

JACK WHITNEY: Profile in Nature

So much has been written about Jack Whitney, who has lived in Bigfork longer than anyone and whose life has been rich in nature lore and friendships. Many have benefited from his passion for nature, including professors, graduate students, hunters, writers and even a President of the United States. We all know him as one of the original members of the Bigfork Bird Club, predecessor to Flathead Audubon. Most applaud him as the president of Flathead Wildlife, working successfully for 10 years to establish Jewel Basin Hiking Area. What you may not know is the path Jack followed to get here.

In 1906, when Jack was born, his family lived in one of the few homes downtown, near the high banks above the Swan River. Jack began running down to the river's edge with his fishing pole when he was five years old. He recalled that although this worried his mother, she finally figured that he'd either catch fish or drown and there was nothing she could do about it. His Grandfather took him on forays into the woods, making Jack memorize the trees and landmarks, then having him find the way home. These early memorization skills helped in two ways; Jack never got lost in the forest and he is able to memorize lots of poetry and jokes. A few years later, young Jack would take off before anyone else was awake and never tell where he was going. He endlessly learned about plants and animals and collected arrowheads. "All I took were matches and a fishing line," Jack fondly remembered. He would eat berries and tie his line and Colorado spinner to a stick and catch brook trout for his supper. "I always felt comfortable in the woods."

Recalling the first birdhouse he built at 9 years old, Jack beamed, "The wrens loved it and nested in it every year." Soon followed houses for

chickadees, nuthatches, tree swallows and wood ducks. At age 10, Jack made his first bow and arrows, and began a lifelong pursuit of bow hunting. Jack had the same zealous concentration for school sports. Although the school was unable to offer any special coaching, he set state records in discus and high jump when he became the first student at the new Bigfork High School in 1933. Like many boys, Jack had to drop out for a few years to work in the family business. His father was a home builder and carpenter, who built many a log home for new residents of the valley, including the lodge and cabins at Six Mile Estates on Swan Lake for Carlos Ryan of Ryan Aircraft. (continued on Page 3)

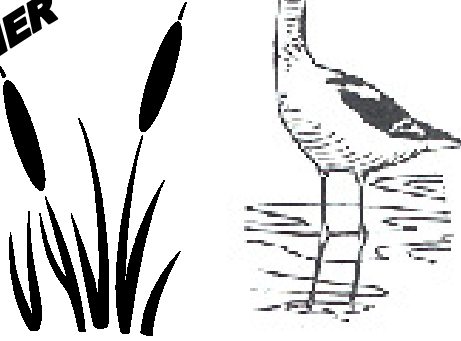
FAS CALENDAR FOR MAY/JUNE 2003

MONDAY, MAY 12, 2003 FAS General Meeting and Potluck will be held at **WEST VALLEY SCHOOL** cafeteria. Please bring a potluck dish and your own table service. Dinner starts about 6PM, followed by a little "stretching time" and then the meeting at 7PM. The board of directors will meet briefly during the 6-7PM time. We will elect new officers and board members and enjoy wildlife biologist Rob Domenech of Missoula as he presents "**Monitoring Golden Eagle Migration along the Continental Divide.**" See inside for program story and directions to West Valley School.

FRIDAY, JUNE 6 through SUNDAY, JUNE 8, 2003 BIGFORK BIRD FESTIVAL
Sponsored by Bigfork Chamber of Commerce, with field trips guided by Flathead Audubon. Fun for all bird lovers. See article on page 4.

FULL LIST OF SPRING AND SUMMER FIELD TRIPS ON PAGES 5 AND 6.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



EASTER OF AVOCETS

A flock of 20 American Avocets flew back and forth across our lake this morning – Easter Sunday. I watched as they flew only 2 feet above the water, then with quick wing flaps rose higher, and then floated back down again. Back and forth, never landing, swooping gracefully as they approached a shore or suddenly turning sharply in unison for no apparent reason. They flew in tight formation like this for hours. Don't they get tired? Are they looking for something special as they fly over the same stretches of water again and again? Or are they just having a good time? Perhaps they are just indecisive birds. Or perhaps they are a very democratic sort, having to look at all the options again and again, until they can reach consensus.

I noticed them about 10:30 in the morning. Several neighbors report having seen them as early as 8 o'clock. I checked on them frequently throughout the day in hopes of seeing them land. In the warm sunshine, watching the avocets, it seems a long time ago that the lake was still covered with ice. Between checks on the flying avocets, I looked back in my bird journal to see just when the ice had disappeared and the summer residents had started to arrive.

