



Pileated Post

Newsletter of the Flathead Audubon Society

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FAS COMPLETES EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN



Flathead Audubon (FAS) has completed a 5-Year Strategy Plan for the FAS Education Program. The Plan focuses primarily on the Conservation Education Program and activities of the FAS Conservation Educator. It also lays out the basic structure for a holistic and coordinated approach for all of Flathead Audubon's educational programs and activities, including conservation education, general meeting programs, bird counts, field trips, website and newsletter. Activities proposed in the Plan are designed to build incrementally and be phased in over the next five years.

The Vision of the Plan is to create and implement an innovative education and community outreach program involving adults, families, and children, using a systems approach to explain the interactions of all aspects of the environment in shaping our ecosystem. The aim is to foster knowledge and appreciation of the ecology and natural history of the Flathead Valley watershed and NW Montana, and to develop an informed and educated citizenry. This will be done in part by shaping and expanding the education and outreach activities already being carried out by FAS, and in part by building on and creating more opportunities for cooperative partnerships

with local schools, teachers, service groups and communities.

The Strategic Plan identifies Three Primary Goals: (1) Promote Understanding and Experience of the Natural World, (2) Increase Learning and Appreciation of NW Montana, (3) Foster Independent Inquiry and Conservation Action. FAS will work toward each of these goals by aiming to achieve a number of concrete objectives (listed in the Plan) over the next 5 years. To promote increased understanding of natural history and ecology, each FAS education activity will be designed to focus on one or more of eight basic ecological principles listed in the Plan.

If you would like to have a copy of the Plan, please contact one of the following: Linda DeKort, Ansley Ford, Mike Fanning, or Ben Young (see the last page of *The Post* for phone numbers and email addresses).

The new Plan is the result of two planning meetings of the Education Strategy Committee and many hours of writing and rewriting on the part of Committee members. Participants have been: Linda DeKort, Jill Fanning, Mike Fanning, Ansley Ford, Bob Lee, Melissa Sladek, Paula Smith, Ben Young, Linda Winnie, and Nancy Zapotocki. (*Education Plan, continued on page 2*)



MAY FLATHEAD AUDUBON CALENDAR

Monday, May 10, 2010: Flathead Audubon General Meeting, Potluck and Silent Auction. 6 PM, Whitefish Community Center. See page 3 for details and driving directions.

Monday, May 3, 2010: Flathead Audubon Board of Directors Meeting. 6 PM at 295 Third Ave. E.N. All are welcome.

Saturday, May 8, 2010: Family Forestry Expo. Details on page 5.

Thursday, May 13 & Saturday, May 15, 2010: Whitefish Bird Class. See page 5 for details.

FIELD TRIPS LIST AND DETAILS ON PAGES 7 & 8!



BIRD OF THE MONTH

By Mary Nelesen

White-crowned Sparrow

I have been watching daily for the return of the White-crowned Sparrows that frequent our yard each spring. They typically spend several days hopping and scratching on the ground below the bird feeders to expose insects and seeds to feed on before heading to higher elevations to breed.

This handsome sparrow nests or winters over much of the continent but is most abundant in the West. It is easily identified by its high puffy crown marked with bold black and white head stripes, and by its orange-pink bill, gray face, gray under parts, streaked brown back with two white wing bars. It is similar to the White-throated Sparrow which also has black and white head stripes, but unlike the White-crowned Sparrow, the White-throated Sparrow has yellow in front of and above the eye.

The White-crowned Sparrow can be found nesting on the ground in moss or grass, under shrubs or dwarf trees, or in small conifer, birch or willow trees, rarely above 30 feet up in a tree. The nest is built by the female and is a bulky cup of twigs, grasses, weeds and lined with fine grasses, hairs of deer and other animals. The finished nest is 5 inches across and 2 inches deep, and takes the female 2-9 days to complete. The male White-crowned Sparrow does not perform courtship feeding, but rather waits until the female initiates courtship. These birds are almost always monogamous.

The nesting period is between April and August with 3-5 pale blue or green eggs with brown or



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reddish spots. The female incubates the eggs. Incubation lasts about 12 days, throughout which the female is responsible for turning the eggs, as well as leaving during the day to forage for herself. The male contributes to feeding the young once they have hatched for up to 5 days; then his contribution begins to decrease. Most young fledge by the tenth day and reach adult weight by day 30-35. Young birds move very little for the first few days after they leave the nest and don't typically learn to fly until a week or so later.

According to the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, a young male White-crowned Sparrow learns the basics of the song it will sing as an adult during the first two or three months of life. He learns from the song environment of his neighborhood rather than directly from his father. Males on the edge of two dialects may be bilingual and able to sing both dialects. Their song is a mix of bright whistles, slurs and churring trills. They will share their territories with Fox Sparrows, but chase Chipping Sparrows and Dark-eyed Juncos until they leave.

In Flathead Valley, White-crowned Sparrows sing on the Danny On trail and nest near the summit of Big Mountain. I like to imagine that the White-crowned Sparrows foraging under my feeders are headed for a breeding site somewhere near Logan Pass...one of the most beautiful spots in Glacier National Park. I will be on the lookout for them this summer as I hike along those high alpine meadows.



Local Farmers Markets are Opening!

Be sure to visit your local Farmers Market this summer. When you buy produce and goods at the Farmers Markets you are helping the environment by buying locally and supporting organic farmers and you are helping your community by supporting local small businesses. Best of all, you are getting quality products, and often unusual and unique products, at a great price.



Bigfork Farmers Market Cooperative: Saturdays, 9 AM to 1 PM, May 1-Oct 9, and Wednesdays, 4 to 6 PM, June 16-September 1, both in Bigfork High School parking lot.

Kalispell Farmers Market: Saturdays, 9 AM to 12:30 PM, April 17-October 3, west end of Kalispell Center Mall parking lot.

Whitefish Downtown Farmers Market: Tuesdays, 5 to 7:30 PM, June 1-September 28, at Central & Railway near the train depot.

