



# The Pileated Post

VOLUME 10      NUMBER 9      DECEMBER 1986

BOARD OF DIRECTORS dinner meeting, 5:30 PM at Streeter's Korner Kitchen, Bigfork. Open to all interested members.

1986		DECEMBER						1986	
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT			
N. M. 1st-30th	1	2	3	4	5	6			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
14	15	16	17	18	19	20			
21	22	23	24	25	26	27			
28	29	30	31	F. Q. 8th	F. M. 16th	L. Q. 24th			

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING, Flathead Bank of Bigfork meeting room. 7:30 Business meeting. 8:00 Program: Film, "The Wolf and the White-tail". This is an excellent wildlife film by Mark Stoffer Productions of TV's "Wild America". 8:30-9:30 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT organizational meeting--Jean Robocker.

METEOR SHOWER. If it is a clear night, as many as 20-40 per hour may be seen.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT DAY, dawn to dusk. 5:00 PM, annual potluck dinner, Bigfork Senior Citizens Center. Bring something good to eat and a hearty appetite. We provide the ham.

## EDITOR'S DESK

LEO KEANE

Driving home tonight I saw the constellation Orion, "The Hunter", in the eastern sky. It made me think of many hunting mornings of years past when it was Orion that shone above the waters and fields. As the great hunter strode across the heavens the sun would slowly steal the night away and the earth would come to life again.

Those hunting mornings are favorite memories, the breath-taking thrill of first light and the accompanying rush of wings. I never dreamed I'd ever be "too busy" to be out there when the birds are coming down. But it seems to have happened, and this year in particular. I missed it entirely, the migration, and that is a sad thing. The spectacle of migrating birds is both a natural wonder and a sign that all is right with the world--or at least a symbol of hope--for as long as the great flocks move down, then the earth is still a wild enough place for the hunters.

The story following, on page two, submitted by Mr. and Mrs. Lane, captures that sense of wonder experienced by those who witness nature in a rare moment. We will continue the theme of migration into the January issue to make room for more on this remarkable event. Meanwhile, there is lots of news here in this last issue from 1986. We've come full circle--back to Christmas Bird Count time! I've sure enjoyed the year, even if it has been too busy, and am looking forward to seeing you again in the Post through 1987.

Happy Holidays!



A MIGRATION TALE  
Arlie and Harrison Lane

The day was crisp and clean, the autumn leaves in the valley created a palette of color, and the not-far-off blue of the Bear Paw Mountains promised new vistas and excitement. Returning to the kitchen, we hurriedly assembled a picnic lunch and were off. Fall, like everywhere, is short and brief and not to be wasted.

We wended our way out of Havre up the blacktop to the mountains. It only takes about half an hour to be in the woods here, a source of great satisfaction to we prairie-bound people. Oftentimes deer are seen, chipmunks and beavers are busily making their presence known, and there is a slightly different mix of birds to be seen if you look closely. We veered off the Sucker Creek Road and up over a divide, taking us into areas we had not explored in a long time. Each bend in the road brought new and vivid scenes. The Bear Paws were lovely this day, the sky blue, a bright sun shining, the air with its unmistakable snap of fall. After alighting and exploring a beaver pond near a western rail fence, we sat in the car munching our sandwiches. Suddenly we were inundated with a blanket of blue!

Rising from the ground, the nearby pines and the fence posts, mountain bluebirds by the hundreds cascaded against the sun into the sky. We held our breath with excitement and wonder. Only rarely had we seen these birds, mostly in the Flathead country. But to see hundreds of them here in the Bear Paws migrating southward in an undulating swoop! We watched until they were out of sight, still finding it hard to believe what we had seen.

What a jewel of a day the bluebirds had created for us. And how glad we are to know they are so near!

Editor's note: Arlie and Harrison Lane are Audubon members out of the Great Falls chapter who reside in Havre. They maintain their ties with this side of the divide through friend Lynn Kelly and they keep a summer cabin in the Flathead.



Across the morning sky all the birds are leaving.  
Ah, how can they know it's time for them to go?  
Before the winter fire,  
We'll still be dreaming. I do not count the time.  
Who knows where the time goes...  
Who knows where the time goes....

