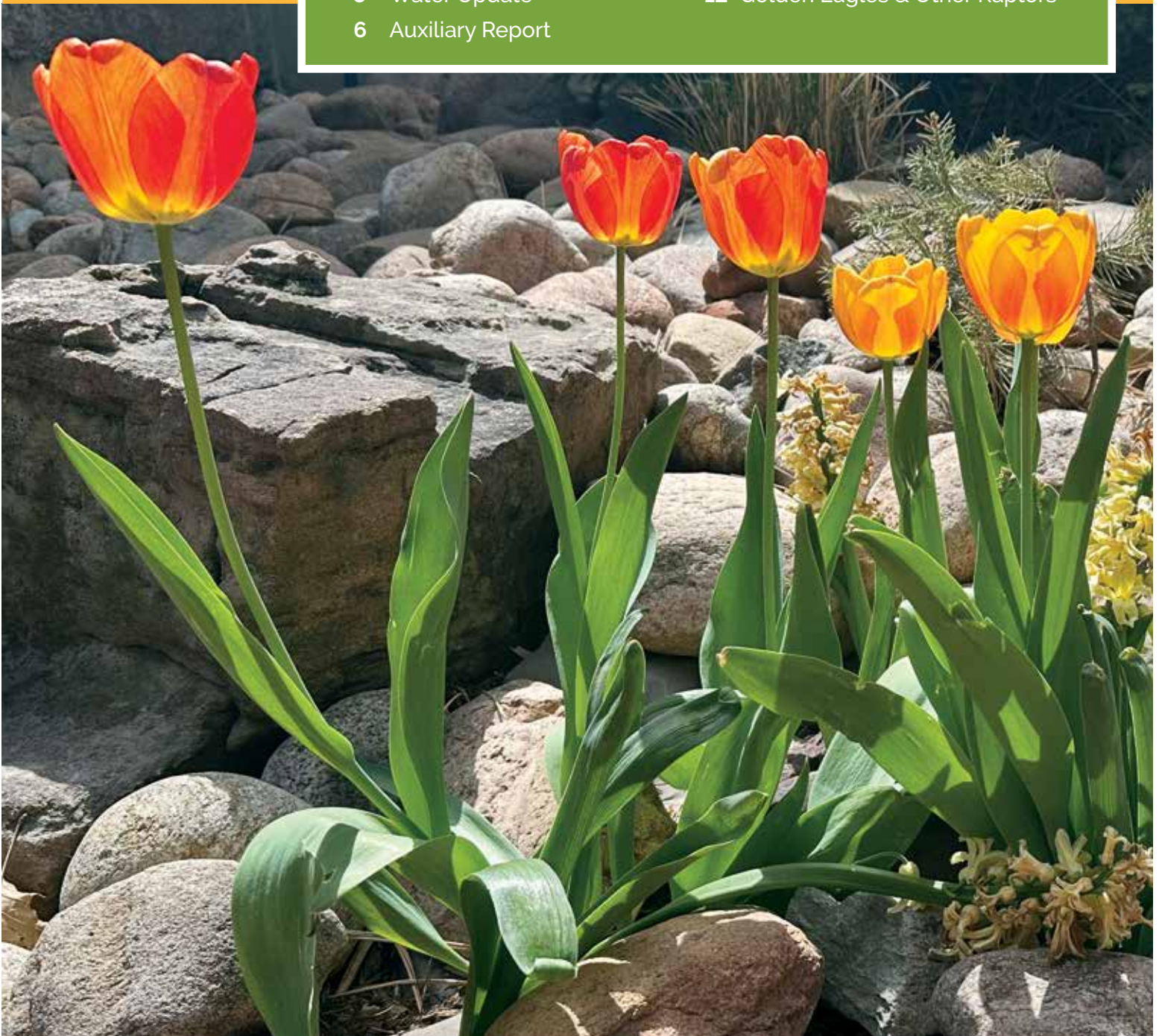


# Pine Brook Press

A quarterly journal for, about, and by Pine Brook Hills residents | Spring 2026

## IN THIS ISSUE

- |   |                           |    |                                |
|---|---------------------------|----|--------------------------------|
| 3 | A Word from the President | 8  | Architectural Review Committee |
| 4 | Fireside Chat             | 10 | PBH Neighbor: Kenny Goldman    |
| 5 | Water Update              | 12 | Golden Eagles & Other Raptors  |
| 6 | Auxiliary Report          |    |                                |



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# Community Calendar

## HOA MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Meetings are held quarterly at the Community Center/Fire Station (1905 Linden Drive) unless otherwise noted. All residents are welcome to attend.

