

## "One Teen-aged Elephant or all the Calliope Hummingbirds in the World?"



The keynote speaker for the FLATHEAD BIRDING FESTIVAL will be Terry Rich, National Coordinator of Partners in Flight, a cooperative partnership of federal, state and local governmental agencies, philanthropic foundations, professional organizations, conservation groups, industry, the academic community and private individuals. Members believe that cooperation and coordination are the best ways to achieve the greatest success in conserving bird populations in the western hemisphere.

Partners in Flight scientists have recently made population estimates for all of the 448 species of land birds that regularly breed in the U.S. and Canada. This has never been done before. Which species is the most common? Which the rarest? Are there more wrens or swallows? Flickers and starlings compete for nest cavities. Who has the numerical advantage? Which weighs more: one teen-aged African elephant or all the Calliope Hummingbirds in the world? Some questions will be answered and many more will be posed for us to ponder.

Mark your calendars for June 3, 4, and 5. Come listen, learn, and laugh!

By Bob Lopp

### Donations Needed for Bird Festival Silent Auction

A silent auction will be part of the Flathead Bird Festival this year. Proceeds from the auction will be shared by Montana Audubon, Flathead Audubon and Mission Mountain Audubon. The items sold in this fund raiser are traditionally donated by members and friends of Audubon.

Can you help with a donation? We are looking for things that will especially appeal to birders and bird lovers. Items that have helped make the auction successful in the past include bird and nature related books and CDs, works of art, birding or hiking equipment, guided bird hikes or nature trips, weekend accommodations in a prime birding area,

tickets to a nature-related performance or outdoor event, handmade bird houses and feeders, contracts for homemade baked goods. Use your imagination!

You may bring your donations to the April or May Flathead Audubon meeting. Give them to Paula Smith or Linda Winnie. Or call Paula (837-0181) or Linda (755-1406) to make other arrangements.

In order to concentrate our efforts on this important fundraiser, Flathead Audubon will not hold a silent auction at our May potluck meeting this year. So if you've been saving up something for the potluck auction, please donate it instead to the Bird Festival silent auction. Linda Winnie

### APRIL FLATHEAD AUDUBON CALENDAR

**Monday, April 11, 2005: Flathead Audubon General Meeting, 7PM at The Summit, Room #3.**

**Monday, April 4, 2005: FAS Board of Directors meeting, 6PM, 295 Third Ave. EN, Kalispell**

**Sunday, April 24, 2005: Smith Lake Waterfowl Production Area Field Trip Meet 8am at Fish, Wildlife & Parks. Contact Leslie Kehoe at 837-4467 or [likehoe@digisys.net](mailto:likehoe@digisys.net)**

**Monday, May 9, 2005: FAS May potluck meeting, West Valley School, dinner at 6 p.m. No silent auction at the potluck this year. Please donate your items to the Flathead Bird Festival auction instead.**



# BIRD OF THE MONTH

I have had the privilege of creating a Hummingbird Educational Trunk with Amy Jacobs and we have had the opportunity to communicate with Elly Jones and Ned Batchelder. This is a short summary of some of the information they generously shared about their experiences with Northwest Montana Hummingbirds.

In the summer of 2004, Ned and Gigi Batchelder with the Hummer/Bird Study Group banded 2924 hummingbirds in Northwest Montana; 49% were Rufous, 48% were Calliope, and 3% were Black-chinned. Broad-tailed and Anna's have also been sighted in Montana.

All hummingbirds belong to the family Trochilidae; there are 328 identified species, all of them in the Western hemisphere. They are characterized by tiny bodies (2.5-8.0 grams), long slender bills and hovering wings. They have the highest metabolic rate of any animal, 50 X faster than a human!

Adult males are generally easier to tell apart than females or juveniles; they are brighter and often act bolder. This is also true of the three breeding species found here. The Rufous male has reddish (hence the name rufous) sides, tail, and back, sometimes with flecks of green. The gorget is bright orange red. It is aggressive at the feeder and has been seen chasing bees, dragonflies and hawks! The Calliope male has separated streaks of purple iridescence on its gorget; it is the smallest bird in North America (3 inches long). The Black-chinned male has a predictably black gorget with a band of purple iridescence on the throat below the gorget.

The females who breed here are difficult to tell apart. They have clear or slightly marked throats and all three species have white tips to their outer tail feathers as opposed to the all-dark tail feathers of the males. Rufous females are predictably rufous on the sides and tail with some flecks of red on the throat. When perched, the wingtips of both the rufous and black-chinned female are slightly shorter than the tail, but the black-chinned has a long bill and grayish crown and a clear white breast. Calliope females are the smallest with a short thin bill. When perched, wingtips are slightly longer than the tail.

The young of the year might appear at your feeders beginning in mid-July. They will look like the

females but their feathers will appear loose. Rufous hatchlings have green backs. If you have a spotting scope handy, look for the longitudinal wrinkles on the beaks of the young. The young hatch with small stubs for beaks and grow so rapidly the first two weeks that stretch marks are made!

Rufous and Calliope males appear first in early spring; black-chinned arrive several weeks later. Expect to see hummingbirds from Mothers' Day to Labor Day but feed them from April through October just in case you get early arrivals or late stragglers. Feed them only white sugar dissolved in water; ratio is 4 parts water to one part sugar. Red is needed somewhere on the feeder but do not color the food. Wash feeder well before every filling and place in a shady place to avoid fermentation. If you place feeders out of sight of each other, the hummers will not chase each other so much.

Feeders alone will not attract hummers. You will also need water (shallow bath or sprinkler) and high perches on dead branches. Wild plants beneficial to hummingbirds are: wild larkspur, snowberry, twinflower, wild currant, Indian Paintbrush and sapsucker wells in conifer trees. Cultivated plants that might be helpful are: bleeding heart, columbine, Monarda, penstemon, delphinium, foxglove, scarlet honeysuckle vine, red petunia and impatiens.

