



# Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds eNewsletter

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Every Fossil Needs a Friend

#33—February 2017

## The Great Backyard Bird Counts—February 17-20

The Great Backyard Bird Count – February 17 – 20<sup>th</sup> 2017

Join the Friends of Florissant Fossil Beds, Inc. and the staff of the Florissant Fossil Beds NM at the Monument on Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup> 2017 starting at 9 AM for our 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Backyard Bird Count event and the 20th International event held every year in February in over 130 countries. It is a citizen science event which had well over 160,000 people counting in 2016 during the 19<sup>th</sup> year.

The International GBBC is a joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, National Audubon Society and Bird Studies Canada. In 2016, 18, 637, 974 individual birds were counted. Of those counted, there were 5,689 species listed and 162, 052 checklists were submitted. The US counted the most birds with 131,290 checklists submitted which represented 665 species.

This citizen science event is important for researchers who track populations of migrating birds to see the effects of weather and other events on bird populations all over the world. We can tell if a species is affected by climate, by diseases, lack of food and other events that put bird populations in jeopardy.

Join us on 1/18/17 at 9 AM to help with this important bird count. We will have two or three different start times for counts led by members of the Aiken Chapter of the National Audubon Society, the Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds, Inc. and other volunteers. Everyone will meet in the yurt to receive info on how to do the count, and how to identify the birds by sound, sight and other signs.

If you have any questions about this event, please call Sally McCracken at 687-9204.



## About the Great Backyard Bird Count



The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is a free, fun, and easy event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of bird populations. Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the four-day event and report their sightings online at [birdcount.org](http://birdcount.org). Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from beginning bird watchers to experts, and you can participate from your backyard, or anywhere in the world.

Each checklist submitted during the GBBC helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how birds are doing, and how to protect them and the environment we share. Last year, more than 160,000 participants submitted their bird observations online, creating the largest instantaneous snapshot of global bird populations ever recorded.

The 20th annual GBBC will be held Friday, February 17, through Monday, February 20, 2017. Please visit the official website at [birdcount.org](http://birdcount.org) for more information and be sure to check out the latest educational and promotional resources.

"This count is so fun because anyone can take part—we all learn and watch birds together—whether you are an expert, novice, or feeder watcher. I like to invite new birders to join me and share the experience. Get involved, invite your friends, and see how your favorite spot stacks up." -Gary Langham, Chief Scientist

Bird populations are always shifting and changing. For example, 2014 GBBC data highlighted a large irruption of Snowy Owls across the northeastern, mid-Atlantic and Great Lakes areas of the United States. The data also showed the effects that warm weather patterns have had on bird movement around the country. For more on the results of the 2016 GBBC, take a look at the GBBC Summary, and be sure to check out some of the images in the 2016 GBBC Photo Contest Gallery.

On the program website participants can explore real-time maps and charts that show what others are reporting during and after the count. Be sure to check out the Explore a Region tool to get an idea of what you can expect to see in your area during the next GBBC.

For questions and comments, please contact the National Audubon Society or Cornell Lab of Ornithology:

National Audubon Society  
[citizenscience@audubon.org](mailto:citizenscience@audubon.org)

Cornell Lab of Ornithology  
(800) 843-2473  
[gbbc@cornell.edu](mailto:gbbc@cornell.edu)

## Calling All Friends, Potential Friends and Volunteers

Have you ever been wondering how you might be able to share your talents and resources to sustain the mission of Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument? Did you realize there are many needs within the National Park Service that can only be met with volunteer efforts and financial contributions outside the Monument's designated funds? Do you have a hidden skill or some knowledge that you think could benefit our Friends' mission?

Join us for our **Friends Annual Meeting and potluck on Saturday February 18th** at noon in the Yurt/Junior Ranger Central to learn about our 2016 Centennial Year accomplishments and our hopes and plans for 2017. Bring your favorite dish. The Friends will provide the plates, cups and silverware as well as coffee, tea, water and lemonade. Be ready to hear about these special events that we need help with for 2017:

- Annual Plein Air Art Festival and Sale-August 11-13 (our primary fundraiser)
- Woodland Park Farmers Market outreach table June through September
- Educational Outreach tables at: Western Interior Paleontological Society Symposium in Golden March 4-5; Lake George Gem and Mineral Show August 18-19; Colorado College Cool Science Fair April 8th; UCCS Cool Science Fair October ? TBD
- NPS Birthday Celebration-August
- Trail improvement projects-throughout summer TBD
- Friends 30th Anniversary Party September TBD
- Friends Quarterly event at the Cusack Barn TBD in May

### What can YOU do to make things happen?

- Marketing the Monument and Friends' message to media, local businesses, wide ranging geographical areas
- Grant writing and fund raising expertise to obtain dollars for:
  - Refurbishing the Fowler Educational Seminar Building
  - Youth outreach and onsite programming K-12
  - Trail Wayfinding Signage and Park Benches
  - Military community outreach
  - Diverse community outreach
  - Accessibility improvements to picnic areas
- Culinary skills for special events
- Financial management skills
- Networking with small/ large businesses or researching grant opportunities

**"Boots on the ground"** are just as important as any financial contribution you can make. Volunteering might be for a few hours for a special event or a willingness to serve on the Friends board that meets the second Thursday of the month at the Woodland Park Library at 5:45pm for approximately 2 hours. Board members support each other and educate the membership as well as the general public on ways to support our very own National Monument. Whatever your interests are, there is some perfect fit to support your park.

