



The Pileated Post

VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 ***** JANUARY, 1980

The Flathead Chapter of the Audubon Society meets on the second Monday of each month in the Bigfork Grade School Audio-Visual Room. The business meeting is at 7:30 and the program is at 8:00.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Feb. 11. MEETING. Program by Wilbur Rehman, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, on the proposed hydro-electric project at Kootenai Falls near Libby. May include a movie featuring the Army Corp of Engineers study of the Lower Flathead dam sites.
- Mar. 6. Meeting. Slides and lecture by Doug Chadwick, wildlife biologist and National Geographic Magazine feature article author. Topic will be of his choosing. Possibilities include: " Goats of the Swan Range and Glacier Park," "The Arctic Wildlife Range in Alaska," or "A Visit to the Himalayas."
- Apr. 14. ^{two} Meeting. Program by Jerry DeSanto, Glacier National Park Ranger and recognized wild flower authority. Lecture and slides will be on "Alpine Wildflowers of Glacier Park High Country."
- May, 2: ⁵ Audubon Regional Conference at Logan, Utah. Will be held at the Utah State University campus. Field trips will include the famous Bear River National Wildlife Refuge, Grays Lake NWR (for whooping cranes), a canoe trip, natural history discussions and a cookout. Lodging can be in motels or in University housing (3 bedroom, kitchenette apartments that sleep 6 are \$ 22.50 per day). Registration is \$ 5.00 per person for meetings. A car will be going from our chapter. Can we make it two? Contact Wanda Jamieson (837-5303) or Marcy Bishop (883-4146) for rides or information.
- May, 12. ^{two} Meeting. Program to be announced. Will probably include a report on the Regional Meeting.
- May, 31. ^{and} State Audubon Council Meeting. Hosted by Pintlar Chapter. Meeting will be in Butte.
- Jul. 19-20. ^{last year.} State Audubon Weekend Workshop at the National Bison Range. The program presentation will be by the Bison Range Staff and we are the host club.

Did you know that the annual Audubon Christmas bird counts were initiated in the early 1900's as a substitute for the Christmas Hunt? The Christmas Hunt aimed for as large a bag as possible and it didn't matter what the game was. It could be anything from chickadees to wolverines. The Audubon count was devised to help end such useless slaughter.



THE FLATHEAD CHAPTER 1980 CHRISTMAS COUNT

- Wanda Jamieson



Twenty-nine people participated in the sixth annual Christmas Bird Count at Bigfork Saturday December 22. Although it was a cold and windy day, observers were able to locate 64 species of birds.

In the Ferndale area, Newton Reed, Barbara Fenner, and Dan DeJong and his daughter Rena were able to find white-winged crossbills and a Cassin's finch. Newton had been encouraging a white-throated sparrow to stay near his feeders, and all of his group were able to "count" it.

Dave Shaner located a great horned owl near his home.

Betty Rose and Jean Robocker found pine grosbeaks, a red crossbill, turkeys and 2 rough-legged hawks, between Flathead River and Highway 35.

In Lower Valley, Mae Sudan and Barbara Baxter found 82 turkeys, 14 mourning doves, a short-eared owl, a marsh hawk, long-billed marsh wrens, and red-winged blackbirds.

Stan and Janet Bones, on East shore added Townsend's solitaire and one winter wren to the list.

In the Holt area, Elly Jones saw whistling swans, American wigeons, a canvasback, hooded mergansers, and 44 ring-billed gulls.

Because Marcy Bishop was unable to participate in the count, her son Matt surveyed the north shore of Flathead Lake and came up with gray partridges, tree sparrows, 400 coots, 600 geese, and one pheasant.

Great blue herons were seen only on the stretch of Flathead River patrolled by Joe and Marjorie Loos in their boat. (Br-r-r-r!!!).

Martha Oliver spent only 1½ hours watching her feeder and saw 19 species, adding 4 different species to the count --- starling, robin, blue jays, and American goldfinches. (Later that afternoon she saw an American kestrel halfway between Kalispell and Whitefish. We tried to stretch the count circle, but it just wouldn't reach that far).