To learn more about hummingbirds, see the following websites: [www.hummingbirdsplus.org](http://www.hummingbirdsplus.org) and [www.hummingbirds.net](http://www.hummingbirds.net). You are also invited to check out the Flathead Audubon's Hummingbird Trunk by calling Rochelle Pope.

I hope that you have a humdinger of a spring. Linda de Kort

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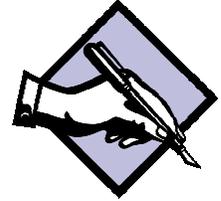
"(On) Feb 19, 2005, a hummingbird bander, Sumita Prasad, conducting research on wintering hummingbirds, recaptured a banded female Rufous in suburban Houston, TX. Data was recorded about the hummer and then the tiny bird was released. This bird was originally banded as a juvenile near Red Lodge, MT, on August 1, 2002, by Ned Batchelder. According to lat/longs, the distance between these two points is 1314 miles, as the crow flies. What tales she could tell us of her many successful trips to and from her wintering grounds."

**Sunday, May 8, 2005: Harlequin Ducks and American Dippers** What could be more appropriate for Mother's Day than a Harlequin Duck hike? Breeding females often return to the same stream where they were born, so local populations include mothers & daughters (and sisters, aunts, nieces, etc.). Easy, all morning trip with short level walks. Glacier National Park entrance fee or pass required. Number of participants is limited to minimize disturbance to these shy ducks. Please contact: John Ashley 892-3825 or [Ashley@Bigsky.net](mailto:Ashley@Bigsky.net).

**FROM THE BOARD:**

**LEWIS YOUNG**

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE CHAIR



## **Conservation Committee Report March 2005**

Flathead Audubon's Conservation Committee has been active over the past year reviewing and commenting on several projects and issues that affect natural resources in our area. In April 2004, comments were submitted on the Northern Rockies Lynx Amendment Draft Environmental Impact Statement in which the U.S Forest Service and U.S. Bureau of Land Management proposed to amend all the Forest Plans and BLM management plans in the Northern Rockies and to adopt new management guidance for lynx. It was a sound idea to adopt consistent management guidance throughout the range of the lynx, but the proposed management appeared to seriously reduce the existing requirements for lynx management without a strong biological basis for those reduced requirements.

Two large fire salvage projects on the Flathead National Forest consumed much of the conservation committee's time in 2004. Both the Robert Wedge Post-Fire Project and Westside Reservoir Post-Fire Project came out of the large forest fires that burned in the North Fork Flathead drainage and along the west side of Hungry Horse Reservoir in 2003. Each of these was a 600+ page draft environmental impact statement that required careful review and comment. The primary issues of interest to Flathead Audubon were snag management to retain adequate habitat for cavity nesting birds, proposed timber harvest in riparian areas and other forest plan allocations that generally exclude timber harvest, and road and motorized trail management to attempt to reach Forest Plan requirements.

So far in 2005, the Conservation Committee has responded to a Flathead County Commissioners' hearing concerning the potential for F.H. Stoltze Company to receive a temporary tax break for upgrading their sawmill to handle smaller diameter trees. Flathead Audubon supported the tax break because Stoltze Company has a reputation for practicing responsible stewardship on their own lands and has been in business in the Flathead Valley for decades. By being able to utilize smaller diameter trees, Stoltze can more efficiently participate in the thinning of dense stands of small trees that have been identified as a high priority for forest management and fire hazard reduction.

Conservation Committee members are Marcy Mahr, Pat McClelland, and Chairperson Lewis Young. Feel free to contact any of us with questions, comments, or issues that may deserve review.

*Until he extends the circle of his compassion to all living things,  
man will not himself find peace.* Albert Schweitzer



## **Birding Hotspots Brochure Available**

Looking for a good place to go birding? Need to know how to get there? Want to know what birds frequent the Flathead Valley in your favorite season? Which birds breed here? Which just visit for the winter? You can get the answers to these questions and more in Flathead Audubon's "Birding Hotspots in the Flathead Basin." This 6-panel, multi-colored brochure contains descriptions of 13 different birding hotspots around the Flathead Valley, with a map that shows how to get to them. It also lists all the birds that have been sighted in the Flathead, along with information on their abundance, breeding status and season of occurrence.

The Hotspots brochure is available—free!—at the monthly Flathead Audubon meeting. This is the easiest (and cheapest) way to get a copy. It is

also available at <http://www.flatheadvalues.org>. You may request a mailed copy of the brochure by sending \$1 for shipping costs to Dan Casey, 33 Second St. East, Kalispell, MT 59901.

Flathead Audubon also provides copies of Hotspots to local businesses that sell bird-related items (e.g. photo stores) or serve tourists who might be interested in birding (e.g. bed-and-breakfasts). Up to 30 brochures may be obtained free of charge for this purpose. Contact Dan Casey, 756-2681, to make arrangements.

Funding assistance for the brochure was provided by Montana Audubon, Flathead National Forest, Glacier National Park and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Region One.

By Linda Winnie

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*APRIL, 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 [piledatedpost@hotmail.com](mailto:piledatedpost@hotmail.com)**

## FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

### OFFICERS

|                |                 |  |          |
|----------------|-----------------|--|----------|
| President      | Linda deKort    | ( <a href="mailto:dekort@digisys.net">dekort@digisys.net</a> )         | 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    | ( <a href="mailto:lindawin@cyberport.net">lindawin@cyberport.net</a> ) | 755-1406 |

### DIRECTORS

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

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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| 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 |
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| 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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