



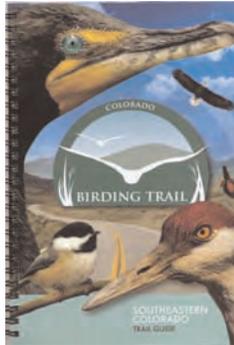
The Corral Bluffs Chronicle

News from the Hoodoos

March 2010

CORRAL BLUFFS QUARTERLY UPDATE

- Corral Bluffs will be included in the SE Colorado Birding Trail Guide
- Corral Bluffs Alliance (CoBA) is working on a noxious weed control plan for the open space
- The IRS received CoBA's 501(c)3 application and sent us a few questions which we've answered.
- KRCC created a narrated slide show from one of our guided tours <http://krccnetwork.org/tbs/2010/01/04/meet-your-newest-open-space-coral-bluffs>
- Corral Bluffs was featured on the Trails and Open Space Coalition bookmark this year



- In addition to the male bobcat seen last year, two Corral Bluffs residents enjoyed watching a female bobcat and her two kittens last fall.



Bobcat kitten at Corral Bluffs

CLEANUP HELP NEEDED

Every Sunday from 1-4PM (except holidays and bad weather days) your help is needed to clean up an old farmer's dump just north of the new Corral Bluffs Open Space. We'll stop in April when the weather becomes too warm.

Meet at the corner of Hoofbeat & Davis at 1PM. A map and weather updates are at corralbluffs.com. Wear old clothes, work gloves, sunscreen and tough-soled shoes.

If you've never seen Corral Bluffs, we'll take you on a short hike before you help with the cleanup.



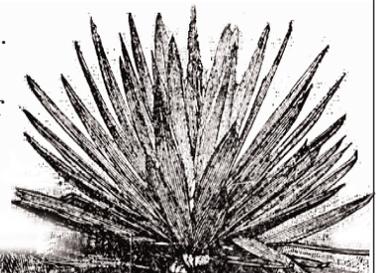
Victorious volunteers who filled our first roll-off. Left to right, David Shonk, Kathleen & Bruce Schneider, Nancy Atherton, Phyllis Cahill and David Lumb. Not pictured: Jeff Cahill, Lynette Reagan, Don & Cristine Watkins & family.

CoBA CORNER

\$5000 MATCHING GRANT CONCLUDED

The Lumb & Hilaire challenge grant concluded on January 18, 2010 with a final \$2000 donation for stewardship of future land acquisitions. A total of \$4140 was generated by this matching grant. Thank you so much to the Lumb-Hilaire's and all those who contributed.

Please send newsletter corrections or submissions to CorralBluffs@aol.com.





STONES AND BONES 2009 PALEONTOLOGY REPORT

*By Sharon Milito, project
paleontologist, Corral Bluffs Project*

The end of the year paleontology report has been turned in to the State. We have documented dozens of fossil localities in Corral Bluffs and have determined the area to be very rich in prehistoric treasures. We reported at least 28 river, lake or pond turtles, 15 crocodiles, 3 gar fish and one mammal, as well as 7 fossil leaf localities.

Fossil trees and leaves are innumerable, many of which are palms. One common leaf is the *Artocarpus*, much larger than a man's hand, and related to modern Breadfruit, which grows in tropical climates. One leaf site appears to have leaves that correlate to the Castle Rock rainforest site. More samples will need to be taken to see whether this actually was a rainforest, here in Colorado Springs.



Fossil gar on display at DMNS. Notice diamond-shaped scales.

Another interesting creature that frequented the rivers of ancient Corral Bluffs was the gar. Gar appeared during the Cretaceous and can still be found today in the south-eastern United States. The gar's body is covered with hundreds of enameled, diamond-shaped scales. Like enamel teeth, these scales are preserved more easily than bone, and are what we find at our fossil localities. These ancient fish were about 5-6 feet long. Imagine how large the rivers must have been to provide a habitat for fish of that size!

This summer Corral Bluffs was a destination for several Denver Museum of Nature & Science (DMNS) curators as well as visiting professors from Yale, University of New Hampshire and MIT. The group collected leaves from several small quarries and also took rock samples for paleomagnetic dating. Another crew from DMNS came out to excavate a baby crocodile skull. The biggest surprise came in the lab at DMNS when during cleaning and

preparation of the skull, a mammal jaw was found! The 4 cm long jaw is from an extinct mammal in the condylarth family, probably a periptichid. Amazingly, most ancient mammals are identified by their teeth, which were harder than bone, and more easily preserved.