Only 3 weeks ago, Rogers Lake was still completely covered with ice. A few Canada Geese would land on the ice and walk around a bit – as if to test for melting. And new birds were showing up on or under the feeders – Pine Siskins, Cassin's Finches, Dark-eyed Juncos, and a pair of Red Crossbills.

It was March 31 when the ice around the edge of the lake began to melt, and a pair of Mallards arrived to patrol the 3-foot wide strip of open water along the shore. The next morning the strip of open water was almost 10 feet wide, and the Mallards were joined by a pair of Barrow's Goldeneyes. The Canada Geese still spent most of their time on the ice or in the grasses near the lake, but occasionally a pair would venture into the narrow bit of shallow water.

For almost a week after that, the strip of open water along shore widened and narrowed with the temperature – but the pair of Mallards and the goldeneye pair remained. By the evening of April 6 the ice had receded about 30 feet from shore, and more

ducks began to come in – Mallards, Common Goldeneyes as well as Barrow's, and several pairs of Wood Ducks. All these species will nest here and raise young – though probably some of these individual birds will move on as it gets more crowded. Winter was receding with the ice. On shore, a pair of Robins scouted the water's edge. And the Northern Flickers were busy posturing and flying short distances to show off their bright red underwings and tail feathers.

Finally, less than 2 weeks ago (April 8), a strong wind came up and blew the remaining bits of ice on shore. The very next morning, a pair of loons appeared – probably the pair that had raised 2 chicks here last summer, back for another season. And then for the next week, new species arrived almost daily. Some are just passing through, like the American Wigeons who were here for only a day, and the Horned Grebes who are still hanging around after a week, taking advantage of the easy fishing. Others are species that historically nest here, so will stay through the summer – Tree Swallow, Red-winged Blackbird, Lesser Scaup and Osprey. With this influx came Bald Eagles, of course, trying to pick up a duck dinner.

The excitement of new arrivals will probably continue for another few weeks as unusual species make their brief appearance and the rest of our traditional nesting species come back for the season. These include Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser, Red-necked Grebe, and Black Tern.

But the excitement on this day is the flock of avocets, still in the air at 4 in the afternoon. The phone rings as neighbors check to see whether we have seen them land yet. Other neighbors drop by to share their observations and wonder what keeps these birds going. Then, shortly after 4 p.m., we see them land in the middle of the lake. I hop into a friend's kayak and paddle slowly out to get a better look. They don't let me get too close, moving slowly away as I try to move nonchalantly toward them. After 20 minutes I retreat, and paddle back to watch them from shore.

Shortly before 8 p.m., the avocets take off and begin circling the lake again. This time they climb steadily higher until they can clear the rim of hills around the lake, and head northeast, in the direction of Smith Lake. Looking out on the lake now, I see goldeneyes pumping their heads in their frantic courtship ritual. A Mallard drake scoots by in pursuit of his mate, green head glistening in the sun. Four Horned Grebes jump-dive repeatedly for their evening meal. Swarms of insects fly up from the surface of the water, and the lake is covered with spreading circles made by rising grayling and cutthroat trout. The avocets are gone, but there is no doubt that spring is finally here.

I'm sure that in recent weeks each of you has had a similar bird-full day that marks for you the changing of the seasons. I hope you will come to the Flathead Audubon May potluck and share your spring bird stories with me.

Linda Winnie, Flathead Audubon President



GOLDEN EAGLES AND POTLUCK HIGHLIGHT THE MAY PROGRAM



The May meeting of the Flathead Audubon Society will be held in the cafeteria of **WEST VALLEY SCHOOL** on May 12. This will be our annual potluck dinner so please bring your favorite potluck dish and your own dinner service. Dinner will start around 6 p.m. and the program will begin about 7 p.m. A short board of directors meeting will be held before the program begins. We will hold elections for the officers and board of directors during the business meeting.

West Valley School is located at the intersection of Farm to Market Road and West Reserve, about 5 miles north of the Flathead County Fairgrounds.

The May program is entitled "Monitoring Golden Eagle Migration along the Continental Divide." Wildlife biologist Rob Domenech of Missoula has been studying raptor migration in western Montana for 10 years. His current Montana Golden Eagle Project is in its third year of trapping migrating Golden Eagles at a research station near Rogers Pass along the Continental Divide.

