

## You Are Invited to Raptor Day September 6!

8<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL  
**RAPTOR DAY**  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2014



"WINTER" - RED-TAILED HAWK  
Photograph courtesy of  
KURT LINDSEY

**LONE PINE  
STATE PARK**  
9:30am – 3:00pm

**Wild Lands for Wildwings**  
50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Wilderness Act

**LIVE  
BIRDS!**

**LOTS OF ACTIVITIES  
FOR THE KIDS~  
FREE OF CHARGE!**

**EDUCATIONAL EXHIBITS - BIRD ID, MANAGEMENT & HABITAT**

- 9:30am Community Bird Walk – all ages welcome!
- 11:00am Family Program
  - Welcome – FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY
  - Fun-filled Family Bird Program with LIVE BIRDS!  
"Montana Wildwings Recovery Center"
- 12:30pm Lunch – Bring your own picnic lunch OR  
Benny's Dog House will be onsite
- 1:30pm The Wonderful Owls of Montana  
Denver Holt's "Owl Institute of Montana"  
(An alternative program for the kids will be offered - FREE of charge)

Financial support for this program has been provided by:



Raptor Day is Co-Hosted by:



All programs are FREE to Montana Residents. There is a \$5.00 Park Fee for non-residents.

Mark your calendar and come to Raptor Day! Everyone is welcome to a fun-filled day with lots of activities for both kids and adults.

Community bird walk participants should meet in the Lone Pine parking lot. Later, after a short address from Flathead Audubon and the family of Rod Ash, Doug MacCarter and colleagues from Montana Wild Wings Recovery Center will give a dynamic presentation with live birds.

Researchers from Denver Holt's Owl Institute of Montana will talk about their current research on Montana's fascinating owls.

There are many fun and interactive booths from local conservation agencies and organizations. For more information contact Ashley, [AudubonAshley@gmail.com](mailto:AudubonAshley@gmail.com) or Lone Pine State Park at 755-2706.

### LAST MINUTE FIELD TRIP—BATS! Friday, September 5, 2014

Join Flathead Audubon and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP) wildlife staff for our first ever late evening **bat viewing/listening/capturing field trip**. Meet at 8 PM at the Old Steel Bridge/Kiwanis Lane Parking lot to carpool/drive to Foy's Bend Fish Conservation Area. Call or email to register; trip is limited to 20 people and could be cancelled due to inclement weather. Trip leaders will share info about local bats, put out capture nets and bat detectors, and wait until dark to capture both bats and bat noises. Trained biologists will work the nets and process the bats. You will not handle any bats. Trip ends around 11PM. Sign up with Alissa Anderson [alissa.kate.anderson@gmail.com](mailto:alissa.kate.anderson@gmail.com) (206-498-4744) or Kaitlyn Farrar (802-681-8369) [kfarar17@gmail.com](mailto:kfarar17@gmail.com).

**IT'S MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME!  
USE THE FORM ON THE BACK PAGE!**

### SEPTEMBER FLATHEAD AUDUBON CALENDAR

**Monday, September 8, 2014: Flathead Audubon General Meeting.** Tom Ulrich presents **ANOMALIES AND CURIOSITIES OF THE ANIMAL WORLD** in photos. See page 3 for full details!

**Tuesday, September 2, 2014: FAS Board of Directors Meeting.** 6 PM at 295 3rd Ave. EN. All welcome.

**Saturday, September 6, 2014: Raptor Day!** See full details above.

**Saturday, September 20, 2014: Owen Sowerwine Work Day,** 8:30-11:30 AM, meet at Montessori School.

**Saturday, September 20, 2014: Wilderness Celebration.** See page 7 for details!

# BIRD OF THE MONTH

by BenYoung

## BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD

And the winner for the “Most Despised Native Bird of North America” award is . . . the Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*).

“An open solicitation for cowbird recipes.”

Such titles as this in a prominent North American birding journal in 1994 illustrate the collective disdain for this native songbird among bird-watchers and scientists alike. But why is there such widespread hysteria and negative attitude toward our smallest blackbird species? Why are some states spending over one million dollars annually to control Brown-headed Cowbird populations?

As the world’s most extensively-studied brood parasite, the Brown-headed Cowbird is best known for its exploitative reproductive strategy, in which it lays eggs in the nests of other host species, allowing the surrogate host to raise its young. Brilliant, right?