From the fossil and rock evidence we are able to reconstruct the paleo-ecosystem and the landscape of our prehistoric past. Colorado Springs was indeed a different environment 65 million years ago!

GUIDED TOURS

CoBA is using a new easier tour route of the Corral Bluffs Open Space for 2010. It includes the western valley and a view from the western ridge. The golden eagles are collecting branches and twigs and doing spring housekeeping around their nest. It's quite possible to see them on one of the new hikes.

Tour dates (weather permitting):

April 3rd, Saturday, 10:30AM*

May 1st, Saturday, 10:30AM*

June 5th 8:00AM

New policy this year: NO SHORTS OR SANDALS. For safety reasons, CoBA can't take hikers who aren't wearing long pants and closed shoes.

Email corralbluffs@aol.com to reserve your place. See corralbluffs.com for more details.

* includes a 15 minute break for those who want to bring a picnic lunch or just relax and take pictures.



March 6th guided tour group—our 19th tour since acquisition of the open space. The sign was created by Jeff Cahill from materials recycled from the farmer's dump cleanup.

Please remember, Corral Bluffs is not yet open to the public, except through guided tours. There are many months of expert studies and master planning ahead before public access is available.

"ONE PERSON'S TRASH..."

by Jeff Cahill

"...Is another person's treasure," as the old expression goes.

My wife would be the first to tell you that I'm a collector, plain & simple. Whether it's old cars and parts to restore to like-new condition, old construction items that "I might be able to use someday," or old tools for my volunteer job as an 1880's woodworker at Rock Ledge Ranch, I just like "stuff."

Those of us volunteering at the Corral Bluffs farmer's dump clean-up can attest to that old "one person's trash" expression as dozens of "lawn and garden ornaments" have been set aside from what's been uncovered. From old 1800's solder-dot cans, to old rusted-out parts of wood stoves, cabinet knobs, car parts and old weathered wood. Recently, our volunteers found the side of an old theatre seat that may have come from the old Burns (and later, the Chief) Theatre in downtown Colorado Springs!

Besides these sentimental finds, numerous raw materials have been recycled for cash. That's right! Since we've started, steel has almost doubled in value and is hovering at about \$180 per ton and

brass, copper and aluminum have climbed higher as well on the world commodities market. So far we've recycled over 6 tons of metal.

Of course, on the other hand we've had to pay to recycle the 100 or so tires that were rolled down the hill, but there's a little nest-egg that we've put aside for fixing our occasional flat tire. Who knows, once the clean-up is done, perhaps a picnic or barbeque could be in order for our volunteers!!

Lots of glass and plastic has also been recycled and will become useful items in their re-manufacture. We've also recycled two and a half tons of wood and three tons of concrete. Yes, concrete can be recycled!

Still far more of what we've dislodged and stacked has been sent to the public landfill with the gracious contribution by Waste Management of a huge roll-off dumpster. Now we can see the elimination of the piles of trash that we've assembled over the past year. Waste Management has emptied the first of what we hope will be an unending

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May 2009 after 2 months of cleanup



March 2010 after 4 more months of cleanup

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stream of progression until we've returned this land to the scar-free country meadow it once was.

So if you can't get to our location on any given Sunday afternoon (except for "snake season"), perhaps you know of one or more of these ravines where farmers and early homesteaders dumped their unwanted and broken items. There may be items of interest in there for you to find! You may even be inspired to start a neighborhood or community effort. Besides the apparent trash you can recycle and the land you'll help to clean up, you may even find a jewel of your own!

It bears mentioning that before we started on the dump cleanup project, archaeologists did a complete survey of the site and approved our volunteer project.



Bill Beagle cutting up and removing old plaster

Volunteers who've helped with the farmer's dump cleanup:

Karl Anderson
Nancy Atherton
Bill & Betsy Beagle
Lynne Bliss
Miranda Burke
Jeff & Phyllis Cahill
Diane Carruth
Susan Davies
Barb Delph
Frank Gonzales
Matt Herman
Jackie Hilaire
Toby, Bridget & Alex Hollingsworth
David Lumb
Hannah Murphy
Bobbie Oxley
Lynette Reagan
Kathleen & Bruce Schneider
David Shonk
Shelly & Molly Stellwagen
Don, Cristine, Emma, Abby & Beth Watkins
Don Watkins, Sr.

A special thanks to Judy Cordova & Steve Eivins for permission to clean up the farmer's dump and Steve Snyder, Bridget Hollingsworth and Sharon Milito for the archaeological survey.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT CORRAL BLUFFS

We'd really welcome help with the following:

- finding and controlling noxious weeds
- newsletter writing & editing
- trash pickup
- organizing & leading public hikes
- educational presentations
- fundraising & special events
- membership development
- volunteer recruitment, training & recognition

Please write to corralbluffs@aol.com for more information on how your skills could benefit Corral Bluffs Open Space.