Whitefish Farmers Market: Thursdays, 4 to 6:30 PM, May-September, Pin & Cue parking lot.

(*Education Plan, continued....*) The primary planning meeting and the writing process were facilitated by Janet Ellis of Montana Audubon. A huge THANK YOU goes to Janet, whose contributions to the process have been enormous. The Flathead Audubon board voted to send a donation to Montana Audubon in honor of Janet, and in recognition of the hours, expertise, energy and diligence she has devoted to this project.



May 2010 Program GLACIER NATIONAL PARK 100 YEARS OLD AND 100 YEARS OF WILDERNESS



Have you ever joined other visitors at the top of Logan Pass on a fine summer day to listen raptly as the Glacier National Park Naturalist pointed out the ancient stromatolites? If so, you may already have heard Bill Schustrom as he interpreted Glacier's history.

Throughout 2010, we will be celebrating the 100th birthday of Glacier National Park. In the past 100 years, many roads, campgrounds, hotels and trails have been built throughout Glacier's 1,000,000 acres. However, over 90 percent of the Park is still considered wilderness. Bill's program at our annual meeting and potluck will focus on that wilderness, and what it means to you and me.

Bill has worked for Glacier National Park during the summers as a Naturalist/Interpreter for 23 years. He works mostly on the west side of the Park. Before that, he worked for the Park boat concessionaire for 16 years. And, prior to Glacier, he worked for two years at Yellowstone National Park. He retired in 2000 from Whitefish High School where he taught biology. Flathead Audubon is now fortunate to have Bill on our Board.

We look forward to seeing you at our annual meeting, potluck and silent auction on Monday, May 10, at the Whitefish Community Center.



FAS MAY POTLUCK MEETING SET FOR NEW LOCATION



Come one, Come All! Flathead Audubon's final meeting of this season will be held May 10 at the Whitefish Community Center for our traditional business meeting, potluck dinner and silent auction. Be sure to mark the date on your calendar and plan to bring a dish to share and any items you would like to donate for the silent auction. Each year, our members do a little Spring Cleaning and come up with plants, bird books, art work, bird houses, CDs, bird feeders, and a host of other treasures. And save up a few dollars now, so you can snap up someone else's treasure that you just can't live without!

Rod McIver will be doing his plant sale again -- the plants will be available on a trailer in the parking lot of the Whitefish Community Center. Also, the Mitchell Recycling Wagon will be in the parking lot to

accept all recyclables that your Spring Cleaning has turned up, and inside we will enjoy great food and lots of fun. This will be our best one yet—see you there!

Directions to Whitefish Community Center

To get to Whitefish Community Center: Follow Highway 93 through Whitefish. The highway turns west in town. After the last traffic light, go 2 blocks to the bottom of a hill. Just before the bridge over the Whitefish River, turn left into the parking lot. The reader board in front of the building will say, "Flathead Audubon." Of course, if you are coming from the North, just cross the bridge and turn right into the parking lot.

Doors open at 5:30 PM; Potluck at 6!



The Fourth Annual Cohen Stroll attracted twenty people. We were treated to courtship displays of red-necked grebes and Goldeneyes, both Common and Barrows. There was also a large flock of snow geese seemingly led by a blue goose and a "kettle" of ravens soaring with the thermals. In all, we viewed about 20 bird species. It was a sunny day filled with song sparrow melodies and magpie calls; Ferne would have been delighted.

From Linda DeKort, Field Trip Leader

Photo by Sheryl Hester

Some of the group on the Cohen Stroll spotting the Common Goldeneye, or is it Barrow's Goldeneye? Our leader Linda DeKort (in blue jacket and pointing) knows - with a little help from Bruce Tannehill.



Dave Menke, USFWS

SAVE THE DATES!



- ! Saturday, September 11, 2010: RAPTOR DAY, in Memory of Rod Ash, Lone Pine State Park**
- ! Saturday, September 25, 2010: OWEN SOWERWINE WORK DAY, meet at Montessori School, 9 AM**





PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT

From
Bob Lee, Flathead Audubon President



This has been an exciting year for Flathead Audubon – and I'm glad that I have been able to be a part of it. We've had great programs and terrific field trips. In addition, there have been a number of things happening that most people don't see, things like renewing our lease with DNRC so that we can continue to manage the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area ... what a fantastic place, right at the edge of town. We have also made inroads into funding for our Education Coordinator, Nancy Zapotocki. Nancy does an outstanding job and was awarded a "Forever Green" grant through National Audubon and Toyota. We've been very involved in the local conservation community and have written many comment letters concerning projects in the area.

Of course, none of this could come about without the amazing dedication of a terrific Board of Directors. These folks really are willing to grab the Horned Lark by the horns. There are some ways for you to help as well; we would like a person to head up the Website Committee and one to chair the Wetlands Committee. Each of these would require only a few hours per week, and the pay is outstanding.

The last event of the 2009-10 year will be the Annual Potluck; a terrific way to begin the summer. And with summer coming, the birding is picking up. Check the FAS website (www.flatheadaudubon.org), find some trips to join and enjoy Nature's bounty.



In Remembrance of Loren Kreck

Loren Kreck, well known Flathead Valley conservationist and outdoorsman, died March 26 at his home in Columbia Falls at the age of 89. Born in Hollywood, CA, after high school he attended the University of Southern California, and then worked for Douglas Aircraft. In 1944 he joined the Marines and became a fighter pilot. He flew corsairs off the aircraft carrier USS Bennington in war against Japan. After the war, Loren went back to school to become an orthodontist. In 1950 he married Mary Rose Fea, and a year later he and Mary moved to Columbia Falls. He moved his dental practice to Kalispell in 1957, where he served the people of the Flathead Valley until his retirement.

Loren loved the outdoors. He was an avid hiker, walking thousands of miles on the trails of our area, usually in the company of good friends. In winter he was a skier, a familiar face on the slopes of Blacktail and on local cross-country trails. One winter, he skied the entire length of the Apgar Range. He was also a skater and hockey player, and an expert paddler of raft, canoe or kayak.

