



LOREN KRECK MAN OF CAUSES AND COURAGE



How did Hollywood-born Loren Kreck find himself in the middle of battles to save and preserve some of the Flathead's pristine places?

It was with the help of his family and several influential friends that Loren discovered his love of the outdoors. His family had a cabin above Los Angeles which they frequented, and his parents loved to hike in Yosemite. Several high school teachers were influential as well. "It's so important to get young people involved. That's where it all begins," he says. One teacher, in particular, was adamant about the importance of saving the desert wilderness in California.

His life took a turn toward the artistic when he began working as an illustrator for Walt Disney studios near his home. However, for \$7.50 a week, working 5 1/2 days with schooling on Saturdays, it didn't seem very profitable.

After flying fighter planes in the Pacific in WWII, Loren decided to follow several members of his family and become a dentist. In 1951, he read an article in The Ford Times, by Whitefish author Dorothy Johnson. She described the Flathead with its skiing, canoeing, fishing and hiking. "It sounded like heaven to me. So we came and stayed." Loren avidly pursued these outdoor interests, passions really, which led him to love as well as appreciate this special Northwest Montana environment. Canoeing has led him on many wilderness trips from the white-waters of the Salmon and Colorado to the Missouri and north to the South Nahanni and Arctic Ocean.

In the early 50s, Loren and his wife Mary bought 2 1/2 acres on the Flathead River. It was here in the early 60's that they saw the first evidence of fluoride emissions from the Anaconda Aluminum Plant. On his cherry trees, the fruit dried up before it could ripen, cattle were having joint problems from the hay and the Ponderosa pines were dying with diseased needles. This evidence convinced them to

bring a class action suit against the company. When you consider the power of Anaconda at that time, you realize how courageous this act was. Insider information told him that 10,000 pounds of fluoride were being emitted each day. Meanwhile, severe damage was being done to the forests.

Although the lawsuit did not come to court, Loren believes it was one of the reasons that Anaconda Company officials went to Japan, where the technology existed to clean up the emissions. They purchased the technology.

In the early 60's, a pulp mill was proposed on the banks of the Flathead River below Columbia Falls. Loren knew the potential harm of such an operation and gathered his information. He persuaded his California sister to fly to Washington DC with the data. She presented the information to the U. S. department in charge of small business loans. "They had no idea there was any opposition to the project," said Loren. "It stopped right there."

Loren Kreck, continued on page 8...

MARCH FLATHEAD AUDUBON CALENDAR

Monday, March 14, 2005: Flathead Audubon General Meeting begins at 7PM at the Summit, conference room #3. (No FAS Board of Directors Meeting in March)

Saturday-Sunday, May 28-29, 2005: Seeley Lake Loon and Fish Festival. Seeley Lake Elementary School; enjoy loon walks, talks, children's activities.

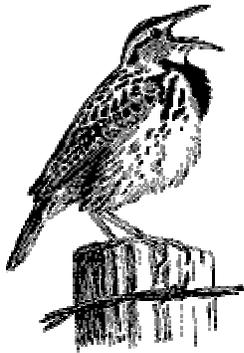
Friday-Sunday, June 3-5, 2005: Flathead Birding Festival, see article on page 3

Saturday, July 16, 2005: Loon Day, details in future newsletter

Spring Field Trips, pages 5 and 6

BIRD OF THE MONTH

SONGS OF SPRING



The first bird song that I learned to recognize as I was growing up on the prairies of eastern South Dakota was that of the western meadowlark. There, as here, spotting a meadowlark sitting on a fence post, head thrown back in jubilant song, was one of the rites of spring. Some twenty-five years later when I relocated to Western Montana, I was delighted to learn that not only did the western meadowlark live here, but that it was the state bird of Montana.

The first recorded observation of the western meadowlark was made by Meriwether Lewis on June 22, 1805, in the vicinity of the Great Falls of the Missouri. Lewis wrote about a lark with a yellow breast that resembled the size and color of the eastern lark but with a song that was noticeably different from that of the eastern meadowlark. He concluded that this was a new bird. Indeed, the western species sings a longer and more musical song than its eastern cousin. Freer and wilder, the song is identified by 7 to 10 flutelike notes, a much more complex and melodic sound than the clear whistles of the eastern species.