See website: [www.pinebrookhills.org](http://www.pinebrookhills.org)

## BOULDER MOUNTAIN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meets the second Monday of every month at 4:00 PM. Call 303-440-0235 for specifics.

## BOULDER MOUNTAIN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT AUXILIARY

Meets quarterly on Sundays. Please check

<https://www.bmfpd.org/auxiliary>

for the next meeting or contact aharsh@comcast.net.

## PINE BROOK HILLS WATER BOARD

Meets the third Thursday of every month at 12:00 PM.

Call the Water Office at 303-443-5394 for more information.

## ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Meets the second Tuesday of every month at 7:00 PM by Zoom.

Contact arc@pinebrookhills.org for the link.

## SHARE YOUR PHOTOS!

Email your high resolution PBH images to [press@pinebrookhills.org](mailto:press@pinebrookhills.org)



*Bobcats by Caren Paul*

**ON THE COVER:** *Tulips by Lynnette Foster-Horwith*

# A Word From the President: No House is an Island

By David Downing



The English poet John Donne famously wrote that “No man is an island, entire of itself.” If he were writing today, he might say, “No one is an island,” or “No house is an island.”

In Pine Brook Hills, we share our love of the natural beauty around us, the abundant wildlife, and the soul-stirring vistas. But we also share concerns such as wildfires, noxious weeds, and boorish beetles. The HOA achieves collective solutions to these communal concerns.

## WARDING OFF WILDFIRES

This year the Pine Brook Hills HOA is setting aside \$18,500 for fire mitigation, mainly for creating fuel breaks and cutting down tall grass.

### You can also be “Firewise” by

- Creating an 8-foot border of non-flammable materials around the outer walls of your house
- Trimming tall grass for thirty feet around your house
- Cutting branches off trees up to 10 feet off the ground
- Keeping wood piles well away from your house
- Removing dead branches, slash piles, and pine needles from your property

## LOSING THE LOGS AND TRASHING THE SLASH

The HOA is contracting with local tree services to chip the piles of logs left behind by the power company in their efforts to keep tree branches from growing close to power lines. The HOA will underwrite this project, but individual homeowners will be expected to pay a small fee for log-chipping services.

Also, Wildfire Partners is encouraging homeowners in Boulder County to host community chipping events, in which five or more neighbors apply together to have slash (small trees, branches, twigs, and brush) chipped and removed from their properties. Neighbors pile the slash from their property near the road, no more than 40 feet long, 5 feet high, and 5 feet wide. See [wildfirepartners.org](http://wildfirepartners.org) for details.

## BATTLING BEETLES

Arborists predict a sharp rise in mountain pine beetle infestations this year, due to the ongoing drought and several mild winters in recent years. Pine Beetles are insects about the size of a grain of rice. They bore into pine trees, inject a toxic fungus that can kill the whole tree, and lay eggs. The larvae emerge in June or July, flying to other nearby pine trees. Beetles are a community threat that calls for coordinated action. If you see a dead tree near your property, you may well find dead trees on your property next year!

### Some signs of beetle infestation are

- Bore holes in the bark that look like nail holes,
- Puffs of white or pink resin coming out of the bark that look like wads of chewing gum,
- Sawdust-like boring dust at the base of the tree or caught in pieces of bark.

If you see a tree in this condition, you need to cut it down and remove the cuttings, lest the beetle infestation spread to nearby trees.