A dedicated conservationist, Loren took action when he saw that something needed to be done. In 1970, he and Mary filed a \$21.5 million class-action lawsuit against Anaconda Aluminum Company, claiming property and human health were being harmed by fluoride emissions from the Columbia Falls plant. The lawsuit was dismissed in 1973, but the aluminum plant later installed new technology to reduce fluoride emissions. Loren's conservation work was not always popular with his Columbia Falls neighbors. According to an article on Loren in the March 29 Missoulian, at one point local bumper stickers appeared, saying "To Heck with Kreck!"

A passionate defender of wilderness, Loren worked for passage of the original Wilderness Act, and helped found the Montana Wilderness Association. He was instrumental in helping to establish the Jewel Basin Hiking Area, and helped lead the push for creation of the Great Bear Wilderness. Loren received Flathead Audubon's Conservation Achievement Recognition for his action to protect his community against pollution from the aluminum plant and for his work to preserve wilderness.

In the past few years Loren has been involved in developing a public trail along the Flathead River near Columbia Falls. To make the trail possible, Loren donated an easement along his stretch of riverfront, and he pitched in to help build the trail.

Loren was a longtime member and supporter of Flathead Audubon. He was a regular at our monthly meetings. You could find Loren there by looking for the group of people standing around him, laughing at one of his great stories.

With Loren's passing, the Flathead Valley has lost one of its most enthusiastic and skilled outdoorsmen, and one of its premier conservationists. His many friends in the Valley will treasure the memory of his lively humor, his companionship, and his kindness.

By Linda Winnie



COMING SOON!



Montana Audubon's Annual Bird Festival



Montana Audubon, Five Valleys and Bitterroot Audubon Chapters are hosting a fantastic festival June 4 - 6. Fifteen field trips on Saturday range from the local Clark Fork River Grass Valley Important Bird Area to a 750-acre working cattle ranch west of Frenchtown. Saturday's lunch speaker is Kate Stone. Saturday evening features a social hour, banquet, silent auction, and fabulous raffle items, as well as the dessert auction. Sunday has 15 exciting field trips, ranging from a beautiful drive to Upsata Lake to a 6-mile hike through Douglas Fir and Ponderosa Pine forests. Information about conservation, habitat, and research projects will be shared. There will be something to meet everyone's fitness level and birding interest. More detailed information is at <http://mtaudubon.org>. In case you haven't made reservations yet, the phone number in the mailed brochure (1-800-721-8550) is incorrect. It should read 1-406-721-8550.

Plan to be in Missoula in early June! Group sizes will be limited so register early!



Montana Audubon is now seeking nominations for 4 awards that will be given at Montana Audubon's annual meeting this year. The awards acknowledge individuals who exemplify a commitment to birds, other

wildlife, and habitat conservation. This year, awards will be given for Conservationist of the Year, Environmental Educator of the Year, Special Achievement, and Lifetime Achievement Award.

To nominate your candidate, please call the Montana Audubon office to request an award nomination form, or download the form from <http://mtaudubon.org/about/awards.html>. To be considered for this year's award, nominations and all supporting material must be postmarked no later than May 14, 2010. All nominations and supporting material should be sent to Montana Audubon, P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624, or by fax: (406) 443-7144. The award ceremony will take place June 5 at Montana Audubon's Bird Festival in Missoula. Questions? Contact Janet Ellis at 406-443-3949 or jellis@mtaudubon.org.



Dear Birding Enthusiast:

Please join us for the annual Potholes and Prairie Birding Festival in Carrington, ND, June 9 - 13, hosted by Birding Drives Dakota. Bill Thompson and Julie Zickefoose will again join us to lead specialty tours, along with local guides who will find the Baird's Sparrow, Sprague's Pipit, LeConte's Sparrow, and other ND target birds. Great fun will be had at our rural events every night, beginning with a jam session the first night featuring Bill and Julie. Al Batt will be our keynote speaker Friday night. Check out www.birdingdrives.com for a full festival agenda. Register early to be sure to get the tours you want. Some of the smaller tours hold only 8 birders.



- * Register: http://www.birdingdrives.com/2010_Festival_Registration_version2PRS.pdf
- * Tour Descriptions: http://www.birdingdrives.com/2010tour_descriptions.pdf
- * Festival Events: http://www.birdingdrives.com/2010events_descriptions.pdf

Ann Hoffert, President, Birding Drives Dakota

Flathead's **Family Forestry Expo** will be held this year on Saturday, May 8. Flathead Audubon is one of the original founders of FFX and we will again have an educational booth at the Expo. If you would like to help at the booth, please contact Nancy Z at naz@centurytel.net.





FLATHEAD AUDUBON TREASURER'S REPORT



From Bruce Tannehill, FAS Treasurer

Our members should be aware that Flathead Audubon Society has expanded its services to the valley in the last four years. The expansion of our Conservation Education program by funding a Conservation Educator has drastically increased the expenditures of this organization. Since July 1, 2006, our expenditures have gone from \$21,200 per fiscal year to an estimated \$35,000 per fiscal year for the year ending June 30, 2010. Fortunately, the organization's income has expanded during the same period from \$20,100 to \$32,100.

The chart below illustrates the changes in expenditures for the last four years.

EXPENDITURES FOR YEAR		2006-2007	2009-2010
Operating (Newsletter, Office)		\$11,950	\$14,180
Owen Sowerwine	(Fencing)	\$4,300	\$360
Education		\$4,950	\$20,460
TOTAL		\$21,200	\$35,000

INCOME FOR THE YEAR		2006-2007	2009-2010
Local Dues		\$3,050	\$5,100
Membership donations		\$1,000	\$2,620
Sustainability Fund		\$5,000	\$10,000
Prudential Foundation		\$1,000	\$1,000
Whitefish Community Foundation			\$1,000
Liz Claiborne Art Ortenberg Foundation		\$1,500	\$5,000
Tom and Teresa Quinn Fund			\$2,000
National Audubon		\$1,275	\$1,275

The income for this organization comes from sales, dues, donations, grants, and National Audubon Society. The chart below does not give all sources of income but illustrates the major changes in the last four years.

