



The Pileated Post

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

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING, Flathead Bank of Bigfork meeting room. 7:30 Business meeting.

8:00 Program: "The Wild Missouri River" by Bert Gildart. Bert narrates this slide presentation of a float trip on the Missouri from Ft. Benton to the Charlie Russel Wildlife Refuge. If you've ever contemplated a float on the wild Missouri, this show will acquaint you with the wonders of the river and its importance in Montana history. Bert is a writer/photographer who has authored several of the Montana Geographic Series books including: "Montana's Missouri River", "Glacier Country" and "Flathead Country".

SPRING COUNCIL MEETING: details inside.

EDITOR'S DESK

Leo Keane

If you've read your Pileated Post carefully over the past several months you will recall we announced a contest for the design of a new logo to emblazon Flathead Audubon T-shirts. We've been pleased with the response. Artists sent us their rendition of harlequin duck, green-winged teal, loons, a pileated woodpecker, and a downy in a birch forest snowfall, a great-horned owl, an osprey or two, and a soaring bald eagle. These and others were all artfully and thoughtfully drawn and lettered. At the March Board of Directors meeting we pinned all the entries up and the Board voted for three finalists: the bald eagle, the great horned owl and one of the ospreys. An hour later, at the general membership meeting, all those present were asked to vote for their favorite of the three finalists. As before, the names of the artists were concealed. The winner of this vote would be our "grand prize" winner (a National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds) and the design we would use on our T-shirts. Rest assured that the vote was absolutely fair--none of us knew who the artists were. But by golly if our own chapter president, Robin Magaddino, and her portrayal of a resting osprey didn't capture the popular vote--and by a clear margin! Oh well, nice try. Are we embarrassed? Is Flathead Audubon ripping you off? Does Robin need another field guide? The answer to any of these questions is, of course, a resounding "Naaaw!".

We promise though, you'll love this new emblem for Flathead Audubon. It is a silhouette of an osprey perched near its nest with a mountainous background. Inarguably, the osprey is a perfect symbol for the Flathead Valley and our beautiful water resources. We certainly do appreciate all of the many fine drawings submitted for our contest, and we may be able to use them for future projects. Special thanks to the artists. Look for our new T-shirts at the May potluck. There is also an order form enclosed in this newsletter. Buy one or two for yourself or for gifts. They're GREAT!



"Montana--Unspoiled, Unforgettable". How many states would dare to use this motto? Are we only trying to cash in on our greatest quality before it is gone? The wilderness hearings are over and, apparently, a few questions remain unanswered in the mind of Melcher: Is a road over the Swan Crest desirable? Do snowmobiles really need Jewel Basin? Are future timber sales in the Mt. Hefty/Tuchuck and Thompson-Seton areas vital to the Flathead Valley economy?

Have you attended or heard about the Flathead fisheries meetings which occurred during the past two months? The loudest outcry has been about the economic loss to the Valley due to disappearing fish and disappointed fishermen. The Thompson-Seton and Mt. Hefty/Tuchuck areas provide the watershed for Whale Creek where over 25% of the Flathead's bull trout spawn. Wolf and grizzlies are there as well; commercial timber is not.

As more and more of our forests are cut, our natural resource based economy must necessarily shift. Let's leave something to shift to. "Unspoiled"? "Unforgettable"? It is not too late to make this Montana slogan a reality.

Point Pleasant on the Edge Robin Magaddino

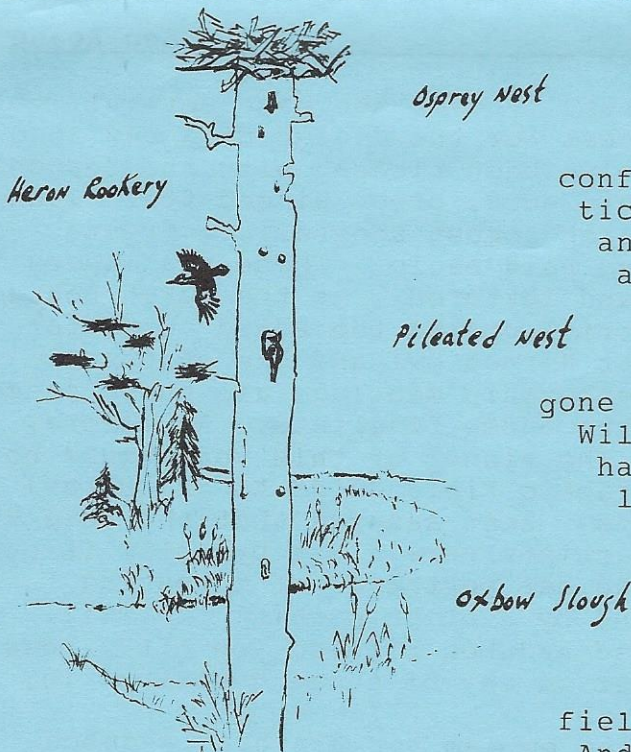
It's hard to believe that a vision of my old white pine desk would come to life for me down in the bottomlands of the Swan River State Forest. But white pines are one of the most valuable trees in there, as we learned when Audubon folks and other interested citizens were hosted by the Dept. of State Lands to view a controversial timber sale near Pt Pleasant of the Swan River.