Well, yes, but how can you generate positive PR with such shady practices? Sure, it might win some over with its native nature: how can you not like a bird whose behavior is closely associated with the American Bison, with a historic range thought to be confined to the grasslands of the Great Plains? But imagine the labels it gets when we anthropomorphize their behavior: a bird that “abandons its own babies,” a bird that “kills the babies of others.”

While a close inspection of the methods of the cowbird’s techniques may not persuade you to start buying cowbird-imprinted stationery or 1000-piece puzzles, it may leave you marveling at the complexities of this intriguing bird.

Once migrant cowbirds arrive in Montana in mid-April to early May, multiple males will frequently chase single females. The courting males can be identified by their inferior position on a branch below a perched female, where they may perform a variety of courtship displays.

Following fertilization, cowbird females will use perches in forested areas or edge habitat to monitor with stealth the nests of other species, synchronizing the laying of its own eggs with that of the other species. The large hippocampus of the brain in female cowbirds is thought to aid in remembering the location of host nests. Preferring to parasitize open-cup nests of species with an insect-rich diet for hatchlings, Brown-headed Cowbirds are host generalists, their surrogate host species numbering 247 (second only to the Shiny Cowbird: 266 species). Throughout North America, the top two cowbird hosts are the Yellow Warbler, the top two cowbird hosts are the Yellow Warbler and the Song Sparrow. In western Montana riparian habitat, the top four hosts are the Dusky Fly-

catcher, Warbling Vireo, Yellow Warbler, and American Redstart.

Once a viable host is identified, the females wait until the pre-dawn hours to quickly lay their eggs, attempting to avoid detection. In the process of laying her own eggs, the female may remove the host’s eggs



with her beak, increasing the survival rates of her own chicks due to higher incubation efficiency and enhanced nutrition of chicks with less competition.

With an unusually long reproductive period, each female will have an average production of 40 eggs throughout the breeding season. Unlike normal passerines, cowbird ovaries and oviducts don’t regress between clutches. These birds are truly the chickens of the songbirds! The eggs, typically thicker-shelled and able to endure the puncture attempts by the host, typically hatch more quickly than those from the host (11-13 days). While only 3% of the cowbird eggs laid in host nests are successful, a parasitized nest may force the host to abandon it and re-nest, or bury the cowbird’s eggs with a new lining and start over, creating additional opportunities for cowbird parasitism.

Yet, if you’re a host, there’s a price to be paid for messing with cowbird eggs that were laid in your

nest. Experimental data from Hoover and Robinson (2002) suggest that cowbirds may respond to ejection of their eggs from a host nest with retaliatory “mafia” behavior. Their results showed that in 56% of nests where warbler hosts ejected cowbird eggs, cowbirds re-



turned to damage, destroy, or remove warbler eggs. (*Brown-headed Cowbird, continued on page 9....*)

# September Program

## ANOMALIES AND CURIOSITIES OF THE ANIMAL WORLD

Acclaimed nature photographer Tom Ulrich will draw on 40 years of photographic experience to show us “**Anomalies and Curiosities of the Animal World**” at our September meeting. Tom has travelled the world as a wildlife photographer since 1975. His photos have appeared in many publications, including *Audubon*, *National Geographic*, *Montana Outdoors* and *Ranger Rick*. His photos have earned him many prestigious awards. He has published five nature books: *Mammals of the Northern Rockies*, *Birds of the Northern Rockies*, *Once Upon a Frame*, *Photo Pantanal* and *Mt. Reynolds, The Story*. You may recall his last presentation to Flathead Audubon

in November 2012, “Pantanal—Wet and Wild.”

Tom leads tours to remote parts of the world, conducts photography seminars and workshops around the country and lectures at colleges and universities. He taught biological sciences prior to embarking on a career in freelance photography. Tom's home is in West Glacier.

Please join us at 7 PM on Monday, September 8. We meet in the *United Way Conference Center (Room 38) at the Gateway West Mall on US Highway 2 West in Kalispell*. The entrance to the United Way Conference Center is accessed directly from the parking area on the west side of the mall.