Flathead Audubon has undergone a radical change in the last four years. We would not be able to do this without the members' support through dues and donations. It would also not be possible without the Sustainability Fund and our other generous granters. To generate long term funding for these projects, the Board decided to set aside our savings into three funds. The Conservation Fund is intended to fund some major conservation projects in our valley. The Education Income Fund and the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area Income Fund are intended as sources of income to support their projects. The funds set aside in the Education Income Fund were contributed to FAS as a legacy donation from the estate of Jack White.

FUND	VALUE
Conservation Fund	\$41,765
Education Income Fund	\$58,000
OSNA Income Fund	\$10,000



Volunteers Needed for OWEN SOWERWINE

We are still looking for volunteers to cover the following summer Monitoring Periods:



July 1-15	August 1-15
July 16-31	August 16-31

Your job would be to make one monitoring visit in your chosen Period. For more information or to sign up for a Monitoring Period, contact Linda (755-1406, lindawin@centurytel.net) or Brent (756-8130, bkmitch@centurytel.net).

Thanks to all who have signed up to cover one of our Volunteer Monitoring Periods this year. You will get a reminder call just before your Monitoring Period starts. Your help is greatly appreciated.

And please remember to take an OSNA Volunteer Monitoring Checklist with you whenever you visit Owen Sowerwine this summer.

Use the checklist to tell us what parts of Owen Sowerwine you visited, and what you saw and heard while you were there. The information provided by our Volunteer Monitors helps Flathead Audubon do a better job of managing Owen Sowerwine.

The checklist, and the map that goes with it, can be printed from the Flathead Audubon website (at flatheadaudubon.org, go to Conservation, then Owen Sowerwine, and look along the right side of the page), or contact Brent to get copies.



FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY 2010 SPRING and SUMMER FIELDTRIPS



In addition to the Audubon field trips listed below, there are also some wonderful field trips and classes offered by other organizations in the Flathead. For activities and field trips by these groups, check:

- ◆ Flathead Chapter of the Montana Native Plant Society www.mtnativeplants.org/26 892-0129
- ◆ Montana Wilderness Association www.wildmontana.org/events/walks/summer.php 443-7350
- ◆ Glacier Institute www.glacierinstitute.org/glacier/outdoor_education.html 755-1211
- ◆ The Nature Conservancy <http://www.nature.org/wherework/northamerica/states/montana/events/>

TUESDAYS OF MAY & JUNE: TENTH ANNUAL WILD MILE WILDFLOWER AND BIRD WALKS. Please join Anne Morley of Montana Native Plant Society and Neal Brown of Flathead Audubon for an informative stroll along the Wild Mile of the Swan River. This is an easy level trail accessible to all. Walk distance is approximately two miles. Meet 10:00 AM at the Bigfork Summer Playhouse in downtown Bigfork. We try to be back to downtown Bigfork by noon. Questions? Call Neal Brown 837-5018 or Anne Morley 886-2242.

WEDNESDAYS, MAY 5, 12, 19, 26, JUNE 2 AND 9: BIGFORK BIRD CLUB WEDNESDAY OUTINGS.

Join Neal Brown for an easy morning of birding along the Swan River Nature Trail. See an Osprey nest and a snag with multiple nest cavities. (Last year, we watched both Goldeneye and Hooded Mergansers enter and exit these nesting cavities.) This stretch of the Trail also has a wide variety of Neo-tropical Migrants, making it a great area to learn bird songs. Meet at 7:00 AM at the east entrance to the Trail in the Parking Area. (From the intersection of MT Highways 35 and 209, travel 2.3 miles to the Swan River Road, turn left, cross the river, and park on the north side of the Swan River at the east entrance to the Swan River Nature Trail). Or arrive at any time 7 – 10:00 AM and walk 400 yards from the Parking Area along the Swan River Nature Trail to where Neal will have a spotting scope set up with great views of the Osprey nest and the snag. All are welcome. For more information, contact Neal Brown 837-5018.

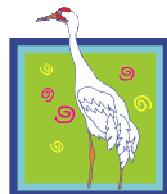
SATURDAY, MAY 8: THREE WAYS TO CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

BIRDING IN THE SWAN. Come celebrate International Migratory Bird Day 2010 with a field trip to the Swan River National Wildlife Refuge and Upper Swan Valley from 7:30AM-1PM. We will meet at 7:30 AM at the Swan River School, east end of the main parking area. The School is located at the intersection of the Swan highway and Echo Lake Road and directly east of Echo Lake Cafe. Please wear boots, as conditions may be wet, and dress appropriately for spring weather (usually cool in the mornings that time of year). Bring binoculars, spotting scopes and a lunch. This is a great opportunity to see and hear American Bitterns, Sandhill Cranes, Northern Harriers and many returning songbirds, and possibly the elk herd will make an appearance or even an otter! All are welcome. To sign up for the field trip and for further information contact Kathy Ross, evenings after 5 at 837-3837.

SPRING BIRDS IN GLACIER NATIONAL PARK. What a great way to begin Glacier National Park's 100th anniversary celebration, three days before its actual birthday (May 11, 1910). Meet Steve Gniadek at 7:00 AM in front of the Alberta Visitor Center. This field trip will offer many opportunities to observe spring birds that have been bringing pleasure to area visitors for hundreds of years. You can call Steve for further information or to sign up at 892-7406.

VISIT THE NATIONAL BISON RANGE. The main event is the opening of the splendid Red Sheep Mountain Drive for the summer season - weather and road conditions permitting. This is a wonderful drive through the range which travels through a variety of habitats and is a great place to see a broad range of birds. Come celebrate International Migratory Bird Day with walks, trivia contests, and free posters. For more information and other events call The National Bison Range at 406-644-2211.