Domenech's eagle study is sponsored by the Wildlife Research Institute. Through wing-tagging and banding, Domenech hopes to determine where the eagles winter, as well as why Golden Eagle numbers are declining in the lower 48 states.

The Golden Eagle migration peaks in the first few weeks of October, with up to 180 Golden Eagles seen in a single day. Last year, during the second trapping season, Domenech and his team of researchers banded 27 Golden Eagles, which Domenech says is a world record. The team of researchers works at the remote station near Lincoln from early September to mid-November. The station is perched on the Continental Divide at 6,000 feet, where the winds often blow up to 40 mph.

Domenech and two paid biologists, as well as many volunteers, also monitor the migrations of 13 birds-of-prey species in addition to Golden Eagles. The team has also seen more than 50 non-raptor species of migrating birds from their research station. The station is one of the top three in the world for spotting high concentrations of Golden Eagles. The team uses traditional falconry techniques for trapping the eagles, including live pigeons and nets.

Domenech, the project coordinator and leader, will arrange a late-September field trip for Flathead Audubon to watch the trapping effort and assist with counting migrating birds. Domenech is committed to the "watchable wildlife" concept and often invites schoolchildren and other groups to his research station to learn about Golden Eagles and research techniques.

Karen Nichols

(JACK WHITNEY, continued from Page 1)

Jack did graduate at age 20 with a football scholarship to Stanford. A few years later, Jack joined the Navy during WWII, serving three years in the Aleutian Islands. He used his outdoor savvy to save the lives of many of his comrades when he convinced the boatswain mate to move them from barracks built too close to a snow covered slope. As he predicted, an avalanche soon covered the building.

Jack pursued his dreams in both work and play when he and Ursula, his wife since 1939, returned to Bigfork. "I tamed everything that came onto the property except my wife," laughed Jack. Squirrels, chickadees, turkeys, deer and a weasel would all eat from his hands. "The blue grouse was the most affectionate; she would eat sunflower seeds from my lips," said Jack.

If Jack was interested in something, he'd researched it thoroughly and learned to do it well. He was the first inductee into the Montana Bow-Hunters Association as the Bow-Hunter of the Year. "I have killed more mountain goats with a bow than anyone else," said Jack, remembering that he ate five of them and grizzly bears got the other 4. "Instead of bungi jumping and skydiving, if you want a real thrill, have a grizzly charge you," laughed Jack, who was also the first inductee into the Montana Hunters Hall of Fame. Fishing was a pursuit that he practiced 7 days a week. Through another fisherman, Jack met CBS correspondents Dan Rather and Robert Pierpoint. Pierpoint asked Jack to catch some fish for President Nixon. Jack's generosity merited him an appearance in Newsweek.

His bows, arrows, birdhouses and split dogwood baskets, are carefully crafted works of art that he loves to share with visitors. He now concentrates his efforts on helping out his friends and neighbors and with keeping Ursula happy. "I feel lucky and blessed to have lived in this area in a period when it wasn't spoiled," reflects Jack on his life and adds, "There are places out there still that only God and I know about."

Interview and Story by Robin Maggadino

FESTIVALS!



MONTANA BIRD FESTIVAL

Friday, May 30 through Sunday, June 1 at Malta, MT
Sponsored by Montana, Yellowstone, and Rosebud Audubon Societies
Features keynote speaker Ed Harper, ornithologist, bird photographer
Educational presentations and field trips to CMR and Bowdoin National
Wildlife Refuges, Matador Ranch, Nelson Reservoir, a dinosaur dig
Get brochures and information from MT Audubon at (406) 443-3949.

BIGFORK BIRD FESTIVAL

JUNE 6-8

The Bigfork Bird Festival is a Flathead Audubon "MAIN EVENT" this spring. Held at a perfect time of year, the festival features lots of field trips, led by our own expert Flathead Audubon guides, as well as seminars and an outstanding keynote speaker, UM Professor (and PBS "Bird Watch" host) Dick Hutto. Professor Hutto's topic Saturday night will be "The Ecology of Fire and Birds."

The Festival is a combined presentation of Flathead Audubon and the Bigfork Chamber of Commerce. In addition to offering excitement and fun for everyone from novice to expert bird lovers, the Festival provides an opportunity for Flathead Audubon to earn some income, doing what we do best—helping others enjoy birds in their natural habitats.

For details of the Festival's field trips and seminars, you may call the Bigfork Chamber at 837-5888 or visit the Festival website at www.bigforkbirdfestival.com. Come one, come all!!

