



**Wilderness
Stewardship
Since 1985**



December 2025 Newsletter

IPWA News

Monthly Naturalist Series: Meet the White-tailed Ptarmigan & Crowned Kinglet

High-Country Flora, Fauna and Geography

By Rob Pudim

How do they do it?

Two other popular year round residents in the Indian Peaks include the **White-tailed Ptarmigan** (*Lagopus leucurus*) and the **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** (*Regulus calendula*). Take a closer look at these high country locals so you can spot them on your next outing.. maybe even this winter.



[Read The Article](#)

& In Case You Missed Last Month's Newsletter... About Rob Pudim:

A long time Boulder resident, Rob describes himself as “a coal-miner's son from Pennsylvania, a scientist (Chemistry, Rutgers University and Microbiology, Tulane University) an editorial cartoonist, an amateur lepidopterist, a Native Plant Master, and a long-time birder”. His affiliation with IPWA goes back to its founding in the 1980s.



Moose Management and Ancient Ecology in the Southern Rockies: Recap



Moose at Sunrise by Kallie Bjerke (2019 IPWA Photo Contest Winner)

Are moose native to the Colorado Rockies? Are they invasive? How should the answers to these questions shape management where moose have degraded wetlands and where moose–human conflict is growing?

These questions were at the heart of last month's panel discussion: **Moose Management and Ancient Ecology in the Southern Rockies**, hosted in Estes Park by the Center for the American West and the CU Museum of Natural History.

Archaeologists, Indigenous community members, National Park Service staff, state wildlife managers, and local residents are working to develop management practices that balance ecological health, cultural values, and visitor safety.

While the public narrative often leans toward the idea that moose are non-native to Colorado, archaeological evidence suggests that moose have a historic presence here. It is important to ask: what makes a species native? Perceptions of nativeness shift with our perspectives and our moment in time, and “non-native” has often been shorthand for “harmful” or “threatening.” A species can also be considered native and still behave invasively under certain conditions.

Whatever answers emerge, species are moving through a rapidly changing world, and land and wildlife managers must allow space for these shifts while protecting fragile ecosystems. The legal categories of native, non-native, and invasive matter for policy and funding, but effective management also has to reckon with on-the-ground ecological realities.

In the southern Rockies—particularly Rocky Mountain National Park, just north of the Indian Peaks Wilderness—a team of researchers, land managers, and Indigenous partners is working toward a plan that will support a future for moose while reducing human–moose conflict and sustaining wetland vegetation.

[Watch Recording Here](#)

Program Updates

Open Invitation: Be a Host For an IPWA Winter Education and Social Evening!

This winter, we're organizing events to bring IPWA volunteers together for connection and learning, and we're seeking supporters interested in hosting gatherings of about 12 members in their homes. IPWA will provide a speaker/presentation, along with light snacks and beverages.

If you have a large-screen monitor, enough seating for 12, and would like to host, please let us know at hikers@indianpeakswilderness.org. We'll follow up to talk about dates, details, and answer any questions you may have.

Winter Patrol Updates!

- Congratulations, Winter Class of 2025-26! These new winter patrollers have successfully completed approximately 32 hours of additional training. We are stoked to have Amy F., Cindy M., Dan P., Donald S., Esa C., JB, Mark M., Mic C., & Todd D. on the Winter Team!
- Big thanks to everyone involved who helped with training content, participated in field day, and volunteered to be a winter mentor! We couldn't have done it without you!
- 8 Winter Patrols have taken place already this season (Conrad L. with 50% of those)!!
- The sawyer team has begun removing trees off trails for the winter season. As a result of the back-to-back severe wind events, there are many trees down and they will have their work cut out for them for this season (pun intended;)).





Book Store Gift Wrapping WRAP:

Thanks to **12 dedicated** volunteers, we connected with many community members, shared resources, and felt strong local support throughout the day. We're thankful for the donations received—and for Boulder Bookstore's ongoing \$1-per-book partnership

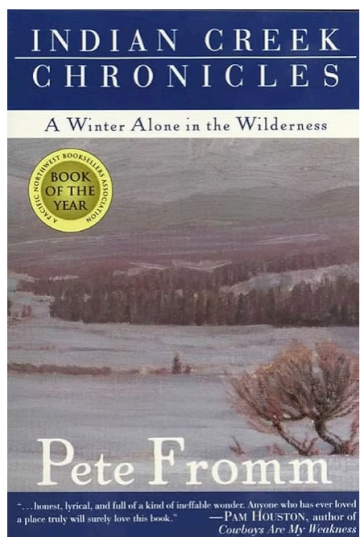


Reading Group

Please join us to discuss books about wilderness, nature, and conservation. All are welcome. Come and share your reflections and experiences.

We'll meet on Jan 22 at 3:30 pm at The Rayback Collective in Boulder. Food and beverages available.

[Indian Creek Chronicles: A Winter Alone in the Wilderness](#), Pete Fromm **RSVP**



Indian Creek Chronicles is an account of seven winter months spent alone in a tent in Idaho's Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, guarding salmon eggs and coming face to face with the blunt realities of life in the wilderness.

A gripping story of adventure and a modern-day Walden, this contemporary classic established Fromm as one of the West's premier voices.

Calling All Volunteers!

Ever wonder how IPWA is managed?
Have questions or comments for the IPWA Board?

We'd like to invite all current volunteers (as-of Summer 2024) to attend our monthly virtual IPWA Board of Directors meetings, typically held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from **6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.** Your presence and participation is encouraged to help increase volunteer engagement and understanding of our organization!

Head over to the IPWA Volunteer Portal for additional information on how to participate.

[Volunteer Portal](#)

Wondering How You Can Support the IPWA?

Click the links below to learn more!

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Indian Peaks Wilderness Alliance | PO Box 17382 | Boulder, CO 80308 US

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