

## Wildlife Committee

The Wildlife Committee mission statement is “The Village at Castle Pines Wildlife Committee seeks to inspire residents to protect wildlife.”

Committee membership: There were no changes in committee membership in 2020. One new member was approved to join the committee in 2022.

The VCP Bluebird Trail monitoring program completed its 13th year. Eight new monitors were recruited from within the Village to replace several monitors who resigned due to moving away or changes in their personal lives. New volunteers were educated regarding monitoring and data collection and were mentored through the season. One volunteer took on the very significant task of checking, cleaning and repairing all 75 boxes as well as building and replacing boxes as needed. Data was submitted to the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology as a part of global Citizen Science efforts. Our 75 nesting boxes produced fewer nests, eggs and fledglings this year compared to previous years, consistent with the 2021 outcomes of other Front Range bluebird trails. The decrease was thought to be due to extreme weather events, drought and wildfires in Colorado and other western states. Two boxes were destroyed by bears and were replaced. A luncheon to thank the monitors was held in the Wildcat Room in October.

The nesting birds in the Bluebird boxes included Western and Mountain Bluebirds, Tree and Violet-green Swallows, Black-capped Chickadees, House Wrens, Pygmy Nuthatches and one White-breasted Nuthatch. The Bluebird Trail has produced an estimated 3579 fledglings of all types in the 13 seasons of the trail.

### Community Presentations:

- Due to Covid-19 restrictions most planned community presentations were cancelled or deferred, including the Elk Rut barbecue at Cherokee Ranch, Colorado Parks and Wildlife “Living with Wildlife”, a bee presentation and a Nature Trail bird walk.
- A Denver Audubon October Family Program presentation “Animals of All Hallows Eve” was given via Zoom and was well received.
- The Denver Botanic Gardens presented a program “Gardening for Birds, Bees and Butterflies” via Zoom.

### Collaborations and Projects

- The Wildlife Help email resource continued to respond to resident concerns for non-urgent wildlife issues including pecking birds, raccoons, bears, squirrels and others.
- The committee expressed its concerns regarding elk and deer safety along I-25 to the BOD and encouraged the BOD to address the issue with CDOT.
- The committee expanded its wildlife articles on the Village website.
- Ongoing community education about bird feeders and bear safety.

- Committee member Bob Jondle remained available to the Village and Metro district traffic planning entities; particularly issues of speeding in sections of the Village where elk, deer and turkeys frequently cross the roads.
- The committee encouraged the BOD to respond critically to the Daniels Parkway Development project out of concern for wildlife safety and well-being, including that of the elk and raptors, particularly the Golden Eagles.

#### Village Reporter and eblasts

Wildlife articles were written for each issue of the Village Reporter by committee members. Committee members are rotating the task of writing articles for the VR; Cynthia Kristensen is the representative of the committee to the Village Reporter . The committee also worked with Mikayl Bristol at the HOA to recommend short wildlife topics for the Village Weekly and to provide photos.

- The WC spent \$1314.89 of the original budgeted \$3,400. We anticipate increased spending in 2022 with the resumption of in-person programs.

#### **2021 Committee Members:**

Cynthia Kristensen – Chairperson

Lilli Almon, Libby Drbal, Christine Horowitz, Robert Jondle, Arlene Raskin, Ron West