Sometimes the best occasions for neighborliness occur when residents work together to face shared challenges. Feel free to write to me at [president@pinebrookhills.org](mailto:president@pinebrookhills.org) if you would like to have the pine trees on your property inspected, to sign up for chipping, to be trained as a “beetle buster,” or you and your neighbors would like to host a “chipping chamboree.”

# Fireside Chat

By Mike Palamara, Fire Chief–Boulder Mountain Fire



Dear District Residents:

As winter draws to a close and springtime begins, I want to share some thoughts on wildfire danger in our area. Winter is when we typically receive precipitation and snow. But this past winter has been extremely dry. Measurable snow events have been few and far between, and many days have had unseasonably

high temperatures. This period also produced numerous wind events which can increase the wildfire danger.

Boulder Mountain Fire (BMF) responded to several wildfire incidents this past winter, including the Goat Trail Fire which occurred near Pine Brook Hills. During the early morning hours of April 8th, emergency response agencies were notified of a wildfire near the Goat Trail, which is part of the Mt. Sanitas Open Space area. In total, 8 different agencies were called upon to respond, including BMF.

While firefighting personnel gained access to the fire, emergency alerts went out to community residents notifying them of the potential need to evacuate if fire progression continued. Firefighters were able to quickly hike to the fire location and use hoses to apply water to stop further spread. The wildfire was contained at just under 2 acres and was successfully stopped before it could damage any structures or infrastructure. Personnel remained at the fire site for many days afterwards to ensure that all “hot spots” were fully extinguished before the fire was declared fully out. At the time of the writing of this article, the cause of the fire remains under investigation.

The Goat Trail Fire is the most recent reminder that wildfire events continue to be a challenge and threat to our communities. Lack of winter precipitation has created dry vegetation conditions where rapid wildfire spread is possible.

Being prepared to evacuate at a moment's notice is vitally important to ensure that you can leave an area quickly when a wildfire occurs. Signing up for emergency alerts can ensure that you get timely information about when an evacuation alert or order has been issued for your area. You can increase a structure or property's chances of survivability during an event

by undertaking wildfire mitigation efforts prior to a wildfire. Please take some time to consider what actions you can take to better prepare for the next wildfire incident.

As we get into summer, when days become longer and temperatures begin to rise, BMF will remain ready to respond to wildfire incidents. While there is hope for spring-time precipitation, it is far from assured. Together with our district residents, we will continue to prepare for and rise to the challenges of wildfire events. The more preparation we can do prior to the next event, the better our chances of success during an incident.

Thank you and be safe.



Goat Trail Fire. Photo by Donna Waters.

# Water Update

By Andrew Churnside



With this unusually dry winter and the fact that several local water providers are considering or imposing watering restrictions, Pine Brook Water wants to provide you with an update on our water situation as of the writing of this article (mid-April).

Using our winter water rights we were able to fill the reservoir to 60 feet, which is 5 feet below full capacity. We have about 80 acre feet of water out of our total storage capacity of 100 acre feet. Usage has dropped us back to 58.5 feet or about 76 acre feet of stored water. An acre foot is a unit of measure commonly used in the water world. It represents the amount of water it would take to cover an acre of land one foot deep and equals 325,851 gallons.

We anticipate filling the reservoir over the next few weeks. Fourmile Creek, from which we pull most of our water, is currently flowing strongly, and our water rights came back into priority (meaning we could pump water) on April 15th.

We will pump water to the reservoir as long as our water rights are in priority, until the creek flow doesn't allow it or the reservoir is filled.

As of now, we do not foresee the need to implement water restrictions for this year, but the board will make an evaluation on June 30th based on the available water supply.

Please be conscientious about your water use. Take proactive steps to ensure that irrigation and household systems are not leaking, and conserve water when and where you are able.

Our drought plan is available for review at <https://www.pinebrookwater.com/drought-info>

Thank you and as always, please reach out with any questions!



## ORPHANED WILDLIFE NEED YOU

Greenwood Wildlife Rehabilitation Center helps thousands of orphaned wildlife grow up and return to their natural habitat each year.

