eagle nest at Barr Lake through Bald Eagle Watch. As a kid growing up in Cheyenne, Wyoming, he never saw a Bald Eagle in the wild. "Being able to see one in the wild on a regular basis is an overwhelming joy for me," he said. In 2013, Dale received the Nelda Gamble Volunteer Award, given annually to the most outstanding volunteer at RMBO.

# 2013 Members and Donors

Thank you to the following people and organizations for supporting Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory and its mission to conserve birds and their habitats. Basic one-year memberships are \$35 for individuals and \$60 for families. RMBO welcomes and appreciates contributions in any amount. Please visit [www.RMBO.org](http://www.RMBO.org) or call 970-482-1707 ext. 30 for information.

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Rachel Bock	Terry Cookro
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Kathleen Doyle  
Dave & Mary Driscoll  
Bruce Ducker  
Jim Duggan  
Terrence Dunn  
Chris Eberly  
Debra Eberts  
Tyler Edmondson  
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Rocky Mountain Bird  
Observatory makes every  
effort to maintain accurate  
and up-to-date records.  
If you were a member or  
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name does not appear on  
this list, please accept our  
apologies and let us know  
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970-482-1707 ext. 30.

**Friend Profile**  
**New Supporters Search for Swifts**



Matthew Fraker and Sherri Thornton are new Friends of Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory. They live in Illinois and joined RMBO to support Black Swift research. Matthew's dedication, however, went beyond just philanthropy in 2013. He joined expeditions in an attempt to discover the first Black Swift nesting site in Wyoming, trudging up canyons in the Wind River and Teton ranges to inspect behind waterfalls for nests. No nests were found during the 2013 surveys, but that won't deter him from continuing to search for this "mystical bird" in Wyoming and supporting RMBO. Matthew said we, as humans, have a responsibility to keep ecosystems as healthy as possible and conserve the birds that serve as important indicators of ecological health. There's also so much left to learn about Black Swifts, he said. "That bird is so remarkable. Just like Rich Levad noted in his book, it really is 'the coolest bird.'"

**Please consider Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory in your estate planning. For assistance, contact Executive Director Tammy VerCauteren at 970-482-1707 ext. 16 for you to make a lasting contribution to bird and habitat conservation.**

# Financials

## Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory Financial Summary FY 2013

(Unaudited)

### Revenues

Contributions & Memberships	\$179,282
SCFD Grant	\$214,772
Contracts & Grants	\$3,496,107
Other	\$25,760
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$3,915,921</b>

### Expenses

Program	\$3,371,616
Administration	\$471,328
Development	\$59,217
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$3,902,161</b>

Change in Net Assets \$13,760

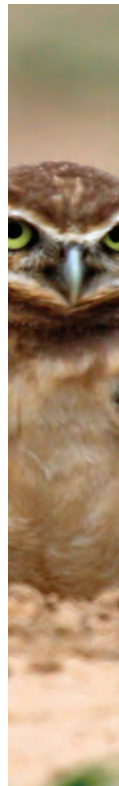
This summary financial information has not been audited. Please visit [www.RMBO.org](http://www.RMBO.org) after May 31, 2014, for the audited financial statements including all note disclosures.

Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

2013 Revenues  
\$3,915,921



2012 Revenues  
\$3,908,797



## 2013 Partners & Funders

- Adams County Open Space
- Agro Cultura Empresarial, S.A. de C.V.
- American Bird Conservancy
- American Birding Association
- Animas Watershed Partnership
- Appleton-Whittell Research Ranch
- Arizona Game and Fish Department
- Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies
- Audubon Center at Bent of the River
- Audubon Nebraska
- Audubon Rockies
- Audubon Society of Greater Denver
- Avian Knowledge Network
- Avian Science Center
- Avogadro's Number
- Baca County Conservation District
- Barr Lake State Park
- Bird Studies Canada
- Birds & Beans LLC
- Bismarck State College
- Black Canyon Audubon Society
- Boy Scouts of America
- Brighton Chamber of Commerce
- Brighton Legacy Foundation
- Butterfly Pavilion
- Campbell County Conservation District
- Canadian Wildlife Service
- Canyons & Plains of Southeast Colorado
- Chadron State Park
- Chama Peak Land Alliance
- Chatfield State Park

- Chico Basin Ranch
- Chihuahuan Desert Grassland Regional Alliance
- CIPAMEX
- Citizens of the Scientific & Cultural Facilities District
- City of Brighton Forestry
- City of Fort Collins Natural Areas Program
- City of Fort Collins Utilities Department
- Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education
- Colorado Association of Conservation Districts
- Colorado Cattlemens Agricultural Land Trust
- Colorado Chapter of The Wildlife Society
- Colorado Dept. of Agriculture
- Colorado Dept. of Natural Resources
- Colorado Field Ornithologists
- Colorado Natural Heritage Program
- Colorado Parks and Recreation Association
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- Colorado Plateau Cooperative Ecosystem Study Unit
- Colorado State Forest Service
- Colorado State Land Board
- Colorado State University
- Colorado State University Extension
- Commission for Environmental Cooperation
- CONABIO
- CONAFOR
- CONANP
- Confluent Design
- ConocoPhillips
- Cornell Lab of Ornithology
- Cuenca Los Ojos Foundation