Other observers were Lillian Tubb, Ruth Steel, Marie Gaiser, Debby Thomas, Menno and Pat Troyer, Jack White, Betty Bartlett, Dave Hudak, Jack and Ursula Whitney, Wanda Janieson, and Jacqueline Brewer.

The most common bird on the count was the black-capped chickadee, being reported by 17 parties. Ravens, mountain chickadees, red-breasted nuthatches, evening grosbeaks, flickers and hairy woodpeckers were reported by 10 to 13 groups.

The twenty-nine observers spent 56½ hours at feeders and 76½ hours in the field and counted 3674 birds. Field observers covered 180 miles by car, 55 miles on foot and 4 miles by boat.

Breakdown of the 64 species is as follows: Great blue heron, 8; whistling swan, 12; Canada goose, 850; mallard, 95; American wigeon, 5; canvasback, 1; common goldeneye, 91; Barrow's goldeneye, 11; bufflehead, 11; hooded merganser, 3; common merganser, 62.

Rough-legged hawk, 3; bald eagle, 24; (23 a, 1 i); marsh hawk, 1; ruffed grouse, 13; ring-necked pheasant, 2; gray partridge, 6; turkey, 100; American coot, 401; ring-billed gull, 45; gull sp., 4; rock dove, 40; mourning dove, 14; great horned owl, 1; short-eared owl, 1.

Belted kingfisher, 3; common flicker, 24; pileated woodpecker, 5; hairy

woodpecker,18; downy woodpecker,8; gray jay,9; blue jay,3;Stellar's jay,42; black-billed magpie,67; common raven,64; common crow,6; Clark's nutcracker,10; black-capped chickadee, 212; mountain chickadee,56; chestnut-backed chickadee,12; white-breasted nuthatch,6; red-breasted nuthatch, 63; pygmy nuthatch,35; brown creeper,16; dipper,6;winter wren,2; long-billed marsh wren,2.

American robin,1; Townsend's solitaire,1; golden-crowned kinglet, 63,Bohemian waxwing,519; starling,1; house sparrow,8; red-winged blackbird,29; evening grospeak, 353; Cassin's finch,1; pine grosbeak,3; pine siskin,73; american goldfinch,2; red crossbill,1; white-winged crossbill,8; dark-eyed junco,101; tree sparrow,30; white-throated sparrow,1; song sparrow,6.

The turkey count (100) was high for this species and the pheasant count of 2 was decidedly low.

STATE COUNCIL URGES MELCHER TO SUPPORT UDALL-ANDERSON ALASKA LANDS BILL

A mailgram was sent to Senator Melcher Saturday October 6 stating "Fifty persons representing over 2000 Audubon Society members in Montana are meeting today in Bigfork, Montana for the semi-annual meeting of the Montana Audubon Council. The council unanimously endorses the Anderson-Udall Alaska Lands Bill, and hopes the bill also has your support."

The following was Senator Melcher's reply:

Thanks for your mailgram on behalf of the Montana Audubon Council regarding the Alaska lands legislation.

I supported the Senate Energy Committee version of the Alaska Lands Bill mainly because it provides greater multiple use of federal lands in Alaska and better opportunity for sound development of native and state lands.

We can preserve the truly natural and scenic wonders of the state while providing for environmentally responsible development. We do have the promises to keep that were made in the Statehood Act and Native Claims Settlement Act. While I don't think either bill does a particularly good job of providing access and coordinated multiple use management, the Senate Energy bill does a better job than the Udall-Anderson bill.

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY GIVES GOALS

The national Audubon Society recently reviewed and approved the following goals:

1. Conserve wildlife and the life-support systems of the natural environment.
2. Promote rational strategies for energy development and use, stressing conservation and renewable energy sources.
3. Protect life from pollution, radiation, and toxic substances.
4. Further the wise use of land and water.
5. Speak for the public interest in public lands and waters.
6. Promote awareness of and actions to solve global environmental problems.
7. Work for stabilization of world population.