## OSNA Work Day—September 20



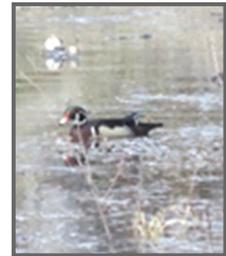
Flathead Audubon's annual workday at the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area will be on Saturday, September 20. Meet at 8:30 AM at the Montessori School on Willow Glen Drive to carpool to the trailheads. We are starting a half hour earlier than usual so folks have time to attend the wilderness celebration at the county fairgrounds, so we will be done by 11:30. Weed pulling and handrail construction on the two footbridges are the main projects. Weed pullers need only bring gloves and a hand clipper if they have one. The goal is to collect as

many hounds tongue seeds as possible. Bob and Jane Lopp are once again submitting our workday effort in a grant to Prudential. Over twenty workers are needed to qualify for the \$1000 grant.

Contact Richard Kuhl by phone (257-5793) or at our general meeting on September 8 if you want to work on the bridge project. This project is still in the planning stage so the necessary tools are still being decided upon.

From Richard Kuhl, Co-Chair OSNA Committee,

Photos of Wood Ducks at Owen Sowerwine by Shawn Richmond



## 2014 BIRDATHON - A Great Success!

In June, Flathead Audubon members participated in their second fundraising Birdathon, with two teams attempting to identify as many bird species as possible in Northwest Montana on a single day. Participants pursued pledges by phone and in person. Thanks to the generosity of Flathead Audubon members, friends and family, the 2014 Birdathon was a rousing success.

June 15 began before sunrise for some anxious birders and developed into a very productive day for the competing Birdathon teams. Tannehill Tanagers racked up **157** species, and John's Jays identified **134**. Members of each team searched from the east side of the Rocky Mountain Front and Glacier National Park to the Bison Range and Ninepipe Wildlife Management Area, along with Smith Lake and local birding hot spots for riparian, alpine, plains and city species. Both teams met at the end of the day, excitedly exchanging stories.

And the day was about more than having a good time. It was about raising money to continue Flathead Audubon's commitment to conservation education in the valley, as well as help pay the lease and expenses associated with the Owen Sowerwine Natural Area.

With the help of so many of you, we raised almost \$5000. A special thanks to all participants and donors for a memorable day in the great outdoors of Northwest Montana and for supporting Flathead Audubon's conservation goals!

From Bruce Tannehill, FAS Treasurer and Birdathon Coordinator

Flathead Audubon received a check for \$75 from Parkside Credit Union to purchase 5 FAS calendars to be distributed to 5 classrooms. Thanks to the credit union for providing this enrichment to our school kids!



## CHIRPS & SQUAWKS

From Flathead Audubon President  
Bob Lopp



### SEPTEMBER

Did you know, in September, VAUX'S SWIFTS roost in Kalispell chimneys by the hundreds during fall migration? By mid-September, SANDHILL CRANE flocks gather in the Smith Valley and West Valley areas. Resident BATS begin moving to caves or abandoned mines to hibernate.

September is the start of the Jewel Basin HAWK WATCH. To participate, hike to the Mount Aeneas area and go left about 100 yards. September 25, 2010, had the highest one day count of 367 at Jewel Basin Hawk Watch!

The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual RAPTOR DAY at Lone Pine State Park is Saturday, September 6. Enjoy a full day of fascinating presentations and programs, browse among several education booths, see live birds and enjoy guided bird walks! Lots of activities for the kids. It is co-hosted by Lone Pine State Park and Flathead Audubon.

Where do you find information like this? It is in the 2015 CALENDAR FOR THE BIRDS published by FLATHEAD AUDUBON and available for just \$15.00!! Twelve beautiful bird photos with detailed information about each bird, quick information notes throughout the month and family activity suggestions for every weekend encourage everyone to get outdoors. It is good for your health and it is fun!



September 8 is the start of another year of fascinating programs with Flathead Audubon. Flathead Audubon meets the second Monday of the month at 7PM from September through May at the United Way conference room at Gateway West Mall. Calendars will be available for purchase at the meetings. See you there!