- Denver Botanic Gardens
- Denver Field Ornithologists
- Denver Museum of Nature & Science
- Denver Zoo
- Desert Landscape Conservation Cooperative
- Desert Southwest Cooperative Ecosystem Study Unit
- Dixon Water Foundation
- Dolores Conservation District
- Ducks Unlimited
- Eagle Optics
- EDM International, Inc.
- Environment for the Americas
- Farm Service Agency
- Finnders & Youngberg
- For The Birds
- Fort Collins Museum of Discovery
- Friends of Barr Lake
- Friends of Dinosaur Ridge
- Funkwerks
- Gates Family Foundation
- Grand Valley Audubon Society
- Great Basin Bird Observatory
- Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative
- Great Plains Landscape Conservation Cooperative
- Greg Miller Birding
- Guidestone
- Gunnison Conservation District
- Habitat Seven
- Highlands Presbyterian Camp and Retreat Center
- IMC - Vida Silvestre
- Intermountain Bird Observatory
- Intermountain West Joint Venture
- Jefferson Conservation District
- Jefferson County Open Space
- Josh Cellars

# 2013 Partners and Funders



Western Meadowlark  
by Cree Bol

Karval Community Alliance  
Kimball Banner County Chamber of Commerce  
Kimball County Conservation Collaborative  
Kiowa County Economic Development Foundation  
Klamath Bird Observatory  
La Plata Conservation District  
La Plata County Open Space  
Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas  
Larimer County Natural Resources  
Legacy Land Trust  
LightHawk  
Medora Foundation  
Missouri Dept. of Conservation  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Montezuma Land Conservancy  
Mountain Studies Institute  
Mule Deer Foundation  
National Association for Interpretation  
National Audubon Society  
National Ecological Observatory Network  
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation  
National Forest Foundation  
National Park Service  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
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Nebraska Educational Service Unit 13  
Nebraska Environmental Trust  
Nebraska Forest Service  
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Pheasants Forever  
Playa Lakes Joint Venture  
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Pronatura Sur  
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Rainwater Basin Joint Venture  
Ranchlands Learning and Science Center  
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Rio Grande Joint Venture  
Riverside Zoo  
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Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation  
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Sandhills Task Force  
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Bill Schmoker  
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Sky Islands Bird Observatory  
Sonoran Joint Venture  
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USDA NRCS Sage Grouse Initiative  
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Western Native Trout Initiative  
Wild Birds Unlimited  
Wild Wings Environmental Education  
Wildcat Hills Audubon Society  
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Wyoming Bird Habitat Conservation Partnership  
Wyoming Game & Fish Department  
Wyoming Natural Diversity Database  
Xerces Society  
Yuma County Pest Control District  
Zen-Ray Optics

## Partner-Funder Profile National Foundation Supports Diversity of Programs



The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) sustains, restores and enhances the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitat. One of the world's largest conservation grant-makers, NFWF has funded RMBO programs for the past two decades due, in part, to RMBO's leadership, expertise and outcome-based, scientific approach to conservation. Today, NFWF supports a range of RMBO programs to enhance and restore habitat for grouse, grassland birds and other wildlife and put biologists on the ground in communities in Colorado and Chihuahua, Mexico. We are grateful for NFWF's support in helping us reverse the decline of threatened species and build local capacity for conservation.



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[www.savethelastdancebook.com](http://www.savethelastdancebook.com); [www.nopnatureimages.com](http://www.nopnatureimages.com)

Pages 1-2: Mountains by Reba Riedner; Staff and Board with Greg Miller by Michelle Seubert; Larry Modesitt and Tammy VerCauteren by Greg Levandoski; Jim Duggan by Chuck Hundertmark

Pages 3-4: Grasslands by Erin Strasser; Flame-colored Tanager by Ángeles González Martínez; Osprey by Nancy Gobris; Grasshopper Sparrow by Erin Strasser

Pages 5-6: Wetlands by Colin Lee; Homeschool by Emily Snode; Camp by Tyler Edmondson; Farmer by Sujata Gupta; Banders by Sandy Johnson; Broad-tailed Hummingbird by Jordan Spalding; Wood Thrush by Greg Levandoski

Pages 7-8: Sagebrush by Teddy Parker-Renga; Aplomado Falcon by Roberto Rodríguez; Rod Johnson by Laura Quattrini; LightHawk by Seth Gallagher; Landowner Profile by Seth Gallagher

Pages 9-10: Marsh - RMBO File Photo; Eastern Screech-Owl by Rob Sparks; Mountain Plover by Colin Woolley; DMNS Speaker Series by Steve Bloom

Pages 11-12: Shrublands by Adam Carman

Pages 13-14: Prairie by Denis Perez; Burrowing Owls by Robert Martinez

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