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[greenwoodbabyshower.com](http://greenwoodbabyshower.com)



[greenwoodwildlife.org](http://greenwoodwildlife.org)

Contribute to our baby shower to help orphans!

# Auxiliary Report

By Ann Harsh & Alicia Villareal



Auxiliary Membership Meeting – April 19th

The Auxiliary's mission is to promote the safety and effectiveness of BMFPD's emergency responders. We organize activities throughout the year geared toward:

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION –**

to increase fire safety throughout the district;

**RECOGNITION –**

to build morale in the district through social events and awards for volunteer service;

**PROVISIONING –**

to supply food and drinks for emergency responders during training events and emergencies; and

**FUNDRAISING –**

to support the work of the Auxiliary and provide financial support to our Fire District for expenses outside its budget.

We carry out this mission in creative ways. For **Valentine's Week Recognition**, we celebrated our heroes with the theme "We Are Bananas Over You!" Auxiliary members wrote personalized thank you notes and baked banana bread muffins for BMF and the water district teams. Throughout the year, in big ways and small, we thank and recognize our heroes.

The Auxiliary's **Provisioning Team** jumped into action during the Goat Trail wildfire that broke out before dawn on April 8, 2026. A huge thank you to our firefighters for keeping PBH safe from this close call! And thank you Provisioners Karen Howl and Karen Branyan, who delivered lunch for 20 firefighters during the incident.

Our largest **Outreach and Education** event, the **Community Safety Fair**, will take place on Saturday, May 30, from 10 am to 2 pm at BMFPD Station 2 – 50 Overlook Lane. All fire district residents – owners and renters alike – are invited to learn important fire safety and general safety tips. With about 40 fire district and Auxiliary volunteers on hand, the Fair is a major district-wide community education effort where residents can:

- Practice using a chemical fire extinguisher under BMF supervision. Bring fire extinguishers from home to have them tested and, if needed, buy new ones;
- Learn how to protect their trees from bark beetle infestation from the Colorado State Forest Service from 11 am to Noon;
- Attend the Safe Mountain Living Presentation and meet Chief Palamara. Designed for those who have moved into the District in the last couple of years and any residents interested in a refresher on best practices - 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm;
- Learn about first aid, pet evacuation, mitigation, the Wildfire Partners program and more;
- Buy Home Safety Gear – through the **Auxiliary's Community Safety Store** (which operates year-round) – including reflective address kits, fire extinguishers, smoke/CO alarms, fire blankets and bleed control kits;
- Kids will enjoy fun activities and tour a fire engine with a firefighter.

**Boulder Mountain Handmade** (BMH) is the Auxiliary's premier annual fundraising event, a not-to-be-missed festive market that brings together hundreds of artists, artisans, crafters and bakers. Shoppers return year after year to find unique gifts for family and friends and enjoy the amazing array of baked goods. BMH is key to the Auxiliary's ability to deliver critical financial support to BMFPD. It takes dozens of volunteers to make it a success. Preparations start each summer. Not an artist, crafter or baker? Not to worry! No special skill or talent is needed to volunteer. Contact Nancy Mohr at [nancymohr201@gmail.com](mailto:nancymohr201@gmail.com) to help.

Whether you're new to PBH or a long-time resident, Boulder Mountain Fire Auxiliary invites you to join us in supporting our emergency responders. Did you know that the vast majority of our district's firefighters are volunteers? If volunteering as a firefighter isn't an option for you, but you'd like to serve our emergency responders in a meaningful way, join the Auxiliary. We support our heroes who keep the rest of us safe!

**REACH OUT** at [www.bmfpd.org/auxiliary](http://www.bmfpd.org/auxiliary) to introduce yourself or come to the next quarterly meeting on July 19th, 2026 at Station 2. **ALL ARE WELCOME!**



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# Architectural Review Committee

By Natasha Bodorff and Rob Mohr

Summer is here and many of us are thinking about improvements to make to the exterior of our homes. Don't forget that your Architectural Review Committee is here to review and approve home improvement projects to ensure that all of our homes are in harmony with the natural surroundings and the neighborhood at large.