Let's Go To The Movies!

Mark your calendars and come to the movies. Flathead Chapter Montana Wilderness Association will have the **International Wildlife Film Festival** this year on Friday, June 13, at Flathead High School at 7:00PM. We will show Best of Festival, 2003, along with other films. As is customary, we will have a Boogie Board Bake Sale and Big Kahuna Raffle. It's a good time and good cause, and kids still get in free if they come as wildlife other than themselves. See you at the movies! For more information, call pattie brown at 837-5018.

MUSIC FESTIVAL TO CELEBRATE FLATHEAD LAKE

BIGFORK: Some of Montana's hottest musicians will gather this summer on the north shore of Flathead Lake, taking part in the first Flathead Freshwater Festival.

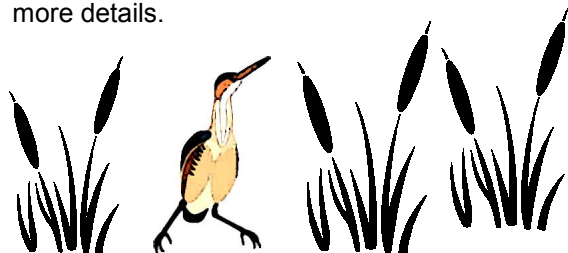
"Flathead Lake is the crown jewel of Montana and well worth celebrating with music, food, and fun," said festival organizer and Bigfork boat-maker David Hadden. "Flathead Lake is famous for providing good clean fun, and we aim to keep it that way."

Bands scheduled to be at the concert include Andre Floyd and the Mood Iguana, John Floridis and Jenn Adams, Tom Catmull Band, Keith Greeninger and Dayne Kai, Greg Grant, and more. Businesses that provide boats and other gear and outdoor services will be on hand. Food and drink will round off a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon on the lake, no matter the weather. Conservation groups, including Flathead Audubon, will have an opportunity to discuss their efforts to enjoy and protect the clean water of the Flathead Basin with festival participants.

The festival will be noon to 10PM, Saturday, July 12, on the north shore of Flathead Lake off Bigfork's Holt Drive. Tickets are \$20 per adult and will be available throughout the Flathead Valley. Kids are free. Proceeds from the concert will go to water quality monitoring in the Flathead Basin.

"Flathead Lake is one of the largest, cleanest lakes in the world," said Hadden. "But water quality has declined 30 percent in the last 25 years. Working together, we can find ways to keep this wonderful lake clean and beautiful for generations to come."

Contact David Hadden, 837-0783 for more details.



FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY 2003 SUMMER FIELD TRIPS



SATURDAY, MAY 10. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY AT THE BISON

RANGE. The birds brought spring back, and here's your chance to enjoy it by celebrating International Migratory Bird Day at the National Bison Range. A variety of bird activities are planned, including an advanced birding hike and a beginning bird walk (space is limited, so pre-registration is required). There will also be a variety of other activities, including a talk about bluebird habitat and houses, information on backyard bird feeding, special bird video showings, giveaways, contests, coloring pages, and a book sale. The National Bison Range is also planning to open the 19-mile Red Sleep Mountain Drive in time for this celebration (fees are charged for the drive). The Range will open at 7:00 a.m. Please call the National Bison Range at (406) 644-2211, extension 207 to register for activities.

MAY & JUNE. BIGFORK WILD MILE CORRIDOR WILDFLOWER & BIRD WALKS. Each Tuesday of May and June, 10 AM to Noon (May 13, 20, 27 & June 3, 10, 17, 24). Join Anne Morley (Montana Native Plant Society) and Neal Brown (Flathead Audubon Society) for a gentle morning of wildflower and bird identification along the Old Swan River Road. Meet in front of Showthyme Restaurant in downtown Bigfork. Contact: Neal Brown at 837-5018 or nealpatt@cyberport.net

SATURDAY, MAY 17. SPRING LOON CENSUS DAY. The Montana Loon Society and the Montana Common Loon Working Group will need volunteers to help look for and count loons on the lakes in northwest Montana on this day. The need is especially great for people to help in the North and Middle Fork areas, the Thompson Chain of Lakes, and the Troy and Libby areas. If you can help, please contact one of the following: for north and west of Kalispell or the Swan Valley, Jane Ingebretson, 837-5081, or Gael Bissell, 752-3874; for Glacier Park, Steve Gniadek, 888-7833; for the Libby/Troy area, Joni Manning, 295-7495.