SATURDAY, MAY 15: SPRING LOON CENSUS DAY. Montana Loon Society and the Common Loon Working Group need volunteers to help observe and count loons on lakes throughout northwest Montana on or close to this date. Contact one of the following coordinators for survey forms and information. For areas west of Kalispell, call Gael Bissell at 751-4580; for north of Kalispell, call Laura Holmquist at 758-3501; for southern Flathead Lake and Mission Valley, call Janene Lichtenberg at 883-2888; for the Troy area, call Glen Gill at 295-4693; for the Eureka area, call Christie Ferruzzi at 882-4451; and for Glacier National Park, call John Waller at 888-7829.



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SATURDAY, MAY 29: BIRDING IN GLACIER NATIONAL PARK. This trip will focus on identifying neotropical migrants by sight and ear. We will walk along McDonald Creek listening and looking for birds and stop at the Fish Creek Campground to search for Harlequin Ducks and scan the cottonwoods for vireos and warblers. We may head up the inside North Fork Road or drive along the Camas Road, stopping along the way in search of Black-Backed Woodpeckers, Olive-sided Flycatchers and Northern Hawk Owls. This trip is limited to 20 participants; please sign up for this trip with Steve Gniadek at 892-7406. We will meet at the Alberta Visitor Center in West Glacier at 7:00 AM and return by noon. Please note: Glacier National Park entrance fee or Park pass is required.



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FRIDAY & SATURDAY, JUNE 11 & 12: THE WARBLER WEEKEND AT TALLY LAKE.

Come join FAS and Dan and Susannah Casey at the Tally Lake Campground for an extraordinary weekend of birding and relaxing. The group campsite at the campground has been reserved for the weekend. Throughout the weekend, we will be focusing on warbler identification, birding by ear, and digi-scoping. This is an ideal time of year to find a wide variety of neotropical migrants; most notable is that all of the warbler species which can be found in NW Montana are found here. Plenty of other activities can be enjoyed at Tally Lake as well: you can bring your canoes and kayaks, play volleyball or horseshoes, or go hiking on one of the numerous trails found close to the campground. The cost is \$15.00 per camper per night. Please contact Dan or Susannah Casey at 857-3143 to sign up for this outstanding adventure into the world of birds.



Jeanne Marcurie

SATURDAY, JUNE 19: SPRUNGER-WHITNEY WALK. Join the Bigfork Bird Club and Arlene Montgomery of Friends of the Wild Swan for this outstanding field trip along the Point Pleasant and the Sprunger-Whitney Nature Trail. Over 50 species of resident and migratory songbirds have been identified in the trail area. Meet at the Sprunger-Whitney Nature Trail parking lot at 9:00 AM. Directions: Following Highway 83 south: From the Swan Lake Trading Post, travel 7.1 miles, turn at the Point Pleasant Sprunger-Whitney Trail sign on the east side of the highway (between mile marker 64 and 65). This is an easy 2-mile walk along an interpretive trail in the low level old growth forests of the Swan Valley. This trail adjoins the Point Pleasant Campground. Folks can camp at Point Pleasant Friday night and save making the drive Saturday morning. Montana State Recreation Permits are advised. Bring: food, water and rain gear (just in case). Contact Arlene Montgomery at 886-2011 if you have questions.



THURSDAY, JULY 1: ANNUAL FROG DAY, 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM on the Swan Lake District. Calling all "citizen scientists" — families, kids, and volunteers! Help find and count amphibians. It is fun and the Forest Service gains valuable data. The day starts at the Swan Lake District office in Bigfork with a 1-1/2 hour orientation on how to identify local amphibians and reptiles, and how to do the surveys. Volunteers work in teams of 2-5 with a crew leader. Anyone 7 years or older is invited to join us for the day! Children must be accompanied by an adult and will need a signed permission slip signed by a parent or guardian. After the training session, volunteers head to selected wetlands in the Swan Valley. Volunteers should bring a lunch, water to drink, boots to keep your feet dry and extra socks. Waders, hip boots or irrigation boots work well and some are available for loan. We'll go out rain or shine, so bring along the rain-gear and a change of clothes. If interested in joining us for the day, please RSVP so we can arrange vehicle and gear logistics. Space is limited. Contact Teresa Wenum, 406-758-5218.

SATURDAY, JULY 10: HIGH COUNTRY BIRDING IN GLACIER NATIONAL PARK. Have you ever wanted to see a Boreal Chickadee or a White-tailed Ptarmigan? This may be your chance to view these special birds. This trip involves a moderately strenuous hike to Piegan Pass enjoying birds and wildflowers on the way. We may also see American Pipits and Gray-crowned Rosy Finches. Meet at the Apgar Visitor Center at 6:00 AM and carpool to the trailhead. Glacier National Park entrance fee or Park Pass is required. This trip is limited to 15. Contact Steve Gniadek at 892-7406.



Kathy Keller

SATURDAY, JULY 17: SUMMER LOON CENSUS DAY. This is your chance to help out with Montana's traditional LOON DAY. Montana Loon Society and the Common Loon Working Group need volunteers to help observe and count loons on lakes throughout northwest Montana on or close to this date. Contact one of the following coordinators for survey forms and information. For areas west of Kalispell, call Gael Bissell at 751-4580; for north of Kalispell, call Laura Holmquist at 758-3501; for southern Flathead Lake and Mission Valley, call Janene Lichtenberg at 883-2888; for the Troy area, call Glen Gill at 295-4693; for the Eureka area, call Christie Ferruzzi at 882-4451; and for Glacier National Park, call John Waller at 888-7829.



THANK YOU!