The selection as the Montana state bird began in 1930 when the state's school children were asked which bird best represented their state. The response was overwhelming in favor of the meadowlark and in the next legislative session in 1931, state lawmakers made the selection official. Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oregon and Wyoming also claim the meadowlark as their state bird.

The meadowlark is a bird of the grassland and the first meadowlarks probably arrived with the prairies, on the heels of the retreating glaciers. Even now, when the once-prairie landscape is dotted with development, meadowlarks still favor this environment. Anytime you see cattle or horses in a grassy field, you're in meadowlark habitat. Watch the fence posts for a robin-sized bird with a black v-shaped breast band and a bright yellow chest. Male meadowlarks arrive first in the spring in order to secure the best possible nesting territory so that they will be able to win a mate when the females arrive several weeks later. Each male adopts a bragging post and spends several hours there in song each day. Although pleasing to human ears, the music is a no-trespassing signal to other meadowlarks and is the primary way that they defend their territories. Occasionally, however, the conflict can escalate into a physical confrontation and males sometimes fight by locking onto each other's feet and rolling around in the grass, stabbing at each other with their beaks until one escapes and flies away, pursued by the victor. Shortly after such an encounter, the winner can be seen back on the bragging post announcing his victory.

When a female arrives, the male approaches with his colorful front toward her and his bill pointed upward and swelling out his breast. He also flicks his wings above his back and leaps up and down to get her attention. If the courtship is successful, they mate and the female begins construction of the nest. She starts with a hoof print or natural depression in the ground which she shapes by digging with her bill. Meadowlarks are equipped with complex bill musculature which allows them to force the bill open with considerable strength. This allows the bill to be inserted into the ground or among grass stems and then open, prying the material apart, thus shaping the nest and entrance. When this happens the eyes rotate slightly forward, allowing the birds to see directly between their jaws into the hole they have created. When the hole is established, she lines the nest with fine grasses and creates a roof by pulling the adjacent vegetation over her nest to form a dome. This task requires hundreds of trips to bring in needed materials and when finished, the nest looks like a tuft of grass & weeds. It's open on only one side and the entrance may be concealed by overhanging weeds or a roofed run of grasses. Meadowlarks are usually silent while nesting and caring for their young. When you hear a meadowlark singing in the summer, it means that the first brood had probably fledged and the parents are ready to start a second nest.

My favorite place to see and listen to meadowlarks is Smith Lake Road and since that's also a great place to see both mountain and western bluebirds, you'll want to plan your spring drive out that way soon! Roll your windows down and listen for the cheerful call of a meadowlark looking for a mate! When you spot your first meadowlark of the season, you'll know that spring has arrived in the Flathead. ENJOY!!

The following sources were used in compiling this article: The Sibley Guide to Bird Life & Behavior, The Lewis and Clark Expedition by Kenneth Walcheck, www.birdwatching.com, and <http://montana.kids.com>

By Jeannie Marcure



MARCH PROGRAM

“Tales of a Traveling Salesman for Bird Conservation”

Flathead Audubon's monthly program for March will be presented by Dan Casey of our board, who is the Northern Rockies Coordinator for the American Bird Conservancy. For the past 5 years, Dan has been working with partners throughout the region to educate, get support for important habitat projects, and further the Partners in Flight credo of “keeping common birds common”. Dan will use his usual combination of anecdotes, natural history and great bird pictures to fill us in on what has been happening locally, in the state, region and across the continent to bring together agencies, organizations and land-owners to “do the right thing” for birds. Come hear about which birds are considered a priority, why, and what is being done for their benefit. Flammulated Owls in ponderosa pine, Long-billed Curlews in grass-land, and waterfowl and Sandhill Cranes in wetlands are among some Montana examples of people working together to develop innovative approaches for conservation in the face of increasing human pressures on western landscapes. Come hear the confessions of a “designated meeting-goer” who is trying to make these things continue to happen!



It's THAT TIME Again



The income tax season is upon us once more, but rather than fall into deep depression, remember a couple of good opportunities that the season brings. Our state offers you the chance to help the wild critters of Montana by simply checking a box on your tax form. Give as much as you can; the birds will love you for it! And when you're adding up your charitable deductions, remember to include \$6 for each bag of sunflower seeds that you purchased from Flathead Audubon.