SATURDAY, MAY 17. GLACIER NATIONAL PARK ASSOCIATES VOLUN-

TEER DAY. Join members of GNPA for their annual Volunteer Day in Glacier National Park. Volunteers will meet with park officials at 9:15 a.m. in front of the GNP Community Center to select from a list of work projects ranging from trail clearing (bird watching opportunities) to working in the park nursery. For additional information, contact Jim Swab at 387-4299 or suejim@bigsky.net.

SUNDAY, MAY 18. LOST TRAIL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE TRIP. Join us for a trip to the new National Wildlife Refuge in the Pleasant Valley near Marion. This is a very exciting time to visit this wonderful place. The fields and marshes and woodlands are alive with bird song not to mention birds. The habitat is very diverse, and we will have a chance to see everything from shore birds to ducks to warblers to raptors. We will meet at 7AM at the Fish, Wildlife & Parks Building in Kalispell. To sign up, please contact Leslie Kehoe at (406) 837-4467 or like-hoe@digisys.net

FRIDAY, MAY 30 through SUNDAY, JUNE 1. MONTANA BIRD FESTIVAL IN MALTA. Don't forget about this year's big birding festival! For information about this annual event, see the PILEATED POST, the Montana Audubon web site, or contact Barbara Johnson in the Montana Audubon office in Helena—406-443-3949 or bjohnson@montana.com. In addition, the Montana Audubon web site (www.mtaudubon.org) will contain a summary of the full program and registration information.



SUNDAY, JUNE 1. BIRDING IN THE NORTH FORK. Join Jim and Sue Swab on a North Fork hike in Glacier National Park. We will meet at the Polebridge Mercantile store at 9:30 a.m. and car pool to the Quartz Creek Trailhead on the Inside North Fork Road. We will hike about 3-4 miles to the Cummings Meadow area in search of birds and other wildlife. **Please RSVP** if you are interested in joining us. Contact Jim at 387-4299 or suejim@bigsky.net.

FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY 2003 SUMMER FIELD TRIPS

FRIDAY, JUNE 6 through SUNDAY, JUNE 8. BIGFORK BIRD FESTIVAL. Enjoy field trips led by our own Flathead Audubon birding experts. Destinations range from Glacier National Park to Ninepipes National Wildlife Refuge and many points in between. Sponsored by Bigfork Chamber of Commerce, with the indispensable help of Flathead Audubon members. For complete list of events and field trips, call 837-5888 or visit www.bigforkbirdfestival.com

SUNDAY, JUNE 15. OWEN SOWERWINE CANOE TRIP. Join Susannah & Dan Casey for a half-day exploration of an island park in the Flathead River near Kalispell. Canoe to the island (easy flat-water paddling) and bush-whack through the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area. Features breeding birds and a close-up look at the diversity of endangered cottonwood communities. Bring canoe and life jackets (one jacket for each person). Contact Susannah and Dan Casey at (406) 857-3143 or caseys4@centurytel.net to sign up for this trip.



SATURDAY, JUNE 28. LOONS OF THE THOMPSON LAKE CHAIN. Lynn Kelly, President of the Montana Loon Society and Justin Paugh, Loon Ranger for the Thompson Chain, conduct this tour of known and potential loon nesting lakes in the Thompson Chain of Lakes and other loon spots along Highway 2 west of Kalispell. We should be able to see loon families with 1 or 2 chicks. This tour will last about 5 hours, including driving time. Meet at the parking lot of the Fish, Wildlife and Parks Building (Meridian Rd, Kalispell) at 8:30 a.m. to car pool. For more information contact Lynn, 883-5797 or loonmont@hotmail.com or Justin, 755-1041.

SATURDAY, JULY 19 . MONTANA LOON DAY. The Montana Loon Society and the Montana Common Loon Working Group will need volunteers to help look for and count loons on the lakes in northwest Montana. The need is especially great for people to help in the North and Middle Fork areas, the Thompson Chain of lakes, and the Troy and Libby areas. If you can help, please contact one of the following: for north and west of Kalispell or the Swan Valley, Jane Ingebretson, 837-5081, or Gael Bissell, 752-3874; for Glacier Park, Steve Gniadek, 888-7833; for the Libby/Troy area, Joni Manning, 295-7495.

