

Mountain Chickadees, Black-capped Chickadees, and You!

Ed Furlong, June 1, 2021 :

At the May 6 chapter meeting, we thoroughly enjoyed Scott Taylor's lively and enthusiastic presentation about the Boulder Chickadee Study, his team's research on hybridization between Black-capped and Mountain Chickadees. For those of you who were unable to attend, Scott's overview puts it nicely:



Mountain Chickadee (c) Bill Schmoker

“The Boulder Chickadee Study seeks to understand what causes Black-capped and Mountain Chickadees to hybridize, and to generally better understand how the two species interact along the Front Range. We combine field collected data on nesting, diet, and blood parasites with whole genomes sequenced from blood samples using a transect of 400 nest boxes that span a 6000-foot elevation gradient, from the city of Boulder to the CU Boulder Mountain Research Station.”

I was struck by the how similar the Boulder Chickadee Study area is to our own Bear Creek Watershed. This similarity was also apparent to many of our members and to Scott, who expressed an interest in surveying active chickadee nesting boxes in our watershed and comparing the results with those from along Boulder Creek.

Do you have an active and accessible chickadee nesting box on your property? Would you be willing to provide access to it? Would you like to learn more? If so, please send me an e-mail at Education@EvergreenAudubon.org and let me know. Please include your address and the number of chickadee nest boxes you have on your property. If you know the height of your boxes and which direction they face, that's helpful information, too. Once we have an idea of whether it would be feasible and practical for us to collaborate with Scott, we will have further discussions with Scott and his team and get back to you.



If you would like to participate but you don't have chickadee boxes on your property, now would be a great time to buy an Evergreen Audubon Chickadee Nesting box! We currently have about a dozen available for immediate occupancy and we will be building more in August which will be ready for fall installation and early spring habitation. [Buy a Chickadee Nest Box!](#)