This includes such projects as repainting, reroofing, a fence, a deck replacement, or new windows. Most of these can be approved on a fast track basis in a day or so. More extensive projects such as a house addition or detached garage will require a full review and discussion at the monthly ARC meeting. Usually the architect or general contractor of such projects will present the details to the committee.

**We have made the application process as streamlined and painless as possible.** Your first step is to go to the application web page: [pinebrookhills.org/arc-online-application/](http://pinebrookhills.org/arc-online-application/) Or you can point your phone's camera to the QR code on the ad on this page.

You simply fill in the blanks with some basic facts about your project and click "Submit". We will confirm by email that we

have received your application and how long we expect the review to take. We will most likely ask for pictures or links to websites showing the colors and materials you plan to use. If your project involves a color such as painting or siding, we will ask you for the manufacturer's name and specific color name. Any additional information we need can be sent by email. On the above web page, you will see more complete instructions about the ARC application process and examples of how to describe your project.

We are sure that you will find the application and approval process very easy to navigate. If you have any questions about the Architectural Review Committee, please write us at [ARC@pinebrookhills.org](mailto:ARC@pinebrookhills.org). We sincerely appreciate the support and cooperation that we receive from our Pine Brook Hills community in keeping our neighborhood as beautiful and harmonious as it is.

## ARE YOU PLANNING ONE OF THESE PROJECTS?

- New siding
- Exterior painting
- New roof
- Deck replacement
- Solar panels
- Fence
- House addition or new structure
- Anything on the house exterior

Don't forget to apply to the **Architectural Review Committee (ARC)** for approval

### Ways to apply:

- Go to [pinebrookhills.org/hoa/architectural](http://pinebrookhills.org/hoa/architectural)
- Email [ARC@pinebrookhills.org](mailto:ARC@pinebrookhills.org)
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## PBH Neighbor: Kenny Goldman

I moved my family of four to PBH from CT 35 years ago so that my children could attend Shining Mtn Waldorf School and I could roam the mountains for skiing, hiking, biking etc.; I was just made aware that in two more years, I will have spent half my life here in this amazing place and community!

Our third child was born at home one year later at 262 Bristlecone Way where we lived while building our dream home a short walk away on 260 Bristlecone Way. I raised the three of them on this hill! Of note is that we fell in love with the amazing Star House and used the same architect to employ the principles of sacred architecture & geometry in designing a home that would evoke similar feelings of warmth and human scale for our family. After my divorce in 2005, I continued to live here (with my children on a half time basis) and in 2011 Damaris Andrews also moved from CT to join me. We have loved our time here in these amazing natural surroundings.

Damaris is an avid gardener (I help!) and some of you have gotten to know her as she frantically tried to save as many plants as possible in the aftermath of the fire that destroyed our home in December 2022. We recently completed our rebuild and returned home a few months ago. We are now busy re-beautifying our property! So challenging and so much fun!! Damaris is also a professional violinist who continues to perform with the Ridgefield (CT) Symphony and has also performed with the Greeley Symphony for the seasonal Nutcracker Ballet performances.

I have had many wonderful opportunities to engage in the community since beginning to scale back my career in commodities trading. I have spent time as a middle school math teacher, a restaurant and bar owner (Lazy Dog on Pearl & ReelFish in Lafayette), & as an EMT/firefighter here in PBH. I have learned so much about living in these hills from those who preceded me.



They were so instrumental in my learning curve of trying to become a good steward. This PBH community is full of amazing and accomplished folks that are so generous with their time and knowledge! An interesting story was how I found out that my next-door neighbor was secretly hosting Salman Rushdie in 1992 while he visited and spoke at CU!

My parents were Jewish refugees who fled Germany in 1939 with their families and were unable to find a “welcoming” safe harbor other than Shanghai, China which was under Japanese occupation at the time. They lived in the settlement / ghetto there till the end of the war before being able to immigrate to the US in 1948. My father was interviewed by

Steven Spielberg's Shoah project to record stories from the Holocaust, and as you might imagine had many stories to share! I recently went through the process to reclaim my rights to German citizenship for myself, children, & grandchildren, and it seems very apropos to share this given what is going on in our country during these crazy times!