To all who made Special Donations to Flathead Audubon in 2009-2010:

Eagle	\$1000+	Art Ortenberg Tom & Theresa Quinn Fund Whitefish Community Foundation	 Dave Menke, USFWS
Snowy Owl	\$250+	Anonymous Tom & Mary Nelesen	 dipinacramby.co.uk
Merlin	\$100+	Roy Dimond Mike & Jill Fanning Bob Lee Janice and Eugene Holmberg Bob & Jane Lopp Bob & Jane Lopp/Prudential Match Brent & Kay Mitchell Paula Smith Nancy Svennungsen Bruce Tannehill & Gail Cleveland	 © 2008 Roger T. Tidmarsh
			<i>In memory of Ferne Cohen</i> <i>In memory of Ferne Cohen</i> <i>In memory of Ferne Cohen</i> <i>In memory of Ferne Cohen</i>
Kestrel	\$50+	Milt and BJ Carlson Doris Causey Janice and Eugene Holmberg Colin & Jill Jay Dorothy Jorgensen Jill Joy Charles McCarty & Anne Lent D. Craig and Dayna McClure Ed Prach Sandy and Dana Yudovin John & Linda Winnie	 Jeannie Marcure
			<i>In memory of Ferne Cohen</i> <i>In memory of Ferne Cohen</i> <i>In memory of Ferne Cohen</i> <i>In memory of Ferne Cohen</i>
My Own Vision	\$25+	Anonymous D.L. Blank Kathryn Britton Hanna & Leo Cohan Edward and Margaret Gray Ruth Schnitzer Wayne & Rosemarie Worthington	 John Gould
			<i>In memory of Mike Britton</i> <i>In memory of Ferne Cohen</i> <i>In memory of Ferne Cohen</i> <i>In memory of Ferne Cohen</i>
Supporting Member + extra		Joe Batts gift for Mary Granger Barbara Boorman Kristin Bruninga Ruth Davis Linda & Frank DeKort Albert Dufresne Richard & Suzanne Hildner Bill Jensen Bob Lopp Richard Kuhl Robert & Inez Love Rod McIver Mary & James Sloan Betty Spettigue Charles Sutfin Bruce Tannehill Richmond & Sarah Thomason Mary Wallace	 trinityum.org
			<i>Thanks to All!</i>

THANK YOU!

To the following for Awarding Grants In Support of FAS Education Projects:



- ◆ Crown of the Continent Ecosystem Education Consortium
- ◆ Montana Audubon
- ◆ Montana Department of Environmental Quality
- ◆ Art Ortenberg
- ◆ Sustainability Fund, Lex Blood Director


Photo: iStockphoto.com

THANK YOU!

To all those who have contributed goods or services or event space:

- ◆ Kris Bruninga
- ◆ Susannah Casey
- ◆ Amy Chadwick
- ◆ Flathead County Library
- ◆ Flathead Wood Recycling
- ◆ Phyllis Gartner
- ◆ Green Team and Recycling Club of FVCC
- ◆ Hoopers Nursery
- ◆ Lone Pine State Park
- ◆ Bob Lopp
- ◆ Jane Lopp and Associates
- ◆ Montessori School & Terry Welder
- ◆ Native Plant Society & Terry Divoky
- ◆ Northwest Montana Education Cooperative & Eliza Sorte
- ◆ The Summit
- ◆ TB Gray, Inc
- ◆ Valley Glass
- ◆ Lynn Vaught & Wildlife Return
- ◆ Western Building Center & Doug Shanks
- ◆ Whitefish Community Center
- ◆ Windflower Native Plant Nursery



This is the final issue of *The Pileated Post* for the 2009-2010 Audubon season. Look for the first issue of 2010-2011 in early September. Your newsletter editors wish you a Very Birdiful Summer!



... and to the many, many people who contributed their time and talents to help with FAS education and outreach activities, including those who led field trips, helped with Raptor Day in Memory of Rod Ash, participated in the Owen Sowerwine Work Day, helped with Teacher Workshops, Great Backyard Bird Count, Earth Day, Nancy's *Together Green Fellowship for Watershed Education* projects, the FAS station at Family Forestry Expo, helped monitor OSNA, contributed Bird of the Month, Kidz Korner, and other articles for *The Pileated Post*, and brought treats to the FAS meetings;

... to our own Nancy Zapotocki, Janet Ellis and Steve Hoffman of Montana Audubon, Amy Jacobs and Teresa Wenum of the US Forest Service, Patti Mason of the Flathead Conservation District, and Mark Deleray of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, for providing outstanding professional expertise and enthusiastic support;

... and finally, to the FAS officers, board members, and committee chairs, for contributing their skills, enthusiasm, thoughtfulness, and many hours of dedicated service.



Cool

CLASSIFIED AD

[WWW.FLATHEADAUDUBON.ORG NEEDS YOU!](http://WWW.FLATHEADAUDUBON.ORG)

blog.lib.umn.edu

Like working with a great group of people on an interesting and evolving project? Flathead Audubon is looking for a Website Committee Chair. The Chair is the contact for those persons having questions, suggestions and comments related to our wonderful FAS website, www.flatheadaudubon.org. The Chair monitors the website, follows up with experts who support the website (our "Flockmaster" and website designer) on change requests of website committee members. The Chair also schedules an annual website review. If you have some computer skills and some volunteer time available each month, we would love to hear from you. Please contact Paula Smith at 837-0181 for details.

Exciting


epc.org

AWESOME AWESOME

Nominations Committee Report, May 2010

Our board members and officers made our work easy this spring! Treasurer, Bruce Tannehill and Secretary, Gail Sullivan graciously accepted our requests to run for reelection. Bruce's conscientious efforts to keep us financially secure as our fiscal responsibilities become more complicated is greatly appreciated and many of us have benefitted from the rich field trips he leads, his CD on local bird calls and songs and his contributions to the Pileated Post. Gail is able to make rhyme and reason out of our energized board discussions; we all rely gratefully on her efficient and accurate role as scribe. She also serves on the Website Committee.

Ansley Ford and Ben Young have agreed to run for additional terms, Ansley for three years and Ben for one. Both have been very active on the FAS Education Committee, Ansley as chair and coordinator of Beauty of Birds and Ben as compiler of our impressive Strategic Plan. We are so fortunate to have the energy and know-how of these vibrant young teachers on our board.