Sandy Denny

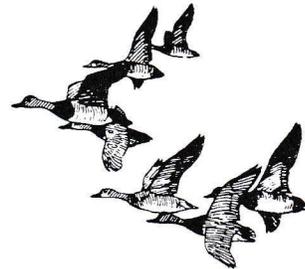
Fund raising for Audubon's 1987 Montana legislative efforts are underway. Ann Humphrey, who is heading the fund raising campaign this year, reports that letters asking for donations to the Montana Audubon Legislative Fund have been sent to Montana Audubon members. "Audubon chapters throughout the state have contributed funds from chapter treasuries but the legislative fund is still \$4,000 short of its goal", said Ms Humphrey.

The Flathead Chapter, responding to the shortage of funds, recently increased its contribution pledge from \$600 to \$1,000.

The legislative fund will enable Montana's Audubon lobby, led by Jan Ellis, to secure legislation for nongame wildlife programs, grizzly bear protection, environmentally sound subdivision planning and other important environmental goals.

Legislative efforts at the local level in 1987 will include a phone tree composed of Flathead Audubon members. We will need 20 to 30 volunteers to make the phone tree work. A volunteer, when alerted of pending environmental legislation by the phone tree chair person, will be required to call several other phone tree volunteers who in turn call other volunteers and so on, until all on the phone tree have been alerted. Each volunteer then responds with a call to their legislator requesting appropriate action.

The phone tree is being set up and members will be contacted to volunteer. Meanwhile, a phone tree chairperson is needed to steer this through the 1987 legislative session. Contact me, Rod Ash, 754-2289, if you wish to help.



Budget planning for the Flathead Audubon Society has become both fun and satisfying. Our \$8,000 budget for this fiscal year allowed us to support our State Audubon Fund and the Montana Audubon Legislative Fund with \$1,000 each. Local education is supported by \$500 for Glacier Institute scholarships, \$400 worth of natural science books for the Bigfork elementary and high school libraries and at least \$200 worth of grizzly bear books for county libraries in this section of the state. We increased our Audubon Adventures program to \$300, so will be looking for 4 additional classrooms to participate. Two of our adopted refuges, the Swan River National Wildlife Refuge and Ninepipe State Game Management Area, are slated for a total of \$425 for educational material and nongame survey assistance. Bald eagle researchers Riley and Pat McClelland in Glacier National Park received \$200 to support their tracking efforts in Northern Canada and \$100 was set aside for Al Harmata of Bozeman for bald eagle chick banding. A full budget report will be published in a subsequent issue of the Pileated Post.

# CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT: 1986

DECEMBER 20 - dawn to dusk

Potluck at Bigfork Senior Citizens  
at 5:00 P.M. following count.  
We provide the ham!

To sign up call Jean Robokee  
at 755-2751.

**GREAT FUN!**



GOT A BIRDER ON YOUR LIST? Here are a couple of gift ideas that will certainly be appreciated while at the same time contribute to the cause of wildlife conservation right here in the Flathead Valley. Our chapter of the Audubon Society is able to share in the profit from the sale of the National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds and from the Bird Watcher's Digest.

The Field Guide is one of the best available, covering all the birds of North America with excellent illustrations as well as complete range maps--a feature which greatly simplifies rapid field identification. The Field Guide is being sold by the chapter for \$17.00 while the retail price is \$21.00. Contact Rod or June Ash (soon!) at 754-2289 to place your order.

The Bird Watcher's Digest is a monthly publication covering all aspects of bird watching, bird behavior and life histories, and field identification. It is the magazine devoted entirely to serious birding. A one year subscription costs \$15.00, one half of which will be returned to Flathead Audubon when your order is accepted by Bird Watcher's Digest. A Christmas card will be sent notifying the receiver of your gift. Call Robin Magaddino at 837-4294 today.

## SPECIAL THANKS TO.....

Dan and Suzannah Casey for constructing a cabinet to hold all our refreshment paraphernalia. The cabinet will be permanently located in our meeting room in the basement of the Flathead Bank of Bigfork.