Volunteers Needed to Chair FAS Committees

We still need to fill several important positions for next year. These include Vice-President, Publicity, and Programs. If you are interested or know of any members who might be interested in these positions, please call Mike Fanning at 862-8070. FAS needs your help!



FLATHEAD BIRD FESTIVAL!



“I Was a Teen-aged Bird-Watcher: Putting our Obsession to Use” is the title of Dan Casey's presentation which will kick off the Flathead Bird Festival, June 3 – 5, 2005, at Marina Cay in Bigfork. Most of us start “bird-watching” at our feeders, driven by curiosity, and by the joy of discovery. Then we become “birders”, armed with the latest information and technology, ready to tick birds off on our life list. Then we really begin to listen and watch birds, paying attention to habitat needs, the local population status, and the impact of environmental changes brought about by homes, industry and infrastructure. Dan Casey has been through all of the stages and now, as a professional with the American Birding Association, he has the knowledge, position and contacts to make a real impact on western habitat conservation. Dan will cover some local/regional examples, with a profusion of anecdotes and identification tidbits, to help define the role that birders can play. Along the way, he will

help us rediscover the joy of bird-watching.

Friday evening will close with a visit from the eminent ornithologist, Professor Avian Guano, Bir D. His name explains much of his background since “Avian” means “of the birds” and “Guano”, well, you can easily guess that one. After he “drops” in, this eccentric German professor of ornithology proves he has been studying birds a little too long. His bird-brained view on birds and his legendary mimicry of bird songs show his perhaps too intimate knowledge of our feathered friends. The good professor's bones are probably hollow, but beneath his wacky exterior is a solid knowledge of fascinating bird lore. The good professor usually travels under his pseudonym, Denny Olson, to avoid being mobbed by fans and crows.

Plan to enjoy the Flathead Bird Festival, June 3 – 5, 2005, at Marina Cay in Bigfork for a weekend of birds, learning and fun!

FROM THE BOARD:

BOB LOPP

VICE-PRESIDENT



MONTANA AUDUBON

Sometimes marriage is great but other times, friendship is the better relationship. Over the last 14 months, Montana Audubon and National Audubon have examined the relationship created by a Memorandum of Understanding in 1997. At that time, National took an active role in the operations of Montana Audubon by assuming the employment contracts of the staff in Montana and funding the hiring of an executive director and a development director.

There have been some major successes with this partnership. Programs such as “Birds Beyond Borders”, “Community Naturalist”, “Advocacy” (especially in legislative years like 2003 and 2005), and “IBA – Important Bird Areas” have flourished. Janet Ellis, Jeff Marks, Bob Petty, and Paul Belanger have worked with the chapters as well as these programs to strengthen our voice in bird and habitat conservation.

Because of some management decisions and inadequate fund raising, a debt of approximately \$270,000 developed over the last three years. Failure to independently audit because of tight budgets and the assumption that National was “doing the oversight job” of the director, allowed this debt to build until the January 2004 Board Meeting, when it all began to unravel.

Since then, joint negotiations have developed a new relationship between Montana Audubon and National Audubon. The MA Board of Directors will take back control of the employment contracts, program management and oversight. Janet Ellis has developed a solid budget that already shows a cushion of \$50,000. National Audubon has assumed the debt and the two organizations will return to the former friendly relationship where each agrees to work together toward common goals while maintaining independence. This time “Friendship” has proven to be better than “Marriage”!



The world is round. The place which may seem like an end may also be a beginning.
Anonymous



Recycle for Flathead Audubon

There are now **three** places where you can take your recyclables and have your proceeds donated to Flathead Audubon. A Flathead Audubon account has recently been established at Pacific Steel & Recycling in Kalispell (off E. Idaho, just east of Office Max). Thanks to Sonja Hartmann, for setting this up! You'll recall that we've have had a similar account for many years with Valley Recycling in Kalispell (1410 Highway 2 W.).