SUNDAY, JULY 20. FLATHEAD RIVER FLOAT. Join Susannah & Dan Casey for a canoe trip from Presen-tine Bar Fishing Access to Leisure Island in Kalispell. This beginner level float is an easy six hours on the river (no whitewater) through a variety of riparian habitats. Bring canoe, lifejackets (one jacket for each person), lunch, and raingear. Meet at 9 AM at the Kalispell K-Mart parking lot. Please RSVP to Susannah or Dan at (406) 857-3143 or caseys4@centurytel.net.

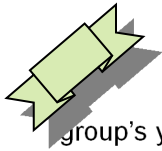


SATURDAY, AUGUST 9. PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE PULL AT NINEPIPE. Come join Flat-head and Mission Mountain Audubon in our 11th annual joyous effort to control the wetland invasive weed, Purple Loosestrife. This field trip requires shoes that can get wet, gloves, lunch, and water. Times: 8:00 AM for a birding tour of the Ninepipe wetland complex, 10:00 AM for the Purple Loosestrife pull, noon for gourmet desserts! Meet at Ninepipes Lodge (six miles south of Ronan on U.S. Highway 93). Contact Neal or Pattie Brown at 837-5018 or neal-patt@cyberport.net

SATURDAY, AUGUST 16. MIGRANT SHOREBIRDS. This trip will highlight the shorebirds of the Flathead Valley, and will offer you a chance to see dowitchers, phalaropes, yellowlegs and sandpipers -- up to 15 species may be seen! Dan Casey will lead this trip to various locations around the Valley. Meet at the west end of the Tidyman's parking lot at 9:00 AM. Please RSVP with Dan at (406) 857-3143 or caseys4@centurytel.net.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20. LUBECK-AUTUMN CREEK TRAIL. Meet at Belton Train Station at 1:00 p.m. This is an easy to moderate 4 mile hike. Bring food and water and flashlight. We will look for fall migrants and listen for elk bugles. September 21 is a full moon, giving us an option of staying out after dusk. It is a beautiful time of year to appreciate this trail. Contact Neal and Pattie at 837-5018 or nealpatt@cyberport.net.





Conservation Recognition given to Flathead Wildlife, Inc.

At the April meeting of Flathead Audubon, **Flathead Wildlife, Inc.** was recognized for the group's years of conservation in the Flathead Valley.

Started right after WWII by sportsmen/conservationists, including Doc Newberry and Jack Whitney, Flathead Wildlife (FWI) has been making bluebird nest boxes for northwest Montana for 14 years. In 1989, Bob Cole was admiring some bluebird houses made by Warren Lamoreux for his friends and family. They thought the club might be interested in building a few as a fund raiser. FWI approved the project; Royce Slatterly, a manager at Stoltze Land and Lumber, donated a unit of end trim to get them started. Warren cut out all the pieces; three work parties organized, and 400 bluebird houses were the result. To date, Warren has personally cut out 36,400 parts and FWI has made nearly 6,100 houses for bluebirds! Cole said, "None of us had air nailers back then so all the nailing was by hand and was pretty darn noisy with 15+ members hammering away. We usually had 17-20 guys, including 4-5 young folks, show up at a work party. We use air nailers now and can hammer out 200 houses per night."

For the first 10 years or so, Flathead Wildlife arranged with Fred Zauner of Zauner's Home Center to sell the bluebird houses. When Zauners changed the focus of their store, FWI sold through Equity Supply Store (now Cenex) and at both Cardinal Hardware Stores. Cole says, "We couldn't run the project without these stores! Fred and Jeff Zauner, Barb and Gary Hanson who own Cardinal, and Jack Hardman at Cenex are real supporters of wildlife!" Marty Fregario makes the deliveries to the retail stores, with help from Jim Cross. These quality bluebird houses retail locally for a whopping \$5.00 each.

Flathead Wildlife directs all income from the bluebird houses to a special "habitat fund," which is designated for local area projects. Several thousand dollars from the fund went into the Dry Park pond renovation on Kalispell's southeast side; several hundred dollars and countless man-hours went into removing 1000 tires from a swamp just north of McWeneger Slough; FWI has made floating Loon Signs for the Montana Loon Society. They've made enough to last for several years; the signs are put on northwest Montana lakes to protect nesting sites. FWI members produce and install goose nesting platforms and wood duck nest boxes. FWI is also partnering with MT Fish, Wildlife and Parks to help fund "Crossing the Barriers," to be constructed in the Shady Lane area near the Flathead River.