Mary Nelesen and Rod McIver have chosen not to run for reelection. Mary, among many other things, single-handedly rescued our sunflower seed sale so that it could continue and Rod has sparked up our board meetings with his witty candor and our May Potluck with his plant sale. (Look for his truck again this year.) Both have offered to help out the board on an ad hoc basis...they can count on us taking them up on these generous offers!

The new kid on the block for nominations is Jan Wassink. Jan grew up in Iowa, received a BS in Wildlife Science from Colorado State University, with three years of graduate work at Utah State University. He was an Avian Prey Biologist at Snake River Birds of Prey Natural Area, a consultant, and a carpenter. Recently, he established a magazine, 'The Llama Link,' and has been administrator for the International Llama Registry since 1996. Widely acclaimed as a freelance writer and wildlife photographer, Jan has authored five books and co-authored two books on wildlife, including Birds of the Central Rockies and Mammals of the Central Rockies. Jan is credited for photos in Birds of North America by Ken Kaufmann and has generously donated photos for Dan Casey's Christmas Bird count presentations and many slides in Flathead Audubon's educational trunk, Birds of the Flathead. In his "free time" Jan has coached baseball and basketball, led youth groups, served on the Kalispell PeeWee baseball board, District 5 School board and the National Pedigreed Livestock Council. But if you ask Jan what he is most proud of, he will quickly reply the three sons he and his wife Dar have raised. Jan would

like to serve on the Flathead Audubon Society board to promote his strong conservation values and leave a positive heritage for the next generation. In summary, our slate of officers and board members for 2010 is:

Bruce Tannehill: Treasurer
 Gail Sullivan: Secretary
 Ansley Ford: Director, 3 year term
 Jan Wassink: Director, 3 year term
 Ben Young: Director, 1 year term.



Respectfully submitted, Linda DeKort for FAS Nominations Committee

SPECIAL GIFTS

I wish to help make Flathead Audubon's vision a reality. Here is my contribution to the continued success of our chapter.

- Eagle Donation, \$1000+
- Osprey Donation, \$500+
- Snowy Owl Donation, \$250+
- Merlin Donation, \$100+
- Kestrel Donation, \$50+
- My Own Vision, amount of my choice



Dave Menke, USFWS

* * *

The FAS activity which most interests me is:

- Education Programs
- Owen Sowerwine Natural Area
- Scholarships and Grants
- Field Trips and Outdoor Events

* * *

I want my gift to recognize another:

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 Kalispell, MT 59904

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Watershed Education and Peer Mentoring Project in the Flathead



TogetherGreen is about creating a brighter, healthier future! It's a dynamic and innovative Audubon program funded by Toyota that provides inspiration, leadership and opportunities that inspire people everywhere to take action at home, in their communities and beyond to improve the health of our environment.

Recently, we reported that our Flathead Audubon Conservation Educator was awarded a one year TogetherGreen Fellowship and funding for Watershed Education and Youth Peer Mentoring for "Finding the Flathead: Discovering the Watershed in Our Backyard." The goal of the project is to increase watershed knowledge and stewardship of the local environment, as well as to inspire personal discovery and growth. Since that announcement, the details of the local project have been defined and the education work initiated with a Teacher Workshop in April.

The Fellowship project includes: 1) education on watersheds, habitat, and wildlife through a unit of study for use in the classroom, as well as in the field, 2) habitat enhancement and restoration regarding native and non-native plants, and 3) application of Youth Cross-Age Peer Mentoring. The restoration and field studies aspects of the project provide the opportunity for the peer mentoring, for the students to get outside and learn about themselves and their local watershed, and for connecting personally with the environment.

Who's involved?

- ◆ Flathead Audubon Conservation Education and the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area Committee
- ◆ Northwest Montana Educational Cooperative
- ◆ Flathead Conservation District
- ◆ Four Local Schools: Fair Mont Egan, Kalispell Montessori, Kalispell Middle School and Flathead High School Orion Program

The field studies and habitat restoration for the Together Green Fellowship will be completed at Owen Sowerwine Natural Area this spring. This will be performed after the students complete the in-class watershed education unit. The Flathead High School Orion Program students will mentor, instruct and assist the younger students. Owen Sowerwine Natural Area is managed by Montana Audubon and Flathead Audubon and is Montana's first and only designated Natural Area and a state Important Bird Area. It is located only about a ½ mile east of the city limits of Kalispell, near the local schools and in the Flathead Watershed. Look for upcoming photos and reports of our local students' experiences.

To learn more: www.togethergreen.org

From Nancy Zapotocki, FAS Conservation Educator



Our Nesting Neighbors

"Chick-a-dee, dee, dee," sounded the children at the Flathead County Library in Kalispell. A total of 62 preschool children with 35 accompanying adults learned about their local bird neighbors and where and how they nest. This included dressing up in the bird costume, enjoying the read-aloud story [Robin's Home](#) and making handcrafted cotton ball birds and nests. The program was presented by our Conservation Educator and the Children's Librarians. "Cheerily, cheer-up, cheerio..."



Keep the Flathead Clean and Green

A total of 75 people participated in the Earth Day activities at Depot Park organized by Kalispell Parks and Recreation. The event included a town clean-up, live music, and education booths with family activities by Flathead Audubon, Flathead Conservation District, Flathead National Forest, Glacier National Park, Hockaday Museum of Art, and Flathead Community of Resource Educators. Happy Earth Day!



From Linda DeKort: Twenty-five people watched the spectacular DVD entitled HOME at the Whitefish Library on April 14. A discussion about local actions we could undertake ensued. Several wished to show the DVD to their friends and neighbors; it can be streamed directly from the internet without charge on goodplanet.org.