The controversy revolves around a web of conflicting interests: riparian logging practices, old growth forest, wildlife, recreation and educational values, and mandates to generate income from School Trust Lands--which this unit happens to be.

The local State Lands administrators have gone to great lengths to follow Dept. of Fish, Wildlife and Parks habitat guidelines, and have been cooperative in working with adjacent land owners in clarifying State land management policies. Until recently, the public has been mostly nonchalant with regard to State Lands management. But with increasing pressure on these lands we've become concerned.

This was evident from our informational field trip to Pt. Pleasant to view Sale Unit #1. And Dept. of State Lands officials learned something too: that we, the concerned public, will be keeping our eyes and ears open to what's happening in these forests, and particularly sensitive areas like the Swan bottomlands.

"Welcome, Dept. of State Lands, to the age of the Public Hearing!"



Sale Unit #1
SWAN RIVER STATE FOREST

LANDSCAPING FOR WILDLIFE

Brent Mitchell

Have you been looking through the garden catalogs wondering what you could plant this spring? This is a great time for dreaming of lush gardens and beautiful flowers and fruit trees. It's also a time to be thinking of what to plant for our wildlife visitors.



Keep in mind that some plantings will require a little extra help getting started. For example: if you plant fruit trees, be prepared to do battle with deer and mice if you live in the country. A heavy

wire fence at least six feet high around each tree will help them get a good start. Also, wrap the tree trunks with special plastic guards (available at nursery stores) and do not mulch the base of the trees with a nice thick layer of straw or the like, since mice love the comfy home in the straw and the tender bark will be irresistible to them. The result will be girdled, dead trees. After the trees get above the wire fence they are not as likely to be damaged by grazing deer, cattle or horses. For apples, those that are left on the trees or that fall to the ground will provide birds and mammals a real treat.

Good luck with your catalog dreaming and spring gardening... and don't forget the birds!

We are blessed with many of the native plants that attract wildlife naturally: pines, Douglas fir, chokecherry, snowberry and serviceberry to name a few. Other plants, while important wildlife foods, can be a bit pesty if found around our yard: bristlegrass (fox-tail), pigweed and knotweed.

To help insure success, plant species that occur naturally or that are grown commercially as crops or ornamentals around the Flathead Valley. Check your nursery for these if you don't have them already on your property: ponderosa and lodgepole pine, Douglas fir, mountain ash, Russian olive, crabapples, wild cherries, honeysuckle, dogwood, blackberries (Rubus species--all), hawthorn, sunflowers and wheat. All of these provide both forage and cover for wildlife.

An especially good source of nursery stock for those who have 10 acres or more is the State Nursery. The plants can be ordered through the County Extension Service or the Dept. of State Lands in Kalispell. They are delivered in April. I've had good luck with Siberian crabapple, Nanking cherry, sand cherry, chokecherry, honeysuckle and Russian olive.

Spring Migration: The annual influx of waterfowl through the Flathead Valley is in full swing. The birds seem to be concentrated this year in the permanent lakes and sloughs. Last week, several thousand pintails were seen feeding on new spring wheat north of Kalispell near Stillwater Church. Seven snow geese (possibly the smaller Ross' goose) were flying with the pintails. Mallards and widgeon loafed on the ponds.

Foods Preferred by Familiar Birds

PLANTS	BIRDS													
	Grouse, pheasants, and quail	Band-tailed pigeons	Woodpeckers	Stellar's and scrub jays	Chickadees, bush-tits, and nuthatches	Robins	Thrushes and bluebirds	Cedar waxwings	Orion's and tanagers	Black-headed grosbeaks	Evening grosbeaks	Purple, Cassin's, and house finches	Goldfinches and chickadees	Rufous-sided and brown towhees
Blackberries	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Cascara		○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Cherries	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Crabapples	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Dogwoods	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Elderberries	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Firethorns	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Grapes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Hawthorns	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Hollies	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Junipers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Mountain-ashes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Russian-olive	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Serviceberries	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Snowberries	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Sunflowers	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Insects around plantings attract vireos, warblers, wrens, flycatchers, kinglets, swallows, and martins. Grasses and weeds attract many seed-eating birds. Sugar-water feeders in conjunction with flowers of salvia, evergreen huckleberry, red-flowering currant, and the columbine, and luchsias attract hummingbirds. Other plants especially attractive to birds include madrone, cotoneaster, salal, highbush cranberry, huckleberries, blueberries, currants, gooseberries, maples, oaks, and other "mast" trees.