### Highlights from May 2014 Board Meeting:

At the May Flathead Audubon Board meeting, significant board actions included:

- ◆ accepted with appreciation a grant from the Sustainability Fund
- ◆ heard updates on Warbler Weekend, Family Forestry Expo, and Go Wild Flathead
- ◆ learned that Ashley Mason has decided not to renew her contract as FAS Conservation Educator
- ◆ firmed up plans for the May potluck meeting and Birdathon
- ◆ approved a grant of \$200 to assist with printing of the Averill Viking Creek Trail bird brochure
- ◆ agreed that the President will make the determination when email voting is to be used
- ◆ accepted the budget report and approved budget for next year



### WARBLER WEEKEND AT TALLY LAKE—FOND MEMORIES



"The weather was gorgeous and so were the birds. A record number of campers attended – fifteen camping units and thirty-five people for the Saturday evening potluck, a total feast. BJ's Thai pork satay appetizers were especially spectacular, as were the hot dishes, salads, and rhubarb desserts. At least eight people were not members of FAS (yet!).

The birds were very busy establishing their territories. We saw an unusual number of black-headed grosbeaks and American redstarts. A warbling vireo nest was visible right next to the trail! We saw the female displaying sexual readiness while the male was gobbling a caterpillar and singing at the same time. In all, 54 species were observed. Flying lemons (yellow warblers) were all around us.

Dan Casey, with infinite patience, led us on bird explorations, setting up his spotting scope and telling us what we were seeing. Along with him, there

were many expert birders including Denny Olson and John Hughes who helped in bird identification.

One highlight was the large colony of carpenter ants emerging from a huge log fully engulfed in flames. The log was way too large and hot to be moved. As hundreds of ants poured out just to be annihilated, lively conversation ensued. How large does a creature have to be before we feel compelled to save it? Are we compassionate toward arthropods? What if it is carrying an egg? In the long run a few survived (Mike Fanning, unknowingly, took one home in his pants), but hundreds perished before our eyes.

John Hughes had to get up at 4:30 AM on Saturday to flush a ruffed grouse from drumming right next to his tent. Denny Olson heard an orange-crowned warbler just above his tent early Sunday. Oh, the joys of tents vs camper trailers! People lingered into Sunday afternoon when a thunderstorm came and washed away our footprints.

## FLATHEAD AUDUBON FIELD TRIP 2013-2014 REPORTS

Last year's FAS field trip season (September 2013-May 2014) was another great success, with over 400 people participating in about 15 different FAS-sponsored field trips from September 2013 through summer 2014. Attendees experienced and tallied hundreds of thousands of snow geese, waterfowl, songbirds, loons, owls and many other plant and wildlife species. FAS strives to bring you a diversity of exciting field trip opportunities again this year at no cost.

### Highlights of our May-August Field Trips

Steve Gniadek reported that 17 people counted 43 species around **Apgar and Fish Creek in Glacier National Park** on May 24. Bird sightings included a Hammond's Flycatcher nest, Harlequin Duck, Rufous Hummingbird, and Golden-crowned Kinglets.

On July 14, on the way to **Thoma Lookout in the North Fork**, 9 participants heard Pacific Wrens, Hermit Thrushes, Swainson's and Varied Thrushes, and took in a good flower show along the 4-mile trail.

Over 30 birdwatchers joined in at the annual **Warbler Weekend at Tally Lake** campground at the end of May. Both beginner and advanced bird observers enjoyed dozens of neotropical migrants. Mike and Jill Fanning coordinated the Weekend and sent us the description on the previous page.

Another dozen folks joined Bruce Tannehill and Gail Cleveland to hear and see warblers and other neotropical migrants along **Lazy Creek north of Whitefish** in early June.

On June 8, Beverly and Bob Skinner, wildlife biologists from the **Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge**, welcomed 15 birders who were able to travel to the back side of the restored Dahl Lake to see Trumpeter Swans, hundreds of waterfowl and grebes, Williamson's Sapsucker, Alder Flycatcher and many other species all while the Common (blue) Camas was in bloom. Weather was excellent. Beverly and Gael Bissell heard positive comments about seeing 2 pairs of trumpeter swans right on cue; several people noted seeing/hearing new or relatively uncommon species. Several attendees had never been there before; Gael's group returned via Little McGregor Lake to view loons and recommend adding this stop in the future if chicks are hatched.