The Motto of Flathead Wildlife, Inc., is: "Conservation not conversation". These sportsmen and women not only "talk the talk," they "walk the walk" of Montana's true conservationists!

Flathead Wildlife deserves a big hand for all the conservation work they do in the Valley.
Thanks from the Flathead Audubon Society!! Brent Mitchell, Conservation Chairman

FAS BOARD ACTIVITIES: JANUARY-MARCH, 2003

The board created a new FAS membership to complement the National Audubon membership in order to recover some of the funding lost to the Chapter as National reduces its financial support to FAS.

Leslie Kehoe is working closely with the Bigfork Chamber of Commerce planning the first Bigfork Bird Festival this June. FAS will lead 10 field trips at the festival.

Memoranda of Understanding between FAS and Montana Audubon were drafted and approved covering Owen Sowerwine Natural Area and the Community Naturalist Program. Sonja Hartman is the Community Naturalist for the Flathead.

The current site for FAS monthly meetings is too small; only 62 people are allowed in the room. The board has investigated a number of possible sites and a final decision will be made and announced at the May Potluck. **The potluck will also move this year, from Lone Pine to the West Valley School,** also due to capacity problems.

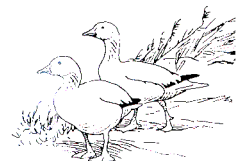
Donations and contributions made were: \$50 to Grounded Eagle Foundation, \$100 to sponsor a new riparian map covering the area from Columbia Falls to Flathead Lake, \$50 for a booth at the Flathead Freshwater Festival in July.

Recipients were chosen for Conservation Achievement Awards.

Fencing and signs for Owen Sowerwine were discussed and work will begin on the project this spring.

FAS will once again have a booth at the Family Forestry Expo, May 10-11.

The nomination committee is succeeding in replacing the irreplaceable. In particular, Leslie Kehoe, our incomparable newsletter editor is retiring and a group of 6 very talented people has been found to fill the void. Come to the May potluck to see the rest of the committee's fine work. Mike Fanning



ELECTION NOTES

The Nominations Committee is delighted to present the following slate of officers for the next two years, beginning in September 2003:

President (two-year term), nominee not settled yet

Sonja Hartmann has accepted the nomination for another two-year term as Vice President. Yeah! Sonja has been a member since even before our monthly meetings moved to Kalispell from Bigfork! As Conservation Coordinator, she has established a solid outreach to our local schools and has led teacher workshops and adult education classes for Audubon. In her role as environmental educator, she has also served as program coordinator for the Glacier Institute and is presently Education Coordinator for the Glacier Park Native Nursery. Sonja's hopes for the chapter are to continue educational and conservation activities and to include new faces from the valley.

John Ashley, our resident "Harlequin Man," is leaving the board. Thank you, John, for the expertise and insights you have shared for 6 years as a Director.

There are three Director positions to be filled on the FAS Board for three-year terms (2003-2006). Our nominees are Lisa Discoe, Andrea Goff, and Lewis Young. ☒

Lisa Discoe was raised in southern California and also has roots in southern Oregon. She is the mother of two teenagers and has a background in business. Lisa is an avid natural history advocate; she and Jim Fiddler have been instru-

mental in bringing Jon Young and his Wilderness Awareness School to the Flathead.

Andrea Goff is the Executive Director of the Bigfork Chamber of Commerce. She moved here from New York City in 1994 and enjoys cross-country skiing, sea kayaking, and bird watching. She has been instrumental, along with Kathleen Moon and Leslie Kehoe, in launching the first Bird Festival in Bigfork this June. Serving as a Director will facilitate coordinating this ambitious event in the future.

Lewis Young has been the Forest Wildlife Biologist for the Flathead National Forest since December 2001. Prior to that, he worked on the Kootenai National Forest, Custer National Forest in North Dakota, Modoc National Forest in California, and Santa Fe National Forest in New Mexico. He and his wife Lynda have one son, Will, who is a fisheries biologist with the Tongass National Forest in Petersburg, Alaska. They "have more hobbies than time to indulge in," including fishing, hunting, hiking, camping, birding, canoeing, and skiing. Lewis lives in Eureka and participates in the Eureka Bird Club, which is a satellite chapter.

We feel very fortunate to have such a talented array of individuals who are enthusiastic about serving on our board. We are also fortunate that our outgoing President, **Linda Winnie**, will be around to share wisdom and energy.

Gratefully, the Nominations Committee:
Neal Brown, Linda deKort, Karen Nichols

FLATHEAD AUDUBON MISSION STATEMENT

THE FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY IS A LOCAL CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY.