BIRD BATH HEATERS are available providing we can order 10 of them. They cost \$ 20.00 apiece, and will provide your birds with open water through the winter. If you are interested in such a heater please notify Marcy Bishop. When we get orders for 10 of them we will send for some.



BIRD WALK QUIZ

Fill in the blanks from the list of 20 common birds below.

An old-timer took me on my first bird walk on spring morning. A House _____ (1) flew up as we started down the park. On the lawn a short-tailed, shiny black _____ (2) waddled about near where a _____ (3) was standing, head cocked listening for worms. A crested _____ (4) shrieked in the oak tree up which a Downy _____ (5) was hitching its way. In contrast a Brown _____ (6) spiraled up the neighboring tree where a _____ (7) Owl was looking out of its hole. Overhead a _____ (8) cawed and a _____ (9) was flying from the lake to its favorite garbage dump. From a thicket came the vigorous scratching of a _____ (10) and from a branch above it we saw, and heard the uncoiled squeak of _____, the Brown-headed _____ (11). Nearby on the feeder a Black-capped _____ (12), a White-breasted _____ (13), and a Red-winged _____ (14) were busy eating. Over the garden a black and yellow _____ (15) bounced in characteristic flight. An orange and black _____ (16) piped its treetop welcome to spring in loud whistles. From the barn door a fork-tailed _____ (17) whizzed out. On a dead apple tree perched that harbinger of spring, the _____ (18). From a distant creek came the rattle of a _____ (19) flying to its lookout perch over the water. Near at hand from a maple I heard the dry trill of the Chipping _____ (20). My first half-hour in the field that spring taught me how easy it was to see 20 species of birds.

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|---------------|
| a. A. goldfinch | h. Cowbird | o. Robin |
| b. Barn swallow | i. Crow | p. Screech |
| c. Blackbird | j. Finch | q. Sparrow |
| d. Kingfisher | k. Gull | r. Starling |
| e. Bluebird | l. Blue Jay | s. Towhee |
| f. Chickadee | m. Nuthatch | t. Woodpecker |
| g. Creeper | n. Oriole | |

Answers are elsewhere in the newsletter. This quiz is sort of easy but we will try to have one each issue and they will get harder as we go along.

GLACIER PARK EAGLES



The maximum eagle count in Glacier Park this fall was 516 on November 14th. Dr. Riley McClelland has color marked 35 of these with bright orange patagial markers. These wing markers carry letter codes A30 through A65. Six of the big birds were fitted with radio transmitters and are being tracked by graduate students from the U of M. One of these birds is still in the Swan Lake area. Please report any sightings to Dr. Riley McClelland, 1612 Bel Air, Missoula, Mt 59801 and to the Bird Banding Laboratory, Laurel Maryland, 20811. Elly Jones is monitoring the Swan Lake bird.

AUDUBON INVITED TO M.W.A. CONVENTION

The Montana Wilderness Association invited the State Audubon Council to give a brief presentation at their annual convention at the Outlaw Inn in Kalispell in December. It was a gesture of cooperation and recognition that the two groups have compatible goals. While M.W.A. activity is directed toward preservation of the larger roadless areas, Audubon is interested in a general quality of life and the security of specific habitats usually directed toward providing for certain wildlife.

The presentation was given by Arnold Bolle, President of the 5 Valleys Chapter on behalf of Bebe Fitzgerald, State President, and outlined the history of Audubon in the State, its activities and goals. There are currently over 2000 Audubon members in Montana and six organized chapters, Yellowstone Valley (Billings), Last Chance (Helena), Sacajawea (Bozeman-Livingston), Five Valleys (Missoula), Pintlar (Anadonca-Butte), Flathead, (Bigfork-Kalispell), and one additional chapter is being formed at Miles City. Great Falls area individuals are also discussing a chapter.

Bolle cited the primary goals of the state organization to be: Fostering communications among the local clubs, encouragement of cooperation in various activities and to provide an effective voice in environmental matters.