The FAS field trip to **Wild Wings Recovery Center** in June was also a huge success, with more than the limit of 25 people showing up at the meeting site such that some participants were turned away. Attendees toured the modernized facility and learned how the birds are rehabilitated and released back into the wild or maintained for education and outreach. Wild Wings was also very successful in their fundraising "Baby Shower" in early May at Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. Proceeds and donations are being used to complete the remodeling of their new facility. Due to high interest in this field trip, ideal for people of all ages, FAS and Wild Wings plan to hold another field trip on Saturday, September 13 (see "Upcoming Field Trips", next page).

Finally, we had a great crew of 14 people, including families, join Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and Flathead National Forest interns Hilary Syvertson and Jennifer Nelson to observe **Common Loons and Loon chicks** near Whitefish. The August bat field trip was cancelled due to rain, but look at page 1 for news of the rescheduled "Going Batty with Birders!"

**A HUGE THANKS** to our amazing field trip leaders listed below. We hope to see you again this season and we encourage anyone who has a new field trip idea and/or wants to help with a field trip to please contact either Kathy Ross (837-3837) or Gael Bissell (261-2255). Thanks!

- Gail Cleveland (Cohen, Lazy Creek, Bird and Bike in cooperation with Flathead Land Trust)
- Dan & Susannah Casey (Freezout Lake, Warbler Weekend)
- Steve Gniadek (Glacier NP, Bird/Hike to Thoma Lookout in cooperation with MWA)
- Bob Lee (Mission and Flathead Valleys, MPG Ranch)
- Kathy Ross (Swan Valley, MPG Ranch, Bad Rock Canyon, Great Backyard Bird Count)
- Beverly and Bob Skinner (Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge)
- Bruce Tannehill (Cohen Walk, Lazy Creek, Bird and Bike with Flathead Land Trust)
- Alissa Anderson (Bats)
- Gael Bissell (Spring Waterfowl)
- Pete Fisher (Owls)
- Lewis Young (Bats)
- Kaitlyn Farrar (Bats)
- Hilary Syvertson (Loons and Loon Chicks)
- Leslie Kehoe (Mission and Flathead Valleys)
- Craig Hohenberger (Spring Waterfowl)
- Jennifer Nelson (Loons and Loon Chicks)
- Doug MacCarter (Wild Wings Recovery Center)
- Ashley Mason (Wild Wings Recovery Center)



If you can't make a field trip, you may also bird at your own leisure using the "Flathead Valley Birding Guide," published by the Whitefish and Kalispell's Convention and Visitors Bureaus. These guides are available at both Kalispell and Whitefish Visitor Centers, and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks office in Kalispell.

## FLATHEAD AUDUBON FALL FIELD TRIPS

All FAS field trips are free and open to the public and are geared for all ages and levels of field experience. They are led by area biologists, retired professionals, and some of the best birders in the region. For all Field Trips, dress for the weather, bring binoculars or spotting scope if you have them, wear sturdy footwear, and drive and pull off the road safely. For more information, contact Gael Bissell, 261-2255, Kathy Ross, 837-3837, or the individual field trip leader listed below. Also, a free brochure, "Birding Hotspots of the Flathead" is available at FAS general meetings (see page 3) and on [www.FlatheadAudubon.org](http://www.FlatheadAudubon.org).



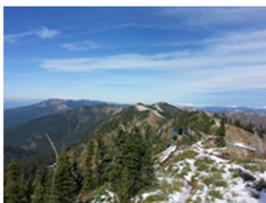
**MONTANA WILD WINGS RECOVERY CENTER, Saturday, September 13, 2014.** FAS and the Wild Wings Recovery Center have teamed up again for you to get up close and personal with **eagles, hawks, owls**, and other injured or recovering birds at the only federally permitted rehabilitation facility in the Flathead, **Montana Wild Wings Recovery Center**. We will tour the recently remodeled facility and visit with "ambassador" raptors commonly used for education as well as other birds and species recovering from various injuries. You will see how these birds are fed, exercised, cared for, and eventually released, if possible, and learn how this organization serves the wildlife of the Flathead Valley. The field trip is limited to 25 individuals and will take about 2 hours. Families and individuals of all ages are welcome. **Meet at ShopKo parking lot** (near Snappy Sport Senter) off US Highway 35 east of Kalispell at **10:30 AM** to carpool to the facility. Space is limited, so please **sign up by contacting Doug MacCarter** at [dsmaccarter@gmail.com](mailto:dsmaccarter@gmail.com), or 602-663-8611.