Groups of birds usually have similar plant food habits, although individual bird preferences and extent of use may vary. Preference ratings for the plants were based on data from food-habit studies, but actual plant use by birds varies by season and situation.

● Choice ○ Good ○ Fair u Used, amount not determined

FIELD TRIPS

The Spring 1988 Field Trip Schedule is out and printed below. All of the Flathead Chapter's field trips are open to members and non-members alike. As a general rule, be sure to wear comfortable walking shoes and be ready for most any kind of weather--especially rain this time of year. I will note how much walking to expect per each field trip. Of course, be sure to bring your binoculars and field guides!

We have a wide variety of trips planned for this spring and summer so look over the schedule and please join us for as many as you like. If you want to add a trip, just let me, Gail Leonard, the Field Trips Chairperson, know before April 30. My number is 862-5807.

Saturday, April 16: Lower Valley Waterfowl Tour. Dan Casey, biologist with the Montana Dept. of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, will lead us through the lower Flathead Valley to view resident and migrating water birds. This will be an automobile trip with little or no walking. Bring spotting scopes if you can. Meet at the Ramada Inn (formerly Levengoods) at 8:00 AM. The trip will be over around noon. Call Dan at 857-3143 for more information.

Saturday, April 23: Pleasant Valley of the Fisher River. Meet at Buttreys parking lot on Highway 2 west in Kalispell at 7:30 AM. This will be a day-long field trip to visit the lakes and meadows of Pleasant Valley and will include a short stop-over at the home of Ann Schwartz, an avid birder who lives in Pleasant Valley. On last year's trip we saw over 70 species of birds, including sandhill crane, golden eagle and phalarope. Bring your lunch, and have a full tank of gas since there are no services on this route. Most of our viewing will be from the roads, but you may do a little walking. Good flower watching too!

April 30 and May 1: Pine Butte Swamp and Freezeout Lake. This is a great opportunity to get a guided tour of beautiful Pine Butte Swamp, a Nature Conservancy preserve near Choteau, Montana. We were able to get a group rate of \$55 per person for Saturday and Sunday's lodging including three meals at their beautiful guest ranch. The accommodations are excellent. During the regular season the rate is \$90 per person! At Pine Butte you'll have a chance to see bighorn sheep, migrating birds, deer, and quite possibly grizzly bear coming down to forage for spring roots. Freezeout Lake is famous for hordes of waterfowl and shorebirds which stop over on migration. We need at least 12 people to make this trip possible, so please call Gail Leonard at 862-5807 if you plan to attend.

Sunday, May 1: Nine-Pipe and Pablo Wildlife Refuge. Jim Rogers will lead this trip around the Mission Valley to see waterfowl, shorebirds and birds of the open spaces. We may see cormorants and nesting herons. Meet at 9:00 AM at Ruby's Cafe near the Charlo turnoff on Hwy. 93. This will be an automobile trip.

Saturday, May 7: Ruth White's Birthday Walk. Meet at Kootenai Gallery in downtown Bigfork at 2:00 PM for Ruth's annual walk up the Swan River Canyon to her home and craft shop. This is a fun and easy walk for all ages, about 2½ miles in length. Call Ruth for more information at 837-6157.

Saturday, May 14: The Rose Property West of Kalispell. Betty Rose will once again lead us through a variety of habitats on her property up in the hills west of Kalispell. This trip is slightly earlier than last year so we may see a wide variety of migrating birds. This is the peak of the warbler migration, and a good chance to work on field identification of bird calls. Just a little walking is required. Call Betty at 755-0852 if you have any questions. Meet at Buttreys parking lot on Highway 2 west at 7:30 AM.

May 21 or 22: Wild Horse Island. Join us for a great day on Flathead Lake's unique and beautiful Wildhorse Island--right at the height of the wildflower season. This field trip is self-guided. We provide maps and bird and flower list, then you will be free to go wherever you want on the island. For novice hikers and those not interested in covering miles, the boat can drop you off and pick you up in the northwest corner of the island. For people in good shape and who have route-finding skills, a drop-off can be made on the southwest side and you can walk the five miles to the pick-up at the northwest corner of the island. This is a strenuous hike and there are no marked trails. Pick up times will be determined when we depart.