SNOWY OWLS have been seen in Montana this year and a GYRFALCON was located near St. Ignatius. Both of these birds are arctic species. They feed on prey which is cyclic, with the owl feeding primarily on lemmings and the Gyrfalcon using ptarmigan as its main food. Both of these prey species occur in reduced numbers during the same years, forcing the birds to migrate in search of food.



STUDY SKIN COLLECTION

The Flathead Audubon Society/Flathead Valley Community College permit to maintain a collection of study skins has been approved but we do not as yet have the permit in hand. As soon as it is received we will begin having study sessions to prepare bird skins for this collection. Jean Robocker will be in charge of the collection. Study skins are mounted, not in living attitudes but as simple mounts constructed on a dowel for easy handling and storage. See figure 1. Study sessions will include techniques for skinning, construction of bodies, final mounting of specimen and proper tagging and labeling. Some regular taxidermy techniques will be discussed also and the classes will be under the direction of Marcy Bishop, a licensed taxidermist. Several sets of tools have been ordered that are required for this skin preparation. Final study skins will be stored in drawer trays in stack cabinets. Help will be needed in the construction of these collection boxes.

Fig. 1

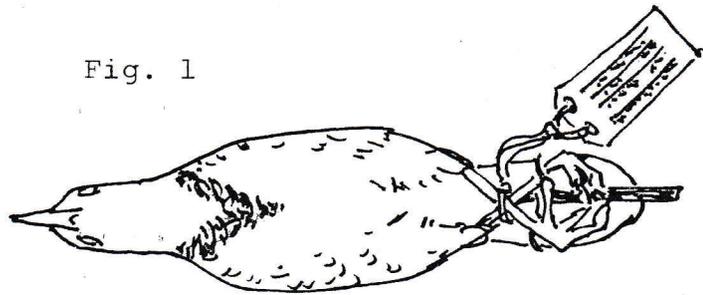
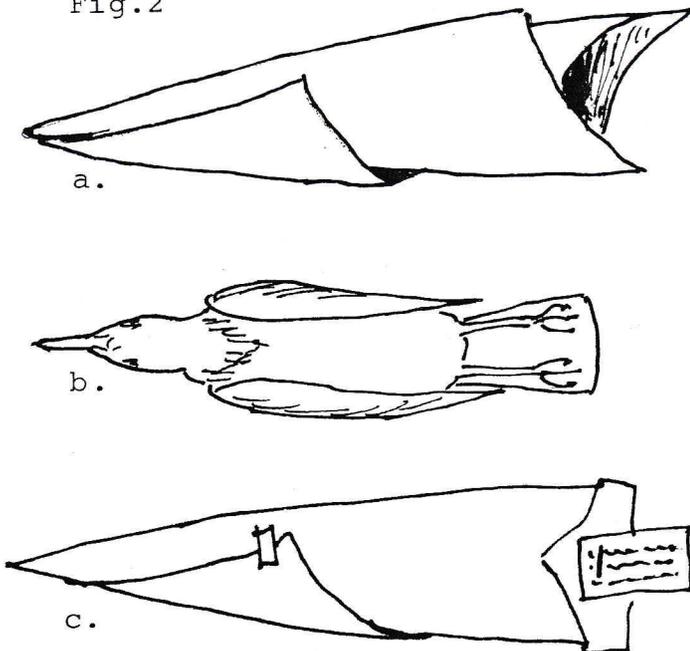


Fig. 2



Persons saving salvage birds for this collection are asked to store them in the following fashion: Brush off any dirt and smooth down feathers.

Note color of soft parts (eyes, feet, bill any bare skin on face). Make a cone of newspaper or the like as shown in Figure 2a. and drop the bird in beak first, with legs trailing and wings folded naturally at sides (Figure 2b.) This smooths the feathers down and keeps them in an unruffled condition. Fold and staple the open end and attach a tag (Fig. 2c.) The tag should give the following information: Date salvaged, by whom, exact location, type of habitat, and how acquired (window kill, drowned etc). These items of information will be needed for constructive use of the skin and also for the reports that must be filled out in conjunction with the permit. Freeze until mounted.