- OUR MISSION IS TO CONSERVE BIRDS, WILDLIFE HABITAT AND ECOSYSTEM DIVERSITY.
- AWARENESS AND APPRECIATION OF THE NATURAL WORLD IS PROMOTED THROUGH EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND ADVOCACY PROGRAMS.
- WE WORK WITH DIVERSE GROUPS AND AGENCIES TO ACHIEVE SOUND DECISIONS ON NATURAL RESOURCE ISSUES.
- OUR COMMUNITY OUTREACH INCLUDES SCHOOL PROGRAMS, WORK PROJECTS AND FIELD TRIPS.
- WHILE FOCUSING OUR EFFORTS IN NORTHWEST MONTANA, WE BELIEVE IN THE PROTECTION OF THE EARTH AND ALL ITS INHABITANTS.

DO YOU PLAN TO COME TO THE SEPTEMBER FAS MEETING?

Be sure to watch for the September Pileated Post announcement of a new meeting location!



THESE SPRING CHORES ARE FOR THE BIRDS (AND BEARS!)

Now that spring has finally arrived in the Flathead, it's time to start thinking about those outdoor tasks that you've been looking forward to all winter. As you begin these outside endeavors, keep your feathered and furry friends in mind. Remember that your yard, whether it is a city lot or a substantial rural acreage, is their home too, and that the things you do or don't do can greatly impact or even threaten their lives.

First, a reminder that bears and bird-feeding don't mix well and the Board of Directors of FAS recommends taking your bird feeders down from May 1 until November 1 if you live in bear country. Also clean up the area around feeders as well. Black bears and grizzly bears are always looking for easy food, and they are **very good** at finding it. Please help protect our bears, remember a fed bear is a dead bear!

Next, as you begin this season of gardening and lawn care, consider these facts :

- 67 million lbs of pesticides are applied annually to home lawns; add school and golf turf and the amount rises to 73 million lbs. That equals 0.26 pounds of pesticide for every man, woman, and child in the U.S. or 8 lbs per acre! That is three times more pesticide than farmers use per acre.
- 672 million birds are exposed to pesticides annually; 67 million birds die. This is a conservative estimate.
- 50 pesticide active ingredients currently used in the U.S. have caused documented bird kills.

Make this the year to learn how to reduce the use of pesticides, find alternatives, and create a healthy home for your family and the wildlife that lives with you! Consider reducing your lawn by 25% and using that extra space to introduce more native plants into your yard. Encourage neighbors to do the same. Treat only when absolutely necessary and then choose the least toxic method available and read and follow directions carefully. Birds and other wildlife will thank you and you'll have more time for fishing and bird watching!

by Jeannie Marcure

Information taken from Mt FWP pamphlet on Bear Attractants: Why is this Bear in my Yard? Available at MT FWP and from "Audubon Guide for a Healthy Yard and Beyond." available by contacting HealthyYards@audubon.org

REMINDER! LOCATION CHANGE! DON'T FORGET! MAY 12, 6PM!

Flathead Audubon May meeting and Potluck at **WEST VALLEY SCHOOL!** Bring potluck dish, table service, items for Silent Auction!



Flathead Audubon Scholarships Available



Have you ever wanted to sign yourself or a child in your life up for a natural history class or camp, and just not had the finances? Flathead Audubon would like to help. Our educational scholarships are available to adults or kids, and can be applied to help pay for such experiences as Glacier Institute classes or camps, Dan Casey's bird classes at FVCC, or other class that share the wonders of the natural world with students. If you are a teacher, this can also be applied to classes that would help you get more comfortable with a natural history topic to share with your students.



To apply, simply e-mail Sonja Hartmann at prather@digisys.net for an application, or request an application by calling her at 387-4150. Scholarships are awarded on a first come- first serve basis to qualified applicants, so apply soon!



FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

OFFICERS

President	Linda Winnie, P.O. Box 220, Kila, MT 59920	755-1406
Vice-President	Sonja Hartmann, P.O. Box 316, West Glacier, MT 59936	387-4150
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Treasurer	Bruce Tannehill, 239 Deer Trail, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-4548
Past-President	Neal Brown, 670 Wolf Creek Dr., Bigfork, MT 59911	837-5018

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Audubon Adventures	Kim Davis, 1230 Rhodes Draw, Kalispell, MT 59901	755-1311
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