William Sclater: Colorado’s Ornithologist

Ornithology, the study of birds, is a wonderful way to combine biology and the great outdoors. Colorado has a number of resources that encourage amateur ornithologists to explore the study of unique birds (see the “Little Known Secrets” section inside for more information).

Ornithologists have long felt at home in Colorado. With excellent scenery and a variety of habitats, Colorado has had nearly 500 different total species recorded within its boundaries. Colorado Springs in particular has an avid birding community.

Colorado Springs has been home to ornithologists since General William Palmer founded the town in the 1870s. Charles E. Aiken spent over 30 years collecting information and specimens of birds in El Paso County and the greater Colorado area before donating his work to Colorado College in 1907. To help curate this collection, General Palmer asked his brother-in-law, William Sclater, to move to Colorado Springs. A well-known ornithologist, Mr. Sclater’s duties at the college included teaching and serving as director of the natural history museum General Palmer had started at the college.

During his time in Colorado, Sclater worked on a book cataloging the birds of Colorado. Sclater continued his work after he and his wife moved back to England in 1909, following General Palmer’s death. Published in 1912, the book was titled A History of the Birds of Colorado. Mr. Sclater based the book off of the collection donated to the museum by Mr. Charles E. Aiken, who served as an advisor to Mr. Sclater while he worked on his book. The book includes descriptions and information on where to find 392 different species of birds as well as a few black and white photographs of several species and habitats. Pikes Peak Library District has a copy of Mr. Sclater’s book in Special Collections at the Penrose Library under call number 598.2 S419H.

If you and your family want to learn more about William Sclater and his time in Colorado Springs, head to Rock Ledge Ranch where Mr. Sclater lived during his time in the city. General Palmer built Mr. Sclater and his wife, Charlotte, a home on the Ranch. It was named the Orchard House. The Ranch is located at 3105 Gateway Road, off of the main entrance to Garden of the Gods. For information on hours, pricing, and special programs, visit their website, rockledgeranch.com, or call (719) 578-6777.

For additional resources on birding, be sure to check out PPLD’s databases like Science in Context and World Book Online. Another fantastic birding website, Cornell Science Lab of Ornithology, has lots of information on how to get started birding. As always, our shelves also hold a wealth of information. Make sure to stop in the 598s in nonfiction to take a peek at all of our print resources. Enjoy discovering birds this fall!
Visual acuity, ages 2 - 4+

The Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory (RMBO), located in Brighton, has, as its mission, the conservation of Rocky Mountain and Great Plains birds and their habitats throughout research, conservation, monitoring, education, and outreach. RMBO offers monthly educational programs for homeschool families. These programs are designed for multiple ages and ability levels. Naturalists and naturalists encourage the older participants to be positive role models and mentors for younger homeschool students throughout all of the activities. Parents are welcome to stay throughout the program. Be sure to check out their website: rmbo.org.

For 33 years, Rocky Mountain Bird Program (RMBP) has served the northern Colorado community through bird identification skills. Find out more information at rmbo.org.

Visual acuity, ages 2 - 4+

In the style of Margaret and H. A. Rey’s Curious George books, this is a great beginner book for working on visual acuity. Following text sets the stage for each “around the town” scene, and page items are both illustrated, and included in the text as to what the child should be looking for on the two-page spread.

Visual acuity, ages 4 - 8

The answers are given in the back.

3) Learn about where food comes from

Now, here is a visual workout for older students throughout all of the activities. Parents are welcome to stay throughout the program. Be sure to check out their website: rmbo.org.

Science Lab Orientation Meeting

Come meet your orientation meeting about East Library’s Homeschool Science Lab and then check out the lab itself. You’ll find out about the equipment we have available and how to do it in the lab with your children.

Fri., Sept. 11 • 11 a.m. • East Library

Homeschool Science Lab

Use PPLD’s science equipment for parent-assigned experiments. We provide some free science programs planned during lab time. Contact Gary at gosnold@ppld.org for more information and to sign up for classes.

3rd Friday of each month • East Library

Homeschool Science Lab equipment will be available every day once the ERC is open.

Homeschool Primary Source Workshop

This workshop is designed to teach students the basics of “reading” a variety of primary sources (photographs, letters, and video). Students will learn about where to find primary sources with PPLD Special Collections.

For grades 7 - 10. Space is limited to 16 students and registration is required. Contact Corrie at cbaker@ppld.org for more information.

Thu., Dec. 9 • 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. • Penrose Library

Homeschool Tools

Come and learn about the many library resources available to homeschool families. During this drop-in program, you choose what you want to learn! We can show you some of our best online resources, answer your questions about our catalog and library services in general, introduce you to the Homeschool Science Lab, and other programs. We’ll even have some activities for kids and teens!