2010 PLANT SURVEY

Sunday, May 23rd at 10:30AM there will be a Southeastern Colorado Native Plant Society plant tour at Corral Bluffs for those who'd like to help throughout 2010 to conduct a plant survey. Some experience identifying plants is needed.

Reservations required. Write to corralbluffs@aol.com to reserve your place and receive the current plant list. Meet at the Loaf N Jug on Peterson Road off of Platte. See corralbluffs.com/guidedtours.html for a map and details on what to wear and bring.



Desert Four O'Clock

SUSTAINABLE PARKS

Over the past few years, as government budgets have gotten tighter, El Paso County and the City of Colorado Springs have significantly reduced funding for their parks, recreation and cultural activities.

The County has reduced its General Fund support for parks by 68%, from \$2.6 million in previous years to \$820,000 in 2010. The City of Colorado Springs reduced its General Fund support for parks by 84%, from \$19 million in 2008 to \$3 million in 2010.

Parks, trails and open space maintenance have been greatly reduced. Watering has been reduced or eliminated at 128 City neighborhood parks. Trash cans have been removed and playground equipment may be removed when it falls into disrepair. Community centers, cultural activities and recreation programs have been greatly reduced or eliminated and facilities closed. User fees have increased. County parks maintenance will continue to be reduced.

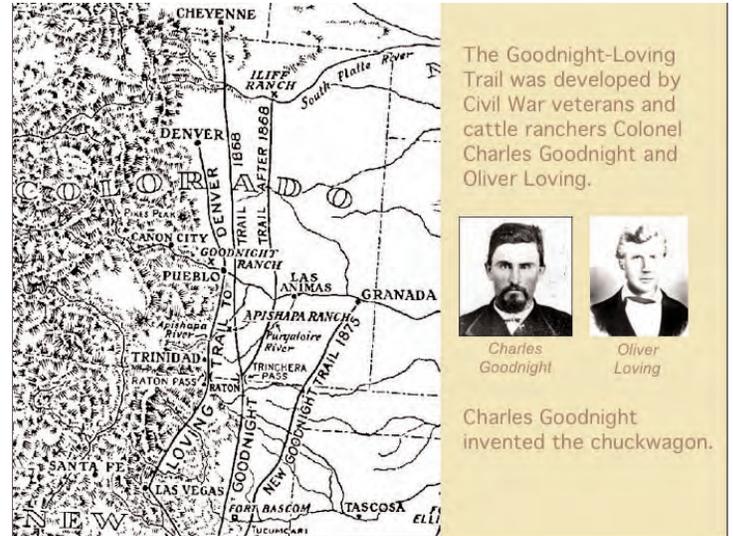
The Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC) is leading a citizen effort to determine the need and support for a regional solution to address parks and recreation funding and service level issues. Several options are being studied. TOSC has developed a short survey to gauge community awareness and opinions about this issue. It's totally confidential and your opinion would be greatly appreciated. To take the survey go to:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/BYGRSVB>

POWER POINT PRESENTATION AVAILABLE

CoBA has developed a PowerPoint presentation full of beautiful photographs and interesting facts about Corral Bluffs' history, geology, archaeology, paleontology, wildlife and plants, as well as the vision for preserving more of the Bluffs. If you know of a group who'd enjoy this presentation, please contact Jackie Hilaire, CoBA President, at 683-8086 to schedule a time.

A presentation was made at Rockrimmon Elementary School in February. The next presentation is slated for the Eastern Plains Chamber's April meeting.



One slide from our PowerPoint presentation

I'D LIKE TO JOIN CORRAL BLUFFS ALLIANCE.

(Please check one level.)

- Supporter - \$25.** You'll receive email updates on how you can help.
- Contributor - \$100.** Same as above, plus you'll receive a free bumper/window sticker
- Conservationist - \$500.** Same as above, plus the knowledge that you're contributing toward land acquisition, expert research, required technical studies, educational materials, postage, printing and advertising.

Make your check out to: Trails and Open Space Coalition (TOSC) and write CoBA on the memo line. TOSC has graciously allowed us to use their tax exempt status until we attain our own so your donation is tax-deductible.

Please print clearly

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone (_____) _____

Cell phone (_____) _____

Email _____

I'm willing to volunteer time to help.

Mail to: Corral Bluffs Alliance, P.O. Box 81,
Peyton, CO 80831