This gives you two options. You can take your recyclables to **Pacific Steel & Recycling** and tell them you want your payment to go to Flathead Audubon, or take your stuff to **Valley Recycling** and do the same. Both will keep a running tab on the contributions, and turn the proceeds over to Flathead Audubon every few months.

The third option is, of course, the **Mitchell Recycling Wagon**, which is stationed at the west end of the Summit parking lot each second Monday of the month, when Flathead Audubon meets. You can bring your recyclables to the wagon when you come to the meeting. Before or after the meeting, Brent or Kay—and sometimes both, if you are lucky—will be there to help you transfer your stuff, and to chat if they are not too busy. They then haul these contributions off to one of the commercial recycling sites, and say “Put the payment for this on the Flathead Audubon account.” This month’s “haul” totaled 459 pounds!

All three places take steel and aluminum cans, #1 plastic and plastic milk bottles, corrugated cardboard, thin cardboard and paper, magazines and junk mail. In addition you can bring all but ferrous metals to Valley Recycling, and all metals, including ferrous, to both Pacific Steel & Recycling, and the Mitchell Recycling Wagon.

Thanks to everyone who is recycling – it is good for the earth and all of us here. And thanks to all who are already contributing to Flathead Audubon with their recycling. We hope that providing three options will make it easier for more of you to help out in this way!

From Linda Winnie

FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY: 2005 SPRING FIELDTRIPS

The Public is Invited.



SATURDAY, MARCH 19. MARCH BIRDING BLAST. Join Bob Rost, one of the Flathead's premier birders, heading south to the Mission Valley in search of raptors. Meet at Park'n' Ride at Hwys 93 & 82 at 0830. Bring lunch, proper clothing, optics, walkie-talkies if you have them. For more information contact Bob, 837-2255.

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, MARCH 26-27. FREEZOUT LAKE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA FIELDTRIP.

past years, more than 40 bird counted. Call leader to arrange parking lot in time to watch geese Bella Vista Motel (406-466-5711)



in Kalispell by 5 p.m. Contact: Dan Casey, 857-3143 or dcasey@abcbirds.org.

Migrate over to Montana's premier migration stopover! In species, including thousands of Snow Geese have been carpool. Leave at 10:30 a.m. Saturday from the Tidyman's arrive at Freezout Lake that evening. Stay overnight at the Stage Stop Inn (406-466-5900) or Gunther Motel (406-466-5444) in Choteau. After watching the geese leave the lake Sunday morning, head for home in time to arrive

SATURDAY, APRIL 2: APRIL BIRDING BLAST. See the March Birding Blast description above, but departing at 8:00 a.m. For more information contact Bob Rost, 837-2255.



SUNDAY, APRIL 24, SMITH LAKE BIRDING. The Smith Lake Waterfowl Production Area at this time of the year will have many varieties of ducks, including grebes, buffleheads, and ruddy ducks. We will search for sandhill cranes, harriers, eagles, ospreys and will certainly see and hear western meadowlarks and bluebirds. It will be an enjoyable morning of bird watching. Meet at the Fish, Wildlife & Parks building in Kalispell at 8:00 a.m. Sunday morning. For more information please contact Leslie Kehoe at 837-4467 or likehoe@digisys.net

MAY & JUNE. BIGFORK WILD MILE CORRIDOR WILDFLOWER & BIRD

WALKS. Each Tuesday of May and June, 10 a.m. until noon (May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 & June 7, 14, 21, 28). Join Chista Eisenberg 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: Chista at 837-5754.



SATURDAY, MAY 14. 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.



FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY: 2005 SPRING FIELDTRIPS

The Public is Invited.



SATURDAY, MAY 14. SPRING LOON CENSUS DAY.

The Montana Loon Society and the Montana Common Loon Working Group need volunteers to help look for and count loons on the lakes throughout 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 the Libby/Troy area, Joni Manning, 295-7495.

SUNDAY, MAY 15. LOST TRAIL 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, 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. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Fish, Wildlife & Parks Building in Kalispell. To sign up, contact Leslie Kehoe at 837-4467 or lkehoe@digisys.net

SATURDAY, MAY 21. HOT SPRINGS AND CAMAS PRAIRIE TOUR. Join Bob Rost for this unique birding adventure. Search for White-throated Swifts, Sage Thrashers, Western Bluebirds, Canyon Wrens, Lewis Woodpeckers and many more. Meet at the Park'n'Ride at Hwys 93 & 82 at 6:00 a.m. for this all-day fieldtrip. For more information, call Bob, 837-2255.