I started small—volunteering a few hours a week at the front desk but found there were many ways I could contribute that I didn't even know existed in the National Park System. If I've piqued your interest please contact me via phone 719-689-3174 or email [jspg@live.com](mailto:jspg@live.com). We can meet for coffee or just chat on the phone. My guess is that you may have ideas to contribute that I haven't even crossed my mind.

Patty Glatfelter, President

### Our Lighter Side of Christmas Sponsors



The Friends would like to extend a special thank you to our Lighter Side of Christmas Sponsors who made the \$12,400 donated funds available to enhance the many educational, preservation and enhanced programs available to our visitors and You!

Newmont Mines, Swiss Chalet Restaurant, Tweeds, The UPS Store, Historic Ute Inn, Vintage Vines and Staircase Gallery, Wildwood Casino, Williams Log Cabin Furniture, Triple Crown Casinos, Kaufmann Dentistry, Sabaru Import Motors, Starbucks, Woodland Hardware and Home, Woodland Park Insurance Center, Denny's, Pikes Peak Credit Union, Kozleski CPA, Woodland Park Professional Building, Charis, The Healing Spot Physical Therapy, 4 Mile Auto Repair, ActiveLife Chiropractic, Alliance Insurance, Allstate Insurance, American Family Insurance, Anderson Pack & Ship, Big D Motorsports, Casa Grande Mexican Restaurant, Big O Tires, Curves, Creative Concepts, Edward Jones, Double M Concrete, Dinosaur Brokers, Foxworth Galbraith Lumber, Furniture Medic, Healing Touch, Keller Williams, Park State Bank, Peak Internet, Pikes Peak Regional Hospital, Absolute Septic, Burger King, BierWerks, Dinosaur Resource Center, Forest Ridge, Joanie's, Ute Pass Brewing Company, Redfin, McDonalds, Studio West, and Olla Terve.

Doesn't this list WOW you? Please thank them for their generous support when you utilize their goods and services! Explore what they have to offer-we have an amazing local community to serve our needs.



## PPHS Chautauqua Feb. 19—Drilling, Fracking, Earthquakes & Our Energy Bills

Fracking. This term has quickly become a common household word. But how many of us really know what it means? Let alone how the process affects a person's everyday life. Retired geologist, John Rakowski, will talk about what the process of fracking is as well as its impact on both the environment and society at the Pikes Peak Historical Society's February Chautauqua.

John will speak on the evolution of "fracking" from post-Civil War times to the present. He will discuss the advantages of horizontal drilling and fracking as well as the downsides of the two processes. We'll learn about the sudden increase in earthquake activity in the Mid Continent region of the United States and why it's occurring. John will also discuss how horizontal drilling and fracking impacts our energy bills.

John's mineral and fossil collection, began in his early teen years, includes minerals collected in the Pikes Peak area from the early 1960's to the present. He later earned a degree in Geology. He has worked as an exploration and exploitation geologist in the oil and gas industry for over 40 years. His profession has taken him to locations throughout the U.S. and several countries overseas. John chose to retire to the Florissant area and is now active with the Pikes Peak Historical Society and the Lake George Gem & Mineral Club. John is a member of the **Society of Independent Professional Earth Scientists** and the **Division of Professional Affairs of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists** and is also a member of Professional Geological Societies in the Rockies and Gulf Coast.

The Pikes Peak Historical Society invites you to learn more about fracking, the environment and the resulting effects at their monthly Chautauqua (free program) on Sunday, February 19th, at 2:00 pm at the Florissant Library. The Library is located adjacent to the Florissant Community Park on 334 Circle Drive in Florissant. This program is presented as a public service of the Pikes Peak Historical Society. Admission is free and refreshments are served. No reservation is required but arrive early, seating is limited. For more information call 719-748-8259 or 719-748-3861.

## "Fire at the Ice Festival" in Cripple Creek

Join your Friends of Florissant Fossil Beds on February 11th and 12th from 10-4pm.

It's all happening at the CC&V Visitor Center 371 E. Bennett Ave. Learn about the influence of two nearby volcanoes that shaped the history of our region. The Friends will have an interpretive display and a free gift for kids to encourage future exploration of our natural world supported by a generous donation from Newmont Mines.

### **Fire at the Ice Festival**

Presented by Newmont Gold Mining CC&V Visitor Center at Newmont CC&V Visitor Center

At the Newmont Gold Mining Visitor Center in Cripple Creek (B.P.O.E. Elks Building), you can learn how two volcanoes, only 10 miles apart, resulted in two very different outcomes. See fossils, rocks, exhibits and more in addition to activities for kids and door prizes! <http://www.peakradar.com/event/fire-at-the-ice-festival/>