## INVITATION TO ADVENTURE: EAST AFRICAN SAFARI

Billie Hicks from the Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society dropped us a line this week extending an invitation to Audubon members and interested individuals statewide to join her on an African safari. Here are the details:

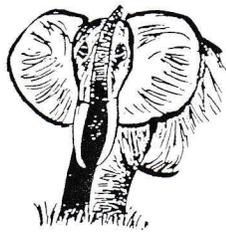
I am co-leading a game viewing, bird watching trip to Kenya, East Africa leaving about February 25, 1987. I've been there twice and listed 279 bird species and 50 mammal species in the game parks. This safari will visit several key birding areas such as Lakes Baringo and Nakuru as well as several game parks with wonderfully diverse habitats which attract over 1200 species of birds in a country only about twice the size of Montana.

Our co-leader is Milt Griffith, a well known wildlife photographer and naturalist who lived in Kenya for ten years and speaks the native language. He helped write the snag policy and the osprey recovery plan for the Deschutes National Forest in Oregon.

We'll be gone 18 days on this unique, custom guided safari which is limited to 15 people to ensure everyone a window seat in the vans for better game viewing and photography.

I'd like to make this an "all Montana" group.

For more information contact me, Billie Hicks, Route 1, Box 232, Joliet, MT 59041. Or call (406) 962-3798.

BIRD SEED '86: THE LAST WORD!

TOMMIE CLARK

We delivered 945 sacks of sunflower seeds to 483 individuals from Condon to Eureka and from Plains to Polebridge. At 50 pounds per sack that is 47,250 pounds or 23 1/2 tons! This was the total production of the Denton, Montana farmer from whom we purchased the seeds. Gross income from the sale was \$14,859 while expenses came to \$8,571 leaving a net profit of \$6,288. This money will go into our chapter's general fund and will be used for operating expenses and for furthering conservation causes in Montana.

At this time we would like to extend a hearty thankyou to all those people who turned out on a very inclement November 8th to help distribute the seeds: From Condon, Rod Ash, Elly Jones, Jack and Ursala Whitney, Patty and Neal Brown, and Robin Magaddino and Nicole from Bigfork. Bob Ballou and his wife Nancy took care of Polson and Ronan. In Whitefish, Cecil and Charlotte Nelson, Mrs. Dick Stark, Betty Nucci, Leo Keane and Mike Potter all pitched in. For Columbia Falls, George Shay, Dale Wicks, Mason Riley and Charles Budge. In Kalispell, Susanah and Dan Casey, Craig Hess, Brent Mitchell, Barbara Baxter, and Tommie Clark all kept the orders going out. Barbara Baxter took care of all the advertising as well as the follow up work in Kalispell. Radio stations KGEZ and KOFI, and Mark Brunson of the Daily Interlake did a great job of getting the word out. A special thanks to Mike Aderhold and the entire staff of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks who made this all possible. And thanks to you people who are feeding the birds!! See you next year!



1986 FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY DIRECTORY

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 Vice President Jack White, 1235 Swan River Road, Bigfork, MT 59911  
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 257-8130  
 257-6645  
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 862-5807

857-3143  
 644-2365

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Membership Application

Please enroll me as a member of the National Audubon Society and of my local chapter. Please send Audubon magazine and my membership card to the address below.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Membership category: **INTRODUCTORY MEMBERSHIP**  
 \$20

STUDENT/S18

My check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed. N54  
 Bill me, please.

CHECK PAYABLE TO: NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY  
 MAIL TO: BETTY ROSE  
 1066 STEEL BRIDGE RD  
 KALISPELL, MT 59901

THE FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY meets on the second Monday of each month from September through May. Regular monthly meetings are preceded by an Executive Board meeting, the time and location of which are published in the preceding newsletter. The business meeting (7:30 PM) and program (8:00 PM) are held in the downstairs meeting room of the Flathead Bank of Bigfork. These are all open meetings and all interested people are invited to attend. THE PILEATED POST is published nine times a year, September through May, and is sent to all members of the Flathead Audubon Society as one benefit of National dues. For others who would like to receive the newsletter, cost is \$3.50/yr.

★ 12 extra sacks Sunflowers - call Robin.

★ CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT INFO INSIDE.



**FLATHEAD AUDUBON SOCIETY**  
 P.O. BOX 715  
 BIGFORK, MONTANA 59911

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