SATURDAY, MAY 21. GLACIER NATIONAL PARK ASSOCIATES VOLUNTEER DAY.

Join members of GNPA for the annual Volunteer Day in Glacier National Park. Volunteers should 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 sue-jim@bigsky.net.

SATURDAY, JUNE 4. BIRDING IN THE NORTH FORK. This is a unique opportunity to explore the northern part of the North Fork for birds such as warblers. If interested, contact Donna, 257-4362.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY, JUNE 3-5. FLATHEAD BIRDING FESTIVAL at the Marina Cay Resort in Bigfork. Sponsored by Montana Audubon, Flathead Audubon, Mission Mountain Audubon and the Bigfork Bird Festival, there will be three days of fun, learning, and sharing the wonders of birding. See upcoming Pileated Posts for more details.



SATURDAY, JUNE 18. SQUEEZER CREEK BIRDING AREA. Join Rod Ash for a unique birding experience in the Swan Valley's Squeezer Creek area. For more information, call Rod, (406) 754-2289.

Thanks to Jim Swab, Flathead Audubon Field Trip Coordinator



FLATHEAD AUDUBON PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

By Linda deKort



This past fall and winter have been busy ones for Flathead Audubon Board members; here is a quick synopsis.

The **Birdseed Sale** was held on October 30th this year, a bit later than in past years. We sold 260 sacks. Many people did not buy because of bear problems so we brought in about \$1,000 less than we budgeted.

FAS members Dan Casey, Lewis Young and Steve Gniadek again coordinated the **Christmas Bird Counts**. We had good participation and record numbers in several species.

Flathead Birding Festival this year will be a joint effort by Bigfork Chamber, Flathead Audubon, Mission Mountain Audubon and Montana Audubon. Bob Lopp and Jim Rogers are co-chairs. Montana Audubon receives half of the profits and Mission Mountain and Flathead Audubon will share the other half. The dates are June 3-5, 2005, and it will be held in Bigfork at the Marina Cay. Friday morning will be the Montana Audubon State Board meeting. Saturday will be fieldtrips and workshops and Sunday morning will be strictly field trips. FAS members Dan Casey and Denny Olson (Critter Man) will be the keynote speakers Friday night. Saturday night's banquet speaker will be Terry Rich. The silent auction offers items donated by members, the public, and the business community.

Our **Conservation Committee** chair, Lewis Young, wrote comments on Flathead Audubon's behalf for the Westside Reservoir Salvage. The comments were specific, thorough and clearly stated. We also submitted comments on the Robert-Wedge Final EIS. Lewis was disappointed on the final snag policy adopted for this final EIS. Lewis also submitted a letter on our behalf in support of Stoltze Timber smaller diameter processing mill. Linda Winnie, Neil Brown, and Dan Casey represent Flathead Audubon on the Conservation Round Table, which meets the second Wednesday of the month. Dan Casey completed the final tallies on the Mansfield Project; FAS received a \$500 check for the initial set of point counts completed on this piece of private property. Linda Winnie is continuing the fine tradition initiated by Ferne Cohen of identifying and honoring members of our community for **Conservation Achievement Recognition**.

Jim Swab distributed a form to be circulated that will hopefully generate more field trip leaders. As you can see, Jim has completed a fine roster of **spring field trips**. He is always looking for more field trip leaders. Leslie Kehoe mentioned that there are fees for recreational use on **refuges** and national

forests and grasslands. She is looking into the fees and permits required for FAS field trips

The **Birding Hotspots brochure** is now posted on the Montana Bluebird Website. Dan Casey also has another box of the printed form of this valuable brochure.