Anyone interested in participating in this project please contact Jean Robocker or Marcy Bishop. Again it must be stressed that we cannot proceed on this work until we have the permit in hand.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- Janet A. Barker, 112 O'Brien, Whitefish, Mt. 59937
 Roger Q. Barnard, P.O. Box 993, Kalispell, Mt. 59901
 Rick W. Blair, 4034 Whitefish Stage Road, Kalispell, Mt 59901
 Dr. Cotner, Box Z, Columbia Falls, Mt. 59912
 Wilma Dotson, 512 E. Lincoln Blvd., Libby Mt. 59923
 Rodney Dresbach, 332 College Ave., Kalispell, Mt 59901
 Olga J. Erickson, Box 645, Libby, Mt. 59923
 Mary Fetter, Box 744, Bigfork, Mt. 59911
 The George Firpo family, P.O. Box 797, Bigfork, Mt. 59911
 Chuck W. Gudeman, 249 Swan Retreat, Bigfork, Mt. 59911
 Jerry and Donna Haugen, 1518 Louisian Ave., Libby, Mt. 59923
 Mrs. J.C. Heglie, P.O. Box 444, Polson, Mt. 59860
 Betty Hennessy, 1103 Dakota Ave., Libby, Mt. 59923
 Beth Hodder, Box 292, West Glacier, Mt. 59936
 Mr and Mrs Daniel D. Johns, P.O. Box 812, Kalispell, Mt. 59901
 Robert Johnson, P.O. Box 144, Libby, Mt. 59923
 Fred E. Krause, 455 Lodgepole Road, Kalispell, Mt 59901
 Paula Kreirer, 601 Park Ave., Whitefish, Mt. 59937
 Larry Lewis, 1355 S. Karrow Ave., Whitefish, Mt. 59937
 Rev. and Mrs. Joe Loos, P.O. Box , Bigfork, Mt 59911
 Dawn Oehlerich, Box 1163, Whitefish, Mt 59937
 David Munson-Young, P.O. Box 297, St. Ignatius, Mt. 59865
 Mrs. Martha L. Oliver, Box 12, Bigfork, Mt. 59911
 Dave Panebaker, Box 636, Walton Ranger Station, Essex, Mt. 59916
 Steve and Bridget Parker, Rt 1, Box 37B, Eureka, Mt. 59917
 Bruce L. Peck and family, 109 Lake Hills Drive, Bigfork, Mt 59911
 David and Lori Percival, 530 S. Ferndale Drive, Bigfork, Mt. 59911
 Mary A. Ross, P.O. Box 875, Kalispell, Mt. 59901
 Mr. and Mrs. Bill Royer, Box 252, Lakeside, Mt. 59922
 John and Marian Schorger, Jr., Box 174, Whitefish, Mt. 59937
 Tim and Karen Scott, Rural Route, Dayton, Mt. 59914
 Dave Shaner, 4135 Montana 35, Bigfork, Mt 59911
 John Thomson, 709 California, Libby Mt. 59923
 Ann Vert, Box 1522, Polson, Mt. 59860
 Jan L. Wassink, 270 Farview Drive, Kalispell, Mt 59901
 David Weld, West Shore Route, Polson, Mt. 59860
 Winton Weydemeyer, Box 77, Fortine, Mt. 59918
 Dr. Braden Wolf, Box 1599, Kalispell, Mt 59901
 Chris and Ken Brewer, P.O. Box 469, Lakeside, Mt. 59922

We wish to extend a warm welcome to these many new members of our chapter and we hope that you will be able to attend our meetings and participate in our field trips in the future.



ANSWERS TO QUIZ -1-j,2-r,3-o,4-l,5-t,6-g,7-p,8-i,9-k,10-s,
 11-h,12-f,13-m,14-c,15-a,16-n,17-b,18-e,19-d,20-q.

FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY
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A red mark on your address label indicates your membership is about to expire or has expired. Would you please renew?

A membership in Flathead Audubon Society is also a membership in National Audubon Society. You will receive the chapter newsletter and Audubon magazine.

Special membership rates are available for senior citizens.

1980 FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

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FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY

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