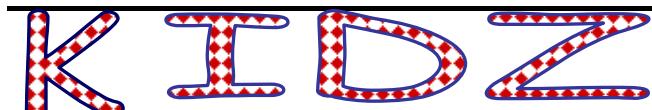


Freezeout Lake: Nice Weather, Cooperative Birds

Twenty or so Flathead Audubon birders who made the annual trek to Freezeout Lake south of Choteau for the spectacle of migrant flocks of Snow Geese were not disappointed. The weekend of 27-28 March brought sunny skies, warm temperatures, and about 75,000 white geese. More than 200 people from all over the state were there for the show. Numbers of other waterfowl were low compared to recent years, but we still saw Tundra Swans, scaup, Canvasbacks, American Wigeons, Northern Shovelers, Gadwalls and more. Goose flocks feeding near the road allowed us to scan for the dainty Ross's Geese and the darker "Blue" Geese. And Choteau welcomed the birders with open arms. A Prairie Falcon at Priest Butte, and a cooperative Ferruginous Hawk soaring over Highway 89 on the way home capped off a great early spring birding adventure.

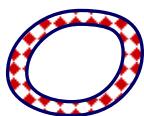


From Dan Casey, Field Trip Leader



Let's Learn More About **BIRDS of SPRING!**

By: Mariah Walker, Cassie Suddath and Amanda Bevan, West Glacier Elementary.
Teacher: Carolyn Wieringa



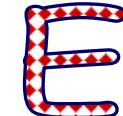
Have you ever had the chance to observe all the different birds? They come to Montana in many different varieties of shapes and sizes. Some birds, like Northern Flicker and Grouse stay in Montana year round. But most other birds migrate to warmer areas like California and Mexico. When spring comes, birds migrate back to their original home to get ready for mating season.



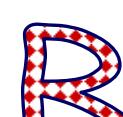
One of the most noticeable migrating birds is the goose! You'll often look up to what sounds like millions of bicycle horns honking in the sky to see a perfect v of geese flying over the clouds.



As the snow melts, birds gather in trees and bushes, eating bugs and the bird feed that you leave in your window or hanging on the trees in your yard. If you don't have a bird feeder in your yard, try getting one from the store or even making your own! That will give you more opportunities to observe the many different birds. But be very careful and watch out for bears, because they might think that it's a tasty snack for them not the birds. So if you live in bear country you should take down your feeder in the spring and find other ways to observe birds. Nesting boxes or buying bird baths are good examples of other ways to enjoy birds.



Did you know that all birds choose a male with better qualities than others? The female bluebird will pick a male with the brightest blue coloring. Male Grouse perform a showy strut of fanning out their tail feathers and using a series of mating calls to draw the attention of the females. After the male has shown off, the females will select the best mate. Then they'll start the nest.



Have you ever seen a bird's nest? Nests aren't all the same. Birds can make their nest out of many different materials. They also make them in different shapes and sizes.



Barn Swallows make their nest out of mud and grass or straw, unlike the Eagle who makes its nest on the highest tree or pole with twigs and branches. If you've ever seen a swallow's nest at first glance you may have thought it was a ball of mud, but at a closer look you would see a little hole which the swallows go in and out. Inside this little contraption you'd find between 4-7 speckled eggs.

After all of this, the eggs hatch. The next generation of all the different varieties of birds is there for all of us to experience and enjoy. Now you've had the chance to observe different birds that come to Montana in the spring!

For more information, visit these Websites:

Nesting - www.paulnoll.com/Oregon/BirdAvionnesting.html

Migration - www.backyardnature.net/birdmigr.htm

Mating - www.paulnoll.com/Oregon/Birds/Avian-countership.html

Kids Korner is coordinated by our Conservation Educator, Nancy Zapotocki. If you have a topic of natural history interest and a budding student author, send Nancy an email at naz@centurytel.net. Include the topic, school, grade, student and teacher name. Your idea could be the next article. A teacher may even give extra credit ☺ "Kids sharing nature with kids!"



NW Montana Electronics Collection Event

Recycle your old electronics –

from pocket calculators to full computers to big-screen TVs!

May 22, 2010, 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM, at Valley Recycling, 1410 Hwy 2 West, Kalispell.

This is a pay event for recycling electronics, with prices ranging from \$1 to \$50 – and for some small electronics, there is no charge at all. All items collected will be recycled in the USA (not shipped overseas) using environmentally sound practices. This year's prices are lower than last year and a larger variety of items will be accepted. Go to www.valleyrecycling.com for more details on what can be recycled and prices. Call 257-4302 to see if you qualify for pre-event pick up for businesses.





P.O. Box 9173
Kalispell, MT 59904-9173

The Flathead Audubon Society is affiliated with Montana Audubon and the National Audubon Society. Flathead Audubon meets on the second Monday of each month from September through May. Meetings start at 7:00PM and include a featured guest who presents a conservation or nature program. The Board of Directors meet 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 Flathead Audubon Society as a membership benefit. For membership information or address change, please call Mike Fanning at 862-8070. To receive this newsletter electronically, email your request to: lindawin@centurytel.net. **Deadline for newsletter copy is the 18th of each month.** Contact newsletter editor at 755-1406; email submissions to: pileatedpost@flatheadaudubon.org

Website: www.flatheadaudubon.org

FlockMaster - John Kyle: jkyle@fastmail.us

Conservation Educator - Nancy Zapotocki: naz@centurytel.net

MAY 2010



Family Birding in the Flathead

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Secretary	Gail Sullivan	932 Columbia Ave., Whitefish 59937	862-5775
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2007-2010	Rod McIver	975 Rose Crossing, Kalispell 59901	756-9445
2008-2011	Melissa Sladek	(msladek72@gmail.com)	
2008-2011	Richard Kuhl	867 North Main, Kalispell 59901	257-5793
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Publicity	Richard Kuhl	257-5793			
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MONTANA AUDUBON

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www.mtaudubon.org

Executive Director: Steve Hoffman
hoffman@mtaudubon.org
Board President: Dan Sullivan
443-4229

FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY

Membership

Individual or Family

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(Pays for newsletter and operating costs)

Supporting Membership \$35

(Extra \$15 funds local projects such as grants, scholarships, meetings, and Christmas Bird Count)

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