Mike Fanning, **membership chairman**, reports that we have about 125 local memberships. All renewals will now be made in the fall. Our national membership is down because of the new national membership policy. Mike is also the Nominations Committee Chairman. The **Owen Sowerwine Work Day** was organized for October 16; FAS received \$1000 from Prudential Insurance for this volunteer effort. Members weeded, cleaned and brushed and set the foundation for the kiosk. The board voted to reimburse builders for the extra cost (approximately \$1100) of the kiosk. A celebration will be planned for OSNA/kiosk after it is completed. Janet Ellis is working on the fencing permit for OSNA with DNRC. Brent, who monitors the Owen Sowerwine area frequently, picked up a red canoe which seems to have been abandoned there. He has reported it; if no one claims it, FAS may end up with a lucrative raffle item.

Kay Mitchell kindly completed a thorough informal **financial review** at Bruce Tannehill's request. Kay summarized him as a "treasure of a treasurer". She also recommended that every 5-7 years, or when a change of treasurers occurs, it would be a good idea to have an outside audit performed. To save on costs, someone might know a CPA who is willing to donate his/her services in the off-season - any volunteers? Kay also recommended that the board establish more specific financial policies. The financial committee made up of Bruce, Linda de Kort and Leslie Kehoe is now working on that. That same committee is also investigating the cost of **liability insurance** for our chapter. We are looking for other members with business or law experience to help out.

In other money matters: We have decided to raffle only one nice item at each meeting. It saves time and still gives attendees an opportunity to make a contribution. The raffle is netting about \$25 to \$40 each meeting, thanks to all of you who have contributed. Ansley Ford was granted \$99.00 from the Walmart donation for "Classroom Feeder Watch" program for her classroom. FAS also gave scholarships to two students at Swan River School to attend outdoor education at Ravenwood.

The **Education Committee** has also been extremely busy. Lex Blood, representing the
(*President's Update, continued on page 9*)



Flathead Audubon Educational Materials Move to Kalispell Montessori School



It is almost moving day! The Education Committee is excited to announce that our educational materials will soon be moving to the Kalispell Montessori School, thanks to the support of Terry Welder and the staff at the school!

We have been searching for a new site for our materials, which have been housed at the Montana Design office of Flathead Audubon member John Haynes. We have really appreciated his willingness for us to set up in their basement! As we have found that the hours at Montessori are more conducive to teachers' schedules, we will continue to store some of our less-used materials at Montana Design, but the bulk of the items will be now be found at the Kalispell Montessori School at 349 Willow Glen Dr. Education materials will be available by reservation; please contact Rochelle Pope at 270-5919 if interested. The Montessori School has someone at the front desk Monday through Friday, 8:00 am. to 4:00 p.m. You can also arrange to pick up materials outside of these hours by calling ahead and making an appointment at 755-3826. The staff is willing to help you sign materials out on the clipboard provided. The trunks will be housed in a shed next to the parking lot, for easy loading.

So, how do you get there? **From the south on Highway 93:** Hwy 93 will jog to the left at Four Corners, which is the intersection of Lower Valley Rd., Hwy 93, and Willow Glen Rd. This intersection is about one mile south of the Kalispell city limits. Watch for the AM 600 radio station on the right and get ready to turn right at Four Corners. Turn right at Four Corners, followed by an immediate left onto Willow Glen. Go past a fire station and the county road maintenance shop, then past a new subdivision on the right and down a steep incline. Watch for Treasure Lane on your right; slow down. The Montessori School is on the right. It is a single story yellow building. If you reach the T intersection with Conrad Drive, you have gone too far. **From the North on Highway 93:** Turn east on Hwy 2 through Kalispell. Hwy. 2 goes down a hill and under a bridge (Underpass Hill). Take the first right after the bridge, onto Woodland Park Drive. Continue to a T intersection with Conrad Drive. Turn left onto Conrad Drive. Stay on Conrad Drive past Caroline and Collier Lanes. The next right is Willow Glen Dr.; turn right. The Montessori School is on the left, about a mile down Willow Glen.

From Sonja Hartmann and Rochelle Pope

FAS Community Education Program in Search of Volunteers

Do you enjoy the natural world, and want to share your passion with others? Would you like to learn more about birds? Flathead Audubon is searching for volunteers with our Community Education Program. Volunteers do not need to be birding experts to share their love of the natural world. Volunteers will have access to Flathead Audubon's educational materials, trunks, and training for use of these materials. Volunteers will then be partnered with local K-12 educators or community groups, to assist or lead programs and classes about birds and other natural history topics around Flathead Valley. Many teachers want to share these topics with their students, but are not comfortable diving into these subjects without some assistance, or having a helping hand along on a field trip. To learn more, please contact Rochelle Pope at 270-5919.