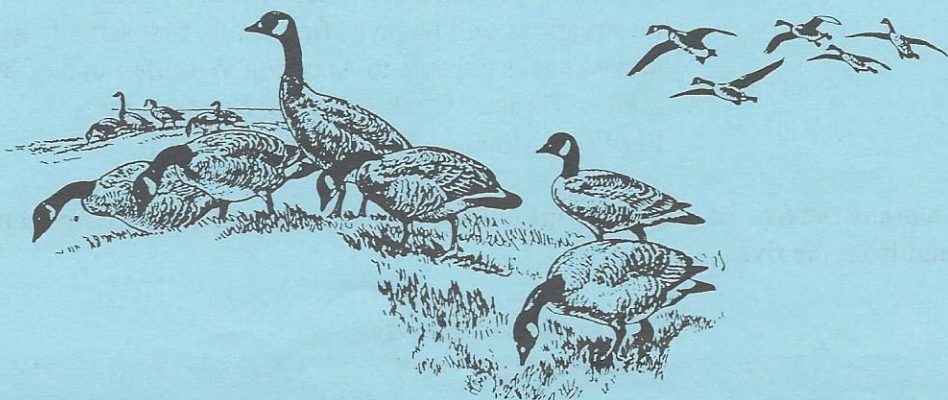
This year's trip will be a benefit for Montana's new Audubon Fund, and will be held two days instead of one to minimize congestion. To sign up send \$12 per person (kids under five are free) to Gail Leonard, 514 Pine Place, Whitefish, MT 59937. Indicate if you want to go out to the island at 8:30 AM or 9:30 AM and on which date you wish to go. We are limiting the size to 30 people per day. I will confirm your space via a postcard, which will also serve as your receipt for your \$5 tax-deductible contribution to the Audubon Fund. Make checks payable to Flathead Audubon.

If the weather is poor (very windy or rainy) the trip will be cancelled. If it is just gray or drizzly we will go ahead. Don't forget a sack lunch and hiking shoes! The meeting place is at Rainbow Landing in Big Arm on the west shore of Flathead Lake. (Make any turn toward the lake in Big Arm and you will end up at Rainbow Landing.)

This trip is open state-wide so send in early to reserve a spot. Call Gail at 862-5807 if you have further questions.

Coming in June: Unique Areas of the Swan. Field trips to Squeeker Creek, Swan River Island and other fabulous birding and rare plant areas. These trips will be led by Jack Whitney and by Glen Grey, a ranger in the Swan State Forest.

Canoe the Flathead. A day on the mighty Flathead with an old river rat. Watch for details on these in the May newsletter.





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Audubon Wildlife Fund of Montana Presents ~
A FLOAT TRIP on the WILD MISSOURI

<i>BIRD WALKS</i>	<i>PALEONTOLOGICAL DIG SITES</i>	<i>HOMESTEAD HISTORY</i>
<i>STEAMBOAT HISTORY</i>	<i>PREHISTORIC GEOLOGY OF AREA</i>	<i>BUFFALO BIOLOGY</i>
<i>INDIANS OF THE UPPER MISSOURI</i>	<i>WILDLIFE OF THE AREA</i>	<i>PADDLEFISH</i>
<i>LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION HISTORY IN THIS AREA</i>		
<i>NEZ PERCE WARS</i>	<i>MINING IMPACT</i>	

All equipment, except your personal needs, are furnished. You'll spend each day floating in a canoe flotilla, with stops at points of interest.

Overnight camps will be at Eagle Creek, Slaughter River, Judith River, Greasewood Flats, and Cow Island.

Six highly qualified instructors (in addition to the trip leader, Lynn Kelly) will lead exploratory trips and lecture on the topics outlined above. Moderate hiking will be involved.

You will be on the 180 miles of the mighty Missouri which is protected under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act that limits development. The trip is limited to 21 participants so that the group will not be an impact upon the ecology. Participants must be 18 years old or older.

You will be given basic training in canoe travel, and you will paddle your own canoe. You need not be an experienced canoe traveler. You will never be alone on the river as you will travel with a flotilla.

Tents for sleeping will be furnished. All meals are prepared by the outfitter. You need to bring your own sleeping bag. You also need to be prepared for long hours of bright sunshine on the river, for mosquitoes, for wind, and rain (not usual in July, but....).

COME JOIN US:

July 6-11, 1988

Six days away from civilization! Five nights in the solitude of the wild Missouri! Camp where Lewis and Clark camped, and be where Chief Joseph and the Nez Perce traveled.

REGISTRATION:

\$425 (includes \$200 tax deductible contribution to the Audubon Wildlife Fund of Montana); \$50 is non-returnable (administrative costs). Deposit of \$50 must be paid by May 15. The total \$425 must be paid by June 1. Reservations will be on a "first come, first served" basis. Make checks payable to Audubon Wildlife Fund of Montana. Mail to Tommie Clark, 231 Pine Needle Lane, Big Fork, Montana 59911 (406-837-6615).

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS: If you are flying, fly into Great Falls; and we'll arrange transportation to and from the river.