My volunteer efforts have most recently been focused on the unhoused segment of our community, and I have served on the board of the All Roads Shelter for the past 7 years. Please feel free to ask me how you can help our community's most vulnerable and needy members!!!!



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# Golden Eagles and Other Raptors in Pine Brook Hills

By Carron Meaney, with photos by Kevin Smith and Jim Adams

A 1943 PhD thesis, emails from nearby residents, and Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks (OSMP) staff have provided much information.

The Golden Eagle is the most magnificent raptor that nests in Pine Brook Hills. Various pairs of Golden Eagles have been documented nesting in the Boulder mountains and in Pine Brook Hills since 1943, and probably for millennia before that! A pair nested and produced young off South Cedar Brook in 2023, 2024, and 2025, with the nest visible with a spotting scope from Linden.



One of the Golden Eagles with a chick. The camera was 1,350 feet away from the nest. (Photo by Jim Adams)

This pair spent some time at the South Cedar Brook nest earlier this winter but ultimately built a new nest on Flagstaff Mountain where they are currently incubating eggs. Eagles will reuse historic sites with decades between nestings, as they live 20 to 30 years. This pair has at least 5 nest structures that OSMP knows about. We can hope they come back soon!

What is particularly exciting about this nesting in our neighborhood is that **GOLDEN EAGLES** face many threats. This is due to electrocutions at power lines, lead poisoning from carcasses left by hunters, collisions with wind turbines and vehicles, and habitat loss. Our national bird, the Bald Eagle, has recently come off the Endangered Species list, and is doing relatively well.



One of the adult Golden Eagles at the Pine Brook Hills nest site. (Photo by Kevin Smith)

Raptors include eagles, hawks, falcons, and owls. Here are some of the other raptors that live in our neighborhood.

The **RED-TAILED HAWK** is a large and very successful raptor. I'm involved in a raptor monitoring study in Boulder County that has been conducted for 43 years. Such long-term studies are immensely important to show population trends. These data reveal that Red-tailed Hawks have increased during that time while other raptor species have declined, sometimes drastically. Red-tailed hawks are generalists and have done well even as human populations have increased. They prey on prairie dogs, voles, rats, rabbits, and others.



Red-tailed Hawk (Photo by Kevin Smith)



Cooper's Hawk (Photo by Kevin Smith)

The elegant **COOPER'S HAWK** preys on birds and small mammals. They are often spotted near bird feeders where they will ambush prey. Cooper's hawks experienced a decline in the last century, likely due to the use of DDT. In good habitat with prey, populations are stable.

*...continued on page 14*

# Golden Eagles and Other Raptors in Pine Brook Hills

...continued from page 13



American Kestrel (Photo by Kevin Smith)

The **AMERICAN KESTREL** is a falcon, our smallest one. It preys on grasshoppers, other insects, and small mammals. Unfortunately, their populations have declined by over 50% since 1966 in North America, with steeper drops exceeding 90% in some areas. They are a species of conservation concern due to habitat loss, pesticide use, and reduced nesting cavities; when insects and small mammals are part of an animal's diet, rodenticides and insecticides are exceedingly harmful. They will use nest boxes built for them.

The **GREAT-HORNED OWL** is common and you may know it more by its hooting than by seeing it. They nest very early, starting in January, prey on a variety of mammals and are one of the few predators of skunks as the owls do not detect the odor. They typically spend the day on a large branch close to the tree's trunk and are surprisingly difficult to spot.



Great Horned Owl (Photo by Kevin Smith)



Northern Pygmy Owl (Photo by Kevin Smith)

The **NORTHERN PYGMY OWL**, perhaps our most charming owl, nests in cavities created by woodpeckers, and in nest boxes. They weigh 2 to 2.5 ounces! Their hoot is distinctive comprised of hoots repeated at a constant pitch. They prey on small rodents, birds, lizards, and insects, and may be active in the daytime.

OWL SOUND:



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*Lilacs. Photo by Sara (Zervos) Knutson*