**THIRD ANNUAL FALL HAWK WATCH AT BAD ROCK CANYON, Sunday, October 5, 2014.** From the comfort of your lawn chair and with experienced guides and quality spotting scopes, you can enjoy the annual eagle and hawk migration at Bad Rock Canyon! Join Kathy Ross and others at the House of Mystery Fishing Access Site along Highway 2, just west of Bad Rock Canyon, from noon to 4 PM. At this time of year, we expect to see Golden Eagles, Bald Eagles, hawks, accipiters, and possibly migrating or resident Peregrine Falcons. This is the second annual FAS simultaneous count for Hawk Watch at both the Bad Rock Canyon and Jewel Basin Hawk Watch sites. If weather permits, we will compare our observations for Hawk Watch at both Bad Rock Canyon and Jewel Basin Watch sites in real time. Bring binoculars, scopes, chairs, and appropriate clothing. Contact Kathy Ross, 837-3837, for more information. You may also volunteer with the Jewel Basin Hawk Watch any day in September or October (see article below). If neither of these options works for you, stop by the House of Mystery Fishing Access Site any time on your own and you will likely see Golden Eagles and other raptors cross Bad Rock Canyon throughout the month of October. We hope you will be able to enjoy this incredible experience!

### Jewel Basin Hawk Watch 2014

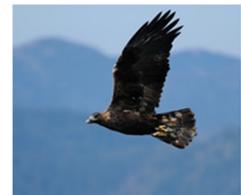
As the days and nights cool, leaves change and the last higher-elevation huckleberries ripen, hawks and eagles start their migration south along the ridges of the Northern Rockies. Locally, the flank of Mt. Aeneas in the Jewel Basin has proven to be a prime location to count and classify these birds as they pass closely by. Dan Casey of American Bird Conservancy has been coordinating annual survey efforts there since 2008, with financial support from Flathead Audubon and the Flathead National Forest, and with hundreds of hours donated by local volunteers. This year's efforts began during the last week of August, and will continue daily through the first week of November, weather permitting.

We conducted 48 days of surveys in 2013, which was our sixth consecutive full-season effort at the Jewel Basin site. We counted 2,145 total birds over nearly 300 hours of surveys, including a record 600 Golden Eagles. This year, we are likely to count our 15,000<sup>th</sup> bird, our 10,000<sup>th</sup> Accipiter, and our 3,000<sup>th</sup> Golden Eagle, and you can be a part of the effort! Observers of all skill levels are welcome on the ridge, and the site offers a wonderful opportunity to learn how to identify hawks in flight, particularly Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks.



two hawk watchers spying a golden eagle on Swan crest in Jewel Basin, October 2013 (G. Bissell Photo).

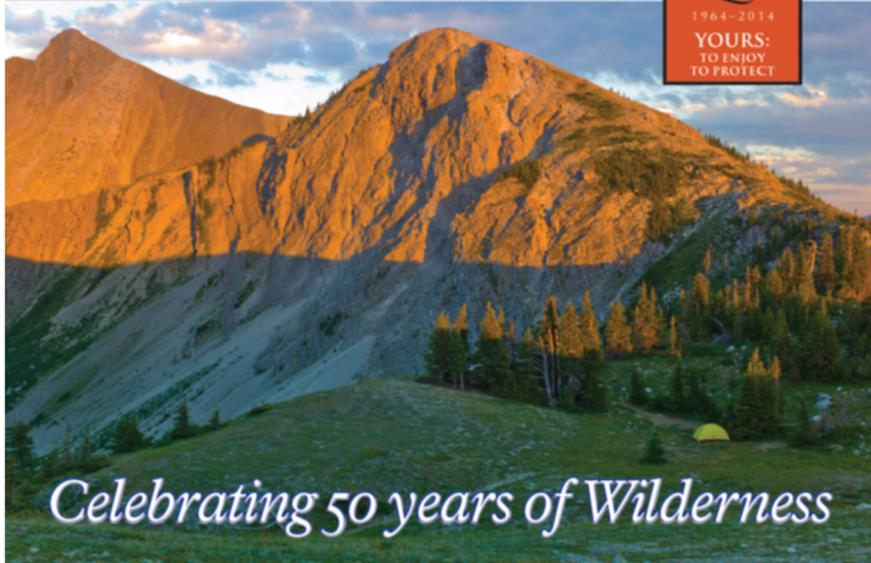
Getting there involves a 2 ¼ mile moderately difficult hike from the Jewel Basin parking lot to the ridge top, steadily gaining about 1,400 ft in elevation. The scenery is as spectacular as the birding. We will include monthly updates in the Pileated Post, and there is also a website dedicated to the effort: [https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/Jewel\\_Basin\\_Hawk\\_Watch/info](https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/Jewel_Basin_Hawk_Watch/info). For more information, or to participate in the counts, contact me at 406-270-5941.