THE BEAUTY OF BIRDS

Are you new to the area, new to birding, or simply in need of a refresher before summer birding season arrives? Sign up for Beauty of Birds! This four class series will be offered Wednesday evenings in April from 6-8 p.m. in the Flathead High School lecture room. Classes will include lessons, slides,

and featured guest speakers on various bird species and topics. Beauty of Birds will also include a Saturday fieldtrip to local birding hotspots. For more information, call Ansley Ford at 857-6788; to sign up, call Flathead High School at 751-3460. Come learn with us!

Ansley Ford

ATTENTION TEACHERS!



Do you need extra funds for science materials, fieldtrips, or special projects? Ask Audubon! Flathead Audubon has a limited amount of grant money set aside for education. Ideas for use of Audubon grants in the classroom include: Bird Sponsorship programs, Classroom FeederWatch and other Citizen Science Projects, fieldtrips, guest speakers, or materials. For more information, please contact any member of the Education Committee or Flathead Audubon president Linda DeKort at dekort@digisys.net.

Ansley Ford

Owls of the Mission Valley: Hoots and Haunts

Denver Holt

April 9-10, Saturday and Sunday

Montana boasts the largest number of breeding owl species of any state, from the massive Great Horned Owl to the miniature Pygmy Owl. Spring is the most opportune time to see the many species of these silent, winged predators who breed in the vast expanses and hidden tree holes of the Mission Valley. Join celebrated owl expert Denver Holt for day and night field trips to learn about the habitats, adaptations for silent flight, hunting, breeding, and life histories of these impressive creatures. This course will reveal the mysteries of nocturnal owls that are rarely seen and may give you a chance to observe these owls in action. You may also observe the fabulous courting flight of the Short Eared Owl. Field excursions will involve short hikes through level, but brushy terrain into owl habitat to investigate snags and look for nests. We will stay and eat at the Ninepipes Lodge with the snowcapped Mission Mountains as a backdrop. Bring a sack lunch for the first day. To register, contact The Glacier Institute at register@glacierinstitute.org or 755-1211. *This course may be taken for 18 OPI credits or 1 FVCC credit. The fee is \$260, which includes meals and lodging.*



INFORMATION FOR YOU

Montana Conservation Voters is a nonpartisan organization that works to identify and elect candidates for local and state offices who support conservation issues. Established in 2003, the Flathead Chapter's growing membership's hard work and support helped elect a strong slate of candidates who will work to balance the Valley's rapid growth and the need to conserve what makes Montana special. Our Conservation Hot List provides current information on the status of bills and contact numbers for action at www.mtvoters.org or e-mail mcv@mtvoters.org.

From Randy Kenyon



...and in Conclusion...



(LOREN KRECK, *continued...*)

Loren has been an active member of the Montana Wilderness Association since its early years. He was president at the local level and vice president for the state group. Loren was involved with the creation of the Great Bear, Scapegoat and Jewel Basin Wilderness Areas. "When I see something I love disappearing -- I have to take action. When I see others sacrificing, I have to get involved."

Loren is still an active outdoor enthusiast. His love of the wilderness has lead to canoe trips in

the Canadian high arctic long after most people have lost that youthful quest for adventure. He ice skates, skis, hikes and climbs mountains the rest of us look up at longingly.

Today, Loren still saves time to keep his ear to the earth for the "small victories." The recent purchase of Melita Island, preventing its development, is one such victory. "Small victories are worth a lot -- it's a big victory for the lake." With this attitude, we understand Loren saying, "Life has been wonderful."

Written by Bruce Tannehill

President's Update, continuedSustainability Fund, increased the stipend to \$2500 for the Conservation Education Coordinator (CEC) position for one year. Board members Linda de Kort, Sonja Hartmann and Linda Winnie wrote the job description and held interviews with four highly qualified candidates. Rochelle Pope was selected as our **Conservation Ed Coordinator**. The education committee has scheduled another work party to complete tubing the bird skins which we hold and to update the educational materials which we have. Amy Jacobs and Linda de Kort are completing the Hummingbird Box which features the five species which are found in Montana: Rufous, Calliope, Anna's, Black-chinned and Broad-tailed. Ansley is in charge of **Beauty of Birds**, which is scheduled for every Wednesday evening in April.