Thu., Nov. 5 • 2 - 3:30 p.m. • East Library

Homeschool Programs at Library 21c

Homeschool Families will enjoy and learn together in these interactive programs. Parents attend the special programming for homeschool families at Rockrimmon Library.

We build this into our homeschool time as a listening center. (The Geisler family also attends the special programming for homeschool families at Rockrimmon Library).

Q1: How does your family use Pikes Peak Library District’s programs and materials?

A1: We love the library. Each week we come to the library and each of my boys picks 20 books, I have found several really great iPad apps for my children. I would recommend Cookie Factory (exploring place value), Llama Drama (beginner multiplication, and Mystery Number 100’s chart), Greater Gator (greater than, less than, and Montessori Patterns (more 100 charts and number pattern). I would much rather have my children use these apps than use a drill or a worksheet, especially since the educational apps will give immediate feedback. We love Teach Time and Counting Money too.

Q2: What is your family’s favorite thing to do at the library?

A2: We love the library. Each week we come to the library and each of my boys picks 20 books, I have found several really great iPad apps for my children. I would recommend Cookie Factory (exploring place value), Llama Drama (beginner multiplication, and Mystery Number 100’s chart), Greater Gator (greater than, less than, and Montessori Patterns (more 100 charts and number pattern). I would much rather have my children use these apps than use a drill or a worksheet, especially since the educational apps will give immediate feedback. We love Teach Time and Counting Money too.

Q3: How does your family use technology to enrich your homeschool experience?

A3: We have found several really great iPad apps for my children. I would recommend Cookie Factory (exploring place value), Llama Drama (beginner multiplication, and Mystery Number 100’s chart), Greater Gator (greater than, less than, and Montessori Patterns (more 100 charts and number pattern). I would much rather have my children use these apps than use a drill or a worksheet, especially since the educational apps will give immediate feedback. We love Teach Time and Counting Money too.

Q4: How does your family’s favorite thing to do at the library?

A4: We love the library. Each week we come to the library and each of my boys picks 20 books, I have found several really great iPad apps for my children. I would recommend Cookie Factory (exploring place value), Llama Drama (beginner multiplication, and Mystery Number 100’s chart), Greater Gator (greater than, less than, and Montessori Patterns (more 100 charts and number pattern). I would much rather have my children use these apps than use a drill or a worksheet, especially since the educational apps will give immediate feedback. We love Teach Time and Counting Money too.

Q5: What is your family’s favorite thing to do at the library?

A5: We love the library. Each week we come to the library and each of my boys picks 20 books, I have found several really great iPad apps for my children. I would recommend Cookie Factory (exploring place value), Llama Drama (beginner multiplication, and Mystery Number 100’s chart), Greater Gator (greater than, less than, and Montessori Patterns (more 100 charts and number pattern). I would much rather have my children use these apps than use a drill or a worksheet, especially since the educational apps will give immediate feedback. We love Teach Time and Counting Money too.

Q6: What is your family’s favorite thing to do at the library?

A6: We love the library. Each week we come to the library and each of my boys picks 20 books, I have found several really great iPad apps for my children. I would recommend Cookie Factory (exploring place value), Llama Drama (beginner multiplication, and Mystery Number 100’s chart), Greater Gator (greater than, less than, and Montessori Patterns (more 100 charts and number pattern). I would much rather have my children use these apps than use a drill or a worksheet, especially since the educational apps will give immediate feedback. We love Teach Time and Counting Money too.

Q7: What is your family’s favorite thing to do at the library?

A7: We love the library. Each week we come to the library and each of my boys picks 20 books, I have found several really great iPad apps for my children. I would recommend Cookie Factory (exploring place value), Llama Drama (beginner multiplication, and Mystery Number 100’s chart), Greater Gator (greater than, less than, and Montessori Patterns (more 100 charts and number pattern). I would much rather have my children use these apps than use a drill or a worksheet, especially since the educational apps will give immediate feedback. We love Teach Time and Counting Money too.

Q8: What is your family’s favorite thing to do at the library?

A8: We love the library. Each week we come to the library and each of my boys picks 20 books, I have found several really great iPad apps for my children. I would recommend Cookie Factory (exploring place value), Llama Drama (beginner multiplication, and Mystery Number 100’s chart), Greater Gator (greater than, less than, and Montessori Patterns (more 100 charts and number pattern). I would much rather have my children use these apps than use a drill or a worksheet, especially since the educational apps will give immediate feedback. We love Teach Time and Counting Money too.