Golden Eagle from Jewel Basin Hawk Watch (Dan Casey Photo).

Dan Casey

# Go Wild!



## Celebrating 50 years of Wilderness

Saturday, September 20, 2014 • 10:00 am to 3:00 pm  
Flathead County Fairgrounds

A Family Event • FREE Anniversary Cake • Live Music • Food • Win Prizes • Hands-on Activities

- Travel the Wilderness Skills Trail
- Taste Dutch Oven cooking
- See the pack string parade!
- Keynote address by one of the author's of the Wilderness Act of 1964

visit [www.bmwf.org/events](http://www.bmwf.org/events) or [bit.ly/FiftyWildYears](http://bit.ly/FiftyWildYears)



### ROY DIMOND—Rest in Peace

It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of long-time Flathead Audubon member Roy Dimond at his home two days after he reached 89. His wall was covered with birthday cards from well-wishing Flathead Audubon members. Roy was a great supporter of Flathead Audubon and an avid birder. The donation of his life-long stamp collection was an example of his commitment to Flathead Audubon and our education program. Roy attended every meeting he could manage, helped with every project his body would allow, always with a positive "I'll help" attitude.

The "Honor Flight Trip" to Washington, D.C., was the highlight of Roy's military career, but observing nature and particularly birds, was the highlight of his day-to-day life. He was everywhere in the Flathead Valley. What an inspiring man. How the entire valley will miss him. He will be greatly missed as a birder but much more as a wonderful friend. There will be a celebration of his life in the near future.

During the rest of 2014, in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of passage of The Wilderness Act, we offer quotes honoring our wilderness heritage, like the following:

*"Wilderness is an anchor to windward. Knowing it is there, we can also know that we are still a rich nation, tending our resources as we should--not a people in despair searching every nook and cranny of our land for a board of lumber, a barrel of oil, a blade of grass, or a tank of water."* - Senator Clinton P. Anderson, former Senator from New Mexico and Secretary of Agriculture.



Here's a good explanation of "Exit Pupil" for anyone thinking of purchasing new binoculars.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0oENTX3p7F0&feature=youtu.be>



### Bird Notes from American Bird Conservancy

A movie has been made about them, but that doesn't protect the Red-tailed Hawks of New York City from rat poison. Two chicks, offspring of the celebrity Red-tail Hawks, Pale Male and Zena, are recovering from ingested rat poison. They were removed from their nest by a rehab group. A third chick is believed to have died after ingesting rat poison. There have been repeated incidents of hawks being poisoned in NYC. Pale Male's former mate, Lima, died last February, from—you guessed it—rat poison ingestion. NYC has a rat problem but ABC is hoping there can be a safer control since the rat poisons pose a danger not just to the hawks, but to other birds, wildlife, pets and humans.

For more about bird conservation activities and news, visit [www.abc.org](http://www.abc.org).

### ABC's Dan Casey Receives Partners in Flight Award

From *Bird Calls*, July 2014 (Vol. 18, No. 2), Newsletter of the American Bird Conservancy



ABC staff, left to right: George Fenwick, David Pashley, Dan Casey, and David Younkman



Dan Casey, ABC's Northern Rockies Conservation Officer, recently received the Partners in Flight Leadership Award for exceptional contributions to bird conservation, including his current leadership effort to coordinate protection of Long-billed Curlew populations and breeding habitat throughout western North America. Dan has a long history of conservation achievement, including six years as chair of Montana Partners in Flight and past chair of the Partners in Flight Western Working Group. He authored the *2000 Montana Bird Conservation Plan* and was named 2006 Montana Conservationist of the Year. Also, Dan has served on the technical committees of the Prairie Potholes, Northern Great Plains, and Intermountain West Joint Ventures.