Montana Audubon Board Reports have been ongoing all year. Bob Lopp has provided an excellent summary on page 4. Thanks, Bob, for serving on the Montana Audubon board and for helping us through this difficult process. In appreciation for his dedication, Bob has been nominated Treasurer for Montana Audubon. Congratulations (we think!).

Bob Lopp has also offered the meeting room of the beautiful new Jane Lopp and Associates building at 295 3rd Ave. EN in Kalispell for our board meetings. His invitation was enthusiastically accepted. Board meetings are held on the first Monday of each month unless otherwise noted in the newsletter. The meetings start at 6 pm and everyone is welcome.

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MARCH, 2005



The Flathead Audubon Society is affiliated with the National Audubon Society and meets on the second Monday of each month from September through May. The regular meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. and includes a featured guest who presents a conservation or nature program. The Board of Directors meets the Monday preceding the general meeting, at 6PM at 295 3rd Ave. EN, in Kalispell. Both meetings are open to all those interested.

THE PILEATED POST is published September through May and is sent to members of the Flathead Audubon Society as a membership benefit. For membership information or address change, please call Mike Fanning at 862-8070.

Deadline for newsletter copy is the 20th of each month. Contact newsletter editor at 257-0363; email submissions to pileatedpost@hotmail.com

FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

OFFICERS

President	Linda deKort	(dekort@digisys.net)	755-3704
Vice-President	Bob Lopp	52 West View Drive, Kalispell, MT 59901	257-6886
Secretary	Gail Sullivan	932 Columbia Ave., Whitefish, MT 59937	862-5775
Treasurer	Bruce Tannehill	239 Deer Trail, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-4548
Past-President	Linda Winnie	(lindawin@cyberport.net)	755-1406

DIRECTORS

2002-2005	Sonja Hartmann	P.O. Box 316, West Glacier, MT 59936	387-4150
2002-2005	Leslie Kehoe	(lkehoe@digisys.net)	837-4467
2004-2005	Neal Brown	670 Wolf Creek Dr., Bigfork, MT 59911	837-5018
2004-2005	Mike Fanning	(shrdlu@centurytel.net)	862-8070
2004-2005	Brent Mitchell	(bkmitch@bigsky.net)	756-8130
2004-2005	Leo Keane	514 Pine Place, Whitefish, MT 59937	862-5807
2003-2006	Lisa Discoe	(ldiscoe@hotmail.com)	837-1456
2003-2006	Lewis Young	50 Garrison Dr., Eureka, MT 59917	889-3492
2004-2007	Dan Casey	(dcasey@abcbirds.org)	857-3143
2004-2007	Bob Lee	(RML@centurytel.net)	257-0363
2004-2007	Ansley Ford	(aew333@yahoo.com)	857-6788

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Audubon Adventures	Kim Davis	755-1311	Membership	Mike Fanning	862-8070
Birdseed Sales	June & Rod Ash	754-2289	Owen Sowerwine	Brent Mitchell	756-8130
Christmas Bird Count	Dan Casey	857-3143	Natural Area	Neal Brown	837-5018
Conservation	Lewis Young	889-3492	Newsletter Editor	Bob Lee	257-0363
Education	Sonja Hartmann	387-4150	Program	Leo Keane	862-5807
Education Coordinator	Rochelle Pope	270-5919	Publicity (temp)	Linda deKort	755-3704
Field Trips	Jim Swab	387-4299	Refuge Projects	Leslie Kehoe	837-4467
Hospitality	Lois Drobish	756-7405	Sales	Lisa Discoe	837-1456
			Wetlands/Waterfowl	Neal Brown	837-5018

MONTANA AUDUBON

State Office	Janet Ellis, P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624	443-3949
Western MT Office	Bob Petty, P.O. Box 831, Stevensville, MT 59870	777-0780
Board President	Jim Brown, 1504 Woods Gulch Rd., Missoula, MT 59802	549-8052



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