Each year, Partners in Flight recognizes individuals, groups, or organizations that have made outstanding contributions to the area of bird conservation. This year's awards were presented on May 29, 2014, during a ceremony in Washington D.C held to celebrate International Migratory Bird Day. Partners in Flight is an international cooperative effort involving partnerships among federal, state and local government agencies, philanthropic foundations, professional organizations, conservation groups, industry, the academic community, and private individuals, aimed at conserving the bird populations of the Western Hemisphere.

Dan is currently the Northern Rockies Conservation Officer for the American Bird Conservancy, with his office located in Kalispell. Dan is a long-time, active member of Flathead Audubon and is well known among members and the community as a source of bird identification and bird conservation information.

### 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



\*\*\*\*\*

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:

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Please send a notification of this gift to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

Donor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please do not acknowledge my gift in the Pileated Post

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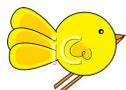
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### First Recorded Bluebird Twins Found by NestWatch Volunteer

Last year an Eastern Bluebird laid three normal eggs and one large egg in one of NestWatcher Gerald Clark's nest boxes. A few weeks later he had five nestlings in the box, and his finding became a scientific paper on [the first recorded instance of twins in bluebirds](#). (The Lab's Dr. Caren Cooper tackled [just how rare an event this is](#) in a blog post for the journal PLOS.) The finding is a direct example of how citizen scientists contribute to scientific discovery each time they participate. [Try NestWatch yourself next season!](#) (Control-Click on [colored text](#) above for great pictures of the nest, eggs, and twins!)

## SONGBIRDS IN YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE

The U.S. Postal Service celebrates ten melodic voices with the **Songbirds** stamps: western meadowlark, mountain bluebird, western tanager, painted bunting, Baltimore oriole, evening grosbeak, scarlet tanager, rose-breasted grosbeak, American goldfinch, and white-throated sparrow. Each colorful bird is shown perching on a fence post or branch embellished with vines, pinecones, leaves, or flowers. The artwork appears against a plain, white background. Illustrator Robert Giusti painted the portraits, based on photographs. Art director Derry Noyes designed the stamps. **Songbirds** will be issued as Forever® stamps in booklets of 20.



**Check Out Cornell's New [Funky Nests in Funky Places](#) challenge!**  
Get started with easy [How to Find Funky Nests](#) download!



### Get Fascinated by Feathers With New "All About Bird Biology" Site

Feathers are amazing: they're light, aerodynamic, beautifully patterned, colorful, waterproof, and warm. To help curious minds of all ages learn about these impressive structures, we've just launched an in-depth, immersive website. It's the first stage of our new All About Bird Biology project, with more to come. Try out [All About Feathers](#), including these great elements:

- ◆ Self-paced interactive features with custom art and video
- ◆ Free Powerpoint downloads of all the illustrations and animations, especially useful for teachers
- ◆ Accompanying reference article that provides quick access to the science
- ◆ A video library featuring 90+ videos that bring bird biology to life  
From the Cornell Lab of Ornithology



*I always suspected that the smaller birds used geese for transportation and now I have proof. Took this picture when we camped at Freezout!  
Jeannie Marcure*

*(Brown-headed Cowbird, continued from page 2 ...)* When these hosts renested, 85% of the new nests were parasitized. However, in nests where cowbird eggs were not ejected by the host, only 6% experienced depredation by returning cowbirds. In fact, hosts who accepted cowbird eggs had 60% more offspring than those who ejected cowbird eggs.

With such a potential impact on host productivity, it's no surprise to see cowbird control measures being enacted in regions with federally endangered host species that are susceptible to cowbird parasitism. Such species include the Kirtland's Warbler (Michigan), Black-capped Vireo (Texas), Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (desert SW), and the Least Bell's Vireo (California). Although the potentially serious threat of cowbirds to the populations of these four species is undeniable, they may be a scapegoat for population declines among other native passerines which are more likely the result of habitat loss and fragmentation.

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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 PM and include a featured guest who presents a conservation or nature program. The Board of Directors meet the Monday preceding the general meeting, at 6 PM 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](mailto:lindawin@centurytel.net). Deadline for newsletter copy is the 18th of each month. Contact newsletter editor at 755-1406; email submissions to: [lindawin@centurytel.net](mailto:lindawin